

Oakington & Westwick

August / September 2024

Journal



**Grassed Up
Black & Blue
Bus Stop Bench
In Search of 7/E2
Pyromaniac Shortage**

What's On

Weekly

Mon		Monday Cafe , 9.30—noon. 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. office@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 , 10–10.45am. Pavilion. Katie Harknett – 07541 721059 / info@elementalfitness.co.uk
Thu		Little Steps , 10–11.30am. term time. Church Hall. office@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. Oakington Primary School. beavers@oakingtonscouts.org.uk
Fri		Scouts , 6–8pm. Pavilion. Cara Hanman – cara.hanman@oakingtonscouts.org.uk
Sat	3 Aug	Village Walk & Talk , 10.30am. Meet by Church on High Street. Alice – OWNeighbours@gmail.com
Fri	2 Aug	Minibus to Bar Hill , 10am. To book ring Teri Seaber – 07711 531004
Fri	2 Aug	Mobile Library , 1.50–2.20pm. Coles Lane.
Sun	25 Aug	Bingo Night , 6pm. White Horse Pub. 01223 232417
Fri	6 Sep	Minibus to Bar Hill , 10am. To book ring Teri Seaber – 07711 531004
Fri	6 Sep	Mobile Library , 1.50–2.20pm. Coles Lane.
Sat	7 Sep	Village Walk & Talk , 10.30am. Meet by Church on High Street. Alice – OWNeighbours@gmail.com
Sat	7 Sep	Village Yard Sale , 10am–2pm. Around the village. See page 24. psa@oakington.cambs.sch.uk
Mon	9 Sep	O&W Parish Council , 7.30pm. Pavilion. All invited. clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk
Tue	10 Sep	Tuesday Talk & Tea , 2.45pm. Church Hall. Marian Cleaver – 01223 232897
Thu	12 Sep	Chess Club , 7pm. Crossways. Ranko Pinter – ranpin@gmail.com
Thu	12 Sep	O&W WI , 7.30pm. Church Hall. Elaine Bailey – elainebailey1@live.co.uk
Wed	18 Sep	Book Club , 7.30pm. White Horse Pub. Gerry Cavander – gedcavander@hotmail.com
Thu	19 Sep	Philosopher's Café , 7pm. Crossways. Ranko Pinter – ranpin@gmail.com
Wed	25 Sep	Sustainable O&W , 7.30pm. Church Hall. Talk by Water Sensitive Cambridge. sustainableow@gmail.com
Fri	27 Sep	Country Dancing , 8–10pm. Histon Methodist Church. Kathryn Coles – 01223 233191
Sun	29 Sep	Bingo Night , 6pm. White Horse Pub. 01223 232417

BIN DAYS

Fri 2 Aug, Fri 16 Aug, Fri 30 Aug, Fri 13 Sep, Fri 27 Sep.

Black bins

Fri 9 Aug, Fri 23 Aug, Fri 6 Sep, Fri 20 Sep, Fri 4 Oct.

Blue & Green bins


Oakington & Westwick Sports Pavilion
Monthly Lottery 2024 - Winners

Month	Ticket No	Area	Winnings
June	241	Days Meadow	£100
July	304	Queens Way	£100

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Cover Photo – Iréne Butlin

Whether you're reading this relaxing in a deckchair, or inside on yet another rainy day, we hope you enjoy this edition of the Journal. At least the sun shone for Village Day – there are photos on the middle pages to prove it – and how nice it was wandering around the stalls and shows, and meeting up with people.

When you get talking, it turns out a lot of interesting people live in Oakington and Westwick... In this Journal we hear from experts on the grasses found locally and on the secret military chambers beneath the airfield; remember a well-

loved villager and say farewell to a family who have contributed a lot to life here. Some of the regular activities take a break over August but September is a good time to join one of the many village clubs and groups. And the village yard sale on 7 September is another opportunity to browse stalls for bargains while chatting to everyone else doing the same!

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*), Jenny Broadway, Ranko Pinter (*chair*), (*advertising / advert layout – vacancies*)

Send contributions to
oakwestjournal@gmail.com

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

**DEADLINE FOR
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER ISSUE:
Tuesday 17 September**

To advertise in the Journal,
please email
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Advert costs	Single	1 year*
Business card	£20	£80
¼ page (portrait)	£32	£128
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* Six for the price of four

Adverts for the next issue must
be received by **10 September**.

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

Allotment Society Barbecue

On a warm and sunny late-June evening, the members of the Oakington and Westwick Allotment Society downed their planting, weeding and watering tools for a few hours, and enjoyed themselves at the inaugural society barbecue.

It was also a chance to christen the new 'clubhouse', which had been expertly built by Nigel and Bernie, with



many of the materials donated by the Butlins. Thanks to Nigel and Bernie's hard work, we also had a marquee, chairs and tables beautifully arranged for allotment holders and guests to relax and get to know each other a bit better.

Over a drink or two, we enjoyed grilled steaks, sausages, burgers and kebabs, along with delicious salads and desserts, thanks to all the efforts of catering manager, Maria.

As the sun set, a circle of chairs formed around a fire of glowing embers and everybody chatted together. At the end of this successful evening, we all decided we should do it again sometime.

If you would like to find out more about the Oakington and Westwick Allotment Society, and would be interested in taking on new allotment plots as they become available, please contact Ann.rayner42@icloud.com.

John Barnett



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.


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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

St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire
Ian Sollom *ian.sollom.mp@parliament.uk*
www.iansollom.org Facebook: *IanFSollom*

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

One of the benefits of the soggy summer we are enjoying (!) this year is that a regular watering programme hasn't been needed for the new plants and **trees on the Rec**. They all seem to be growing really well.

Mention of the Rec leads on to the professional tree survey which was recently carried out. The Parish Council is duty bound to ensure its trees are properly maintained. Most of the trees inspected are in good condition and need a small amount of maintenance. The London Plane on Stocks Green is very healthy and needs only a few branches to be trimmed.

The same cannot be said, sadly, for the Horse Chestnut on the Rec in the play area. Whilst it is not diseased, it is not structurally sound, meaning that branches or bigger limbs could fall. Obviously this is not acceptable and the tree inspector has recommended felling the whole tree due to its location. Consequently the PC will arrange to have the tree felled this autumn. Of course it will be a huge loss of amenity but a new tree or trees will be planted to replace it. Suggestions are welcome for a tree or trees which will in time provide shade and beauty... let the PC know.

Plans are in place now for the improvements along **Dry Drayton Road**. The conifer stumps will have to stay, because there is a gas main beneath them, but they will be tidied up. The old chain-link fence will be replaced by a new fence, similar to the green fencing around the 3G pitch on the Rec. A deciduous hedge will be planted inside the fence.

The idea of recording every type of living thing in the parish (except humans) is becoming increasingly needed as pressures on the habitat seem to get more and more. The Parish Council has a duty to consider what it can do to **conserve and improve biodiversity**. The first stages must of course be to find out what there is and where in the parish it is. A Norfolk Hawker dragonfly and a Green Eyed Marsh Horsefly are examples of just two visitors that flew into our kitchen recently.

iRecord is a free app that can help record the amazing wildlife around us as it has an identification facility built in. For further information, including how to link findings to the village Nature Recovery project activity on the app, see *sustainableow.co.uk/nature-recovery-project*.

Here's a challenge then for the holidays and autumn to come – how many species of mammals, insects, plants, birds and so on can you record in *your* garden? Save the results and they will be collected at a later date and put on a database. When we find out what species we've got we can perhaps begin to improve the habitat for those we haven't!

Finally, the work on the new **3G football pitch** has been completed and its now open for business. A huge 'thank you' to all those involved, particularly Marcus Till, Oakington Vikings FC.

David Reeves



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! Contact Bruce via *brucessutherland@aol.com* or 07730 817350.

From our District Councillor

Since the last issue several things have changed politically, and for the District Council Cabinet at local level too.

I am delighted to have played an active role in the election of three new Liberal Democrat MPs in Cambridgeshire including Ian Sollom for St Neots and Mid Cambs which of course includes Oakington & Westwick. I know Ian as a man who genuinely puts the interests of people at the centre of his thinking, and will be a strong advocate for us all.

At South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), there has been a reshuffle in the Cabinet, and the Lead Cabinet member for Communities including Oakington is now Cllr Henry Bachelor. Henry succeeds Cllr Bill Handley. I would like to thank Bill for his attention to, and support for, the needs of both Oakington and the surrounding villages. I have taken over from Henry as Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services at SCDC too and am getting even closer now to residents' concerns about the environment, and our waste services, in particular.

With the elections has come a focus from the new government on the acceleration of new town development, with Northstowe on the agenda. The Chancellor made a speech ([tinyurl.com/3cs9mr8h](https://www.tinyurl.com/3cs9mr8h)) on 8 July, in which she mentioned Northstowe as one of five sites that will be accelerated as part of the government's approach to increase housebuilding. While we don't have too many details yet, I understand Homes England are looking at accelerating all Phase 2 approved housing, town centre and associated community facilities.

While this is happening Homes England have started Community Consultation Events about Phase 3A too, and I was delighted to be at the first engagement session at the same time as the Chair of Oakington & Westwick Parish Council, David Reeves, and Parish Councillor, Stephen Moore, who had the chance to discuss their thoughts on this phase, building closer to Oakington & Westwick, with Cllr Henry Bachelor and Homes England.



This report focuses mainly on the political agenda and Northstowe, but my monthly updates to the Parish Council about the services offered by SCDC include links to where you can get help with District Council related concerns. Please visit scambs.gov.uk, or feel free to email me for support if you can't find what you need on the website.



Cllr Natalie Natalie Warren-Green

Contact details for all Councillors are on page 5.

From our County Councillor

This year, the UK has experienced one of its wettest Junes on record, with persistent rain and unseasonably cool temperatures dampening the usual summer festivities. As you know rain and sun provide essential moisture and energy respectively, promoting the growth of green infrastructure including weeds, which significantly increases the workload for the council in maintaining verges and roads. Please ensure that you continue to report any highway issues on the County Council website:

highwaysreporting.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

General Elections – 4 July

I'm thrilled to share that the Liberal Democrats have made significant gains across Cambridgeshire, including our victory in the new constituency of St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire. Thank you to all who voted in these elections; let's continue to work together for a brighter future for us and our children.

Government Announcement of Acceleration of Northstowe – 8 July

We welcome the new taskforce to help accelerate the development of Northstowe. Constructing a new town is undeniably complex and the challenges have been magnified by the pandemic, especially with rising costs in the construction industry and seeing two contractors on-site going into administration. We are eager to collaborate with

all stakeholders, including Anglian Water and the Environment Agency alongside all levels of Councils, especially as the design code for the development of Phase 3A is currently being consulted on by Homes England. Details are available from 9 August online: bit.ly/4co5r4O. Please have your say.

Gas works in Oakington

I want to apologise for the disruption to the village for the gas works across the summer. I understand that the No. 6 bus is unable to go through the village at certain times, depending on where the works are taking place. This has been mainly to do with the buses being able to turn at the junction of Meadow Farm Close. The bus drivers are unable to turn unless a banksman is available to assist them to make this manoeuvre. The Cadent project manager is working directly with Stagecoach on this matter.

A reminder: The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) have asked for gas works to be carried out, because the old cast iron main keeps failing. They are replacing the mains and services with Polyethylene pipe (PE). These new PE pipes will allow for more sustainable greener gases to be used in the future.



Cllr Firouz Thompson

Contact details for all Councillors are on page 5.

From our New MP

Following the General Election held on 4 July 2024, I am delighted to say I have been elected as your MP for the newly created constituency of St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire. Whether you voted for me or not, I want you to know that I will keep listening to you and I will keep fighting for you every day – for the fair deal you all deserve. I will work hard for the people of St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire and be your champion in Parliament.

Throughout the campaign I heard of the everyday challenges people faced trying to see a GP or dentist – or if they could even register with one – or with the cost of living. Many of you have felt let down or taken for granted. I will do my utmost to improve the lives of residents in our constituency.

For Oakington & Westwick, my priorities will be ensuring there is adequate flood coverage and following the government's announcement on acceleration of Northstowe housing that the green separation remains fully enforced.

There are many challenges facing us all. Although the new Labour government are yet to announce their plans for the greater Cambridge area I don't envisage any changes in the planned growth for this area. My role as local MP is to challenge government and fight for the best outcomes for residents here and that relates to water shortages, access to the NHS and transport.

I love our new constituency – from St Neots and our new towns to all our unique villages and communities. To be elected to represent you in Parliament is the honour of my life. I am truly humbled by the faith you have put in me. I won't let you down!



Ian Sollom

Contact details on page 5.

At the time of writing, we do not yet have an address for our constituency office, but when we do, we will share this in the Journal and on my social media accounts.

How Are You South Cambs

Connecting with others, getting active, learning a new skill, being creative, seeking professional support, exploring the outdoors, volunteering – all these things (and more) can improve well-being... but it isn't always easy to know what is on your doorstep or to feel comfortable trying something new.

How Are You South Cambs haysouthcambs.co.uk is a website that brings together everything local in the district (including Royston) that boosts mental well-being. Just like our physical health, we all have mental health and we all need to look after it – what that looks like for each of us is unique. The How Are You South Cambs website gives you the factual information you need to find a well-being boost, alongside videos, photos, quotes and a description of what to expect when you go for the first time. If you are on

Commemorative Bench

Earlier this year, Oakington and Westwick Parish Council kindly gave permission for a new bench to be put up next to the bus shelter on Water Lane, opposite the village sign. The previous bench had been vandalised many years ago, and the base needed redoing as well.

At the end of June, the bench, in memory of local resident, Jean Barnett, was erected expertly by Brookfield Contracting.

Jean lived in Oakington for most of her life. She passed away last autumn, just a few months shy of her 100th birthday.

Interestingly, Jean's family found a letter in her home, a letter which Jean had obviously treasured. It was from March 1987 and had been sent to Jean by Vima Linney, Clerk to the Parish Council. The letter thanked Jean for regularly cleaning out the bus shelter and for her public spirited action. Apparently, the bus shelter needed cleaning "because of the appalling state it gets in by the youths of the village using it as a toilet."



Fortunately, the bus shelter is in much better shape these days. Now there is a nice new bench beside it, a place for you to rest your weary feet when waiting for the bus or just when you are taking a breather. Jean would certainly have enjoyed sitting there with you, chatting away and with her shopping trolley by her side.

John Barnett

Facebook, give the How Are You South Cambs Facebook page a follow too: [@HowAreYouSouthCambs](https://www.facebook.com/HowAreYouSouthCambs)

We're also keen to discover, share and support what is good for well-being in South Cambs and Royston – what it is you value for your health and well-being. If you know about something that we should know about, please contact Charity Green on HowAreYou@cpft.nhs.uk – she'd love to hear from you.

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Clubs and Groups

Oakington & Westwick Table Tennis Group



Table tennis is good for your mental health as well as your physical health – heart rate, reaction times, coordination, muscles and joints. Join us for fun and laughter – we are a small, friendly club, of mixed ability. We play every Tuesday at 7.30pm at the Pavilion, and welcome new players. Bats provided. For more information contact Gillian L'Angellier on 01223 234758.

Oakington & Westwick Tennis Club

Has Wimbledon inspired you to try your hand at tennis? If so, Oakington & Westwick Tennis Club would very much welcome you. The courts have newly painted surfaces and a bit of a spruce up, with new nets and benches. Money from subs been spent wisely!

The year's subscription which runs from 1st April -31st March. Great value rates – only £65 for a family, £45 for adults and £20 for juniors. If you'd like any further information, do please contact oakingtontc@gmail.com.

Gill Attmore



Club members can use hard courts at the Recreation Ground. 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.

Country Dancing

Jane and I look forward to seeing you on Friday **27 September** for our next fun evening of country dancing. We will have a Caller and the music will be provided by our excellent musicians. All abilities catered for. You don't need a partner as we all dance with each other. So, do come and join us, either to dance or listen to the music.

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.

1st Oakington Beavers

Oakington Beavers has had a great end to the summer term with sports activities, water fun, a barbecue and a Beaver camp with lots of colonies from all around Cambridgeshire. It was the first outdoor camp for our young Beavers and they all did brilliantly! We also made our very own “Higher or Lower” game for the Village Day and took part in the Big Help Out, helping to protect the saplings at the school by spreading woodchips around them.

Kathryn Bigg



Beavers (aged 6–8) meet 6–7pm on term time Fridays at Oakington Primary school.

If your child is interested in joining Beavers, please contact Kathryn.Bigg@oakingtonscouts.org.uk. Adults: do you have a skill or passion you can share with our Beavers? Please get in touch!

Oakington Vikings Football Club



FA Charter Standard

Our Teams and Contacts

- First Team James & Ronnie 07834 465188
- Under 16s Marcus & Josh 07866 635241
- Under 14s Winston 07968 716290
- Welfare officer Frank 07841 995713

www.facebook.com/OakingtonVikingsFC

Village Tool Share



To join the WhatsApp group and/or request a copy of the tools list, contact Gerry Cavander, on 07857 704636 / gerard@cambridgereuse.org.uk / gedcavander on Oakyfolk.

Oakington and Westwick Allotment Society

For anyone who feels that ‘Grow your own’ is the way to go then the Allotment Society is pleased to say that there should be a number of new plots available to rent by October this year. Please contact me if you would like to go on the waiting list.

Ann Rayner ann.rayner42@icloud.com

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Sustainable Oakington & Westwick

Thank you to everyone who visited the SOW stall on Village Day. Look at the photos to see some of actions people here are already taking to help tackle climate change (green and blue stickers) and the “next steps” they want to take (orange and red stickers.) Eco Club organised crafts including bracelet making from reused wool, and with the EAG we ran some games and displayed photos to help spread the word about Nature Recovery.



The talk and tour at the June meeting inspired us to make and use compost as part of sustainable, closed-circuit gardening practices, which don't waste resources or rely on a lot of bought inputs. They are better for wildlife too. Notes



from this talk and many others can be found on the SOW website, sustainableow.co.uk.

No SOW meeting in August, but on **25 September** members of Water Sensitive Cambridge are coming to talk to us about rain gardens, slow-flow planters and other ways to save water and prevent flooding. All are welcome to SOW meetings, both regulars and one-off visitors!

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

Why I love ... short mat bowls

I enjoy being a member of the Oakington and Westwick indoor bowling Club, as it is so friendly and encouraging to help people like myself who are new to the game. Having never played bowls before, I have made some new friends since being in the village, and enjoy my couple of hours with friendly people.

Pam Nicholson

Why I love being a member of the Oakington & Westwick Indoor Bowling Club is not only enjoying the sport activity itself, but also making new friends that share a similar interest, and having fun evenings every Thursday.

Sue Kaufman



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.

Ten Years Ago This Month

Sadly still etched in many people's minds, hopefully the floods of 8–10 August 2014 will never be repeated. Nearly 70 houses were affected after 140mm rain fell in a single day. Thank you to the village's Flood Mitigation Group for their work in the decade since.

Editors



Village Day 2024





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Village Day Report

Well, here we are! The Village Day has come and gone, but what a day it was!

Many remarked that the atmosphere was probably the best ever, with some 400 of you wonderful people making the most of the perfect weather, the stalls and entertainments and of course the sheer pleasure of simply bumping into old friends and neighbours.

Country Dancing started the afternoon off, followed by the Circus act and workshops – both new this year. There was Toddler Play for the little ones, Story Telling for those a bit older, Oakington Singers for everybody and bands galore till the end of the day. Local groups and visiting enterprises provided a variety of stalls to enjoy, not least the culinary ones. And the magnificent Bouncy Castle complex and Bungee Trampoline were as popular as ever. Thank you to all!



We are most grateful to the local businesses and organisations who generously donated prizes for our grand Raffle. The raffle was the financial foundation of the event and the pre-selling of tickets crucial to the Village Day ending up with a provisional surplus of £650. The Planning Team spent a larger amount on entertainments than in previous years.

We always rely on local support - and you never fail to deliver. Volunteers are the backbone of the event and again we were thrilled to have so many freely giving of their time and energy. (We could have done with some extra "muscle" to put away the heavier items, maybe next year you could help out?)

Hopefully we shall have enough people to form a team to plan the next Village Day. Again, perhaps you could seriously consider coming on board!

Thank you again for your fantastic support this year.

*Brian Esson
Planning Team Chair*

The Grass Beneath Your Feet

With the days warming and the soil still holding onto the moisture that's built up over the previous months, it is full steam ahead for plant growth. Anyone who left their grass to grow for 'No Mow May' (or June, or July, or all three) is probably thinking, "it's a jungle out there!" But how much thought do we give this group of plants? To some, grass is a surface to play sport on, to others something that must be kept in check. For many, it's just there, not very interesting. But step back and it emerges that grasses are probably the most important group of organisms (let alone plants) out there.

Estimates vary, but the higher ones have grasses of one kind or another covering up to 70% of the Earth's land surface. That not only includes savannahs, meadows, prairies and pampas, but fields of wheat, barley, rice, millet and maize – all of which are types of grass and our most important crops. Grasses and grasslands have shaped the evolution of some of our most important animals – cows and horses are both grazers.

Whilst we tend to look to animals to provide us with clues to the onward march of the seasons, grasses alone can provide you with that. One of the first to emerge from the winter is Barren Brome, or 'the sock destroyer', its characteristic awns or spikes embedding in your clothing and taking over road verges wholesale from March. Meadow Foxtail, with its spiked flower (yes, grasses are 'flowering plants' too) comes up in April, followed by Soft Brome (one of my favourites). June and July is the time when some of the bigger species start flowering – by the time you read this, most of the grass you will see on the Guided Busway will be False Oat-grass (tall, slightly drooping) and Yorkshire-fog, which is often described as having 'striped pyjamas'.

Grasses are also tremendously variable. Some are small, creeping affairs, others are big brutes that form big tussocks. They are also some of the best indicators of a habitat. The presence of Quaking Grass (another favourite of mine) tells someone they are on chalk (the 'clunch pits' of south Cambridgeshire, or the Devil's Dyke are great places for this most attractive plant), whereas Cock's-foot can betray high nitrogen levels.

Grass (and their relatives sedges and rushes) often take the back seat – they are tricky to identify and they don't have the colour or showiness of most plants that flower, especially when we consider the great efforts to help our pollinating insects. But grasses on their own are tremendously valuable for wildlife. The Common Reed is what you see in our reed-beds, home to Bittern, Marsh Harriers and so on. At a much smaller scale, many butterflies rely on grasses as food-plants for their caterpillars; Meadow Brown caterpillars use fescues, couch grass (so hated by allotment holders) and bents, whereas

Meadow Brown in the Village Orchard



Speckled Wood feed on False-brome and Yorkshire-fog. Field voles make their tunnels in amongst the tussocks, being the main food source for kestrels and barn owls – you get the picture.

So, next time you are looking at a tangled 'mess' of tussocks and grass stems, give some thought to their diversity, what it might tell us (other than no-one's been around with a mower lately) and what might lurk within.

James Heywood



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Oakington & Westwick Neighbours

June was bookended by two community events for OWN.

The Big Lunch took place on Sunday 2 June, and Village Day on Saturday 29 June. The sun shone gloriously for both!



OWN runs a minibus service to Bar Hill on the first Friday of every month, but in July we also went to the seaside! Ten people went merrily to Felixstowe, driven carefully by Kris. First a stop at Languard Fort café for coffee and to admire the container port, then back in the bus to drive to the beach. The group dispersed, to meet up again at 4pm near the pier. Everyone had fish and chips, and a walk around on a sunny afternoon. "The sun shone, we were able to sit on the prom and enjoy our ice creams. A great day out, enjoyed by all."



However, our AGM takes place in November: we are flagging it now because three of our six committee members will be stepping down at that time. In order for OWN to continue, we need people willing to take it on. If you value what OWN has contributed to village life over the last ten years, please consider stepping up to help lead OWN forward. Our contact details are: 07902 111786 owneighbours@gmail.com



Due to the venue being unavailable this year, we won't be holding our usual Jazz and Tea event.

Jo Bryant & Jillian Wilkinson

Environment Action Group



Our village **Nature Recovery project** (joint project with SOW) is now well underway, with volunteers using the iRecord app to record plants and animals spotted around the village. Cambridgeshire is one of the most nature-deprived counties in the UK, and has a commitment to double its nature-rich habitats by 2050. We are hoping to do our bit by recording our local wildlife and increasing local habitats. We would love for you to join us in this work – please contact SOW on sustainableow@gmail.com. The iRecord app can help suggest what species you are looking at, so you don't need to be an expert in wildlife identification to take part.

We spent a very enjoyable afternoon at the **Village Day** in June talking to people about nature recovery and our other projects. Our stall, which adjoined that of SOW, included a tin can game to illustrate wildlife recording, along with a miniature pond and soil samples. Did you know that there are 26 different species of earthworm in the UK? They play a vital role in soil structure by eating and recycling decaying plant matter, cleaning up pollution, and aerating the soil, which also helps to reduce flooding. However, earthworm numbers have dropped in recent decades, decreasing by 33% in the last 25 years. Meanwhile, various beetles and other invertebrates, as well as plants, could be seen in our pond display, although we could not find any tadpoles this year.

Adding a pond is one of the best things you can do to help wildlife in your garden, as it not only provides a habitat for aquatic species but is also used for drinking by a wide range of birds and small mammals. This is vital in hot weather. It is best to include a ramp or shallow shelving so hedgehogs and other small mammals can get out of the water if they fall in.

Together with SOW, we also had a stall at the **Pollination Festival** that took place at the Garden Centre the weekend before Village Day. We again focused on nature recovery at this event.



Our other projects, including **flood mitigation**, continue in the background and we aim to report on these in future editions of the Journal.

Stephanie Smith

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Book Club

The Hundred-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out of The Window And Disappeared
by Jonas Jonasson



This funny book split the group. One could not complete it whilst others did enjoy it, but admitted that reality had to be completely suspended when the main character yet again meets another major historical character and plays a key part in world events. The style of the writing reminded some of us of a book we reviewed last year, '*A man called Ove*' by Fredrik Backman, another Swedish writer.

If you enjoy reading and would like to meet a friendly bunch and be encouraged to try new books – it's great for trying many different genres and styles of writing – join us after the summer break on **18 September** to discuss *Killing my Own Snakes* by Anne Lesley, and then October 16 to discuss *Holding* by Graham Norton.

Natalie Meredith

Video Game Review

Fortnite



Fortnite is the number one online battle royale game; it is immensely popular with children and teenagers, as well as some adults. One hundred players drop onto an island, scavenging for weapons and building structures to survive. The last person or team standing wins. The fast-paced action keeps players engaged; matches typically last around 20 minutes, contributing to its popularity. The game features cartoon-like graphics, making it appealing to a wide age range. There's no blood or gore – players eliminate opponents with guns and melee weapons. Fortnite encourages social interaction through voice chat and emotes (animations the player's character performs such as waving). However, this can expose kids to inappropriate language and behaviour. Parental controls are crucial. While the game is free, players can buy cosmetic items like skins, dances, and emotes. Parents should monitor spending and set limits. The continuous development of new updates keeps even long term players engaged by providing new experiences.

Ming Tregonning

Bourn Windmill

Last two open afternoons this year: **Sunday 18 August & Sunday 15 September**, 2–4.30pm (last tour 4.00 pm).

Come and enjoy an interesting afternoon out at Bourn Windmill where you can ride in the windmill while it is being turned around! Built in the reign of King Henry VIII, this post windmill is likely to be the oldest in the country. Mill tours £4 per adult and children £1, under 6s are free! Home-made cakes and tea-time treats also available. Between the villages of Caxton and Bourn, and a short walk from Cambourne along a footpath. Free parking. Sat Nav: Mill Cottage, Caxton Road, Bourn, Cambridge CB23 2SU.

Kate Armstrong, Bourn Windmill Volunteer Team

Gardening Notes

August: A bountiful month! Beans, peas, potatoes and onions should be ready to harvest now. Wait until the onion tops bend over and begin to turn yellow then lift carefully. Leave to dry in the sun for a while and then store in a cool dry place.

If, like us, you have suffered badly from slugs and snails during this very wet summer it could be worth trying this garlic spray which is completely harmless to wildlife. We are using it regularly and hope that it is helping. If you want to give it a try, this is a recipe used by a professional hosta grower: siennahosta.co.uk/pages/garlic-wash-recipe



Many flowers will have reached their peak now so keep dead-heading. Roses, dahlias and sweet peas will then reward you with many more blooms.

Don't forget to regularly water and feed tomatoes and cucumbers in the greenhouse.

September: Cover cabbage, sprouts, kale and cauliflowers with fleece or net to prevent birds stripping the tasty leaves.

Prune summer-fruiting raspberries by cutting fruited canes back to the ground and tying in new canes to fruit next year.

Start to plant bulbs for a spring display, but continue to dead-head dahlias and roses to keep the flowers coming. Stake late-flowering, tall perennials like dahlias, asters and sunflowers to prevent wind-rock. If temperatures start to fall be ready to take tender plants indoors. Happy Gardening!

Ann and Peter Rayner

Chess Corner

Solution to chess puzzle 3-24 from last Journal:

1st White 1st Black

Qh7-h8+ Kf8-f7

2nd White 2nd Black

Bd3-g6+ K:Bg6

3rd White

Qh8-h5#

+ = check. # = checkmate. : = capturing a piece.



Chess Puzzle 4-24

This time an easier puzzle. White to move and checkmate in two moves. Send your solution to me at ranpin@gmail.com

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Black Coffee – a Band with Village Roots

Two Oakington residents – Jonathan Chaplin on keyboards (Coles Lane) and Alice Marsh on drums (Mead View) have been regular members of the jazz-blues band Black Coffee, which many villagers will have heard perform in Oakington or elsewhere. Black Coffee was founded in 2015 by Cambridge resident Steve Shaw (lead guitar), who brought in Jane Adams (vocals) and John Hicks (bass guitar) alongside Jonathan and Alice. Black Coffee has played at the White Horse on several occasions, at the Village Day, at Jazz by the Lake – the annual fundraiser for Oakington and Westwick Neighbours (OWN) – at private parties in and around the village, and at several venues in Cambridge.

Black Coffee plays light jazz with a blues feel, featuring covers of well-known standards by the likes of Billy Holliday, Van Morrison, Norah Jones, Madeleine Peyroux, Sade, Nat King Cole, Karen Souza, Diana Krall, Dusty Springfield, Wilson Pickett, as well as livelier numbers by Pussycat Dolls (Sway) and even Eric Clapton (Layla). We generally play two 45-minute sets which we adapt for the occasion. We also have a few rock and roll numbers on reserve if we think the audience can handle them!

Bands evolve over time as members explore new musical interests and the personnel of Black Coffee has changed in recent years. After many years of sterling service, Alice has now moved on to another band, Blutone, formed in 2023, which offers a more blues-rock genre and is led by Black Coffee's former bassist John Hicks, now on lead guitar. Jonathan plays keys for both. Oakington residents will have heard Blutone play at the White Horse and the Village Day.

If you're interested in booking Black Coffee, contact Jonathan on 07483 802406. For Blutone, contact John Hicks on blutonebusker@gmail.com.

Jonathan Chaplin



Black Coffee in September 2023

A Farewell Message from the Phillips Family

For the last eight years, Ben Phillips has been the Family Outreach Worker at St. Andrew's church, and together with his wife Sharon has been very active in many areas of village life, particularly at the primary school. He's recently been accepted for training towards priesthood so the family are moving to Durham. He writes:

Dear St Andrew's and Oakington Family,

As I write this, I'm filled with both sadness and gratitude. After eight incredible years, it is with a heavy heart that we must say goodbye (for now) to a community that has been our spiritual home and my place of employment.

When we first arrived, we had no idea what an incredible journey lay ahead. We were immediately surrounded by a community that wrapped their arms around us, encouraged us, and helped and prayed for us during the darkest times of our lives, especially at the time of Sharon's cancer.

We have been blessed to work alongside such talented and dedicated people and teams of volunteers, including OWN, the Village Day committee, fireworks, playgroups, and the PSA. Over the years, we have been privileged to witness the growth and transformation of so many young lives. We have seen families come together, form deep bonds, and support one another through the challenges of life.

Of course, there have been challenges along the way. The pandemic tested our resilience and forced us to find new ways to connect with one another. But through it all, we have been amazed at the resilience and creativity of this community.

We will carry the lessons we have learned here with us, and we will always be grateful for the opportunity to serve this church, the school and the wider community. We are confident that this community will continue to thrive in the years to come, and we look forward to watching your flourishing from wherever God leads us next.

We would like to invite you all to our leaving service on **1 September**, where Sharon will be leading and I will be speaking. We would love as many of you to come as possible so we can say goodbye with big hugs and food. The service will start at 10am and will be followed by the famous hog roast. It would mean so much to us if you are able to come so we can serve you all one last time.

So, thank you – for welcoming us into your lives, for allowing us to serve you, and for supporting us in so many ways. We will miss you all deeply, but we will carry you in our heart as we enter into this new season of life. May God bless you, and may you continue to grow in faith and love.

With love and profound appreciation,

The Phillips Family



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Searching for Oakington ROC Post

Are there ghosts at the bottom of your garden? Almost certainly if you live in Church View with an airfield view. Get out your old Ordnance Survey map and stick your pencil on Grid 412651 and you might see wraiths emerging from the depths.

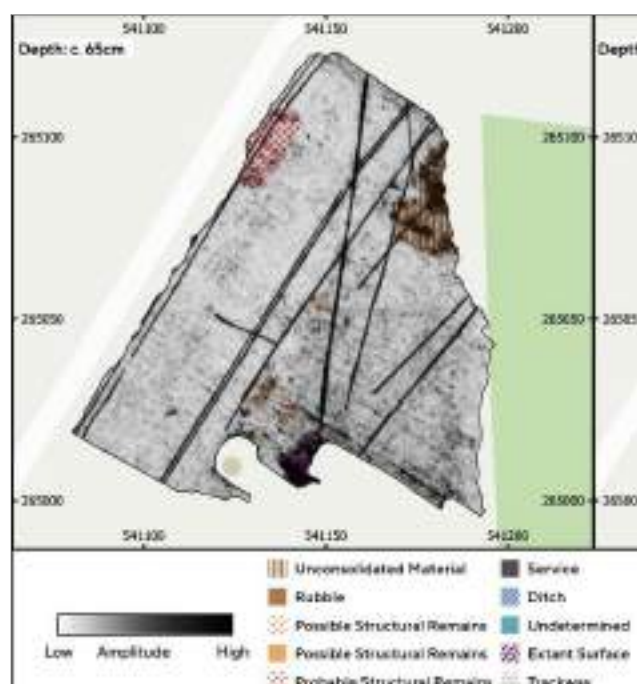
During the First World War German forces dropped bombs from aircraft and Zeppelin airships both at the battlefield and deeper into France and the UK. Given the correct information, it was possible to send fighter aircraft to intercept these invaders. After the end of the war various ways were investigated to improve the collection of this data for defence. One initiative led in 1925 to the formation of the Royal Observer Corps (ROC). The ROC established a network of observation posts across the UK. The Oakington ROC Post we searched for in a recent archaeological survey of the airfield is a Cold War addition to the network.

Now the airfield site is being redeveloped as Northstowe, the developers are required to carry out an archaeological survey to locate, record and preserve any historic artefacts. As part of this a geophysics survey is done first, to identify areas which need further investigation.

In the middle of April Dr Oscar Aldred, Archaeologist Northstowe Development, invited members of the village to take part in carrying out the geophysics survey looking for the Oakington ROC Post. It was believed to be within the one hectare area being surveyed.

Villagers were split into four groups which arrived at different times over two days. We were both in the same group and arrived at the Oakington gate into the airfield at the appointed time. As the airfield is an active building site we were fitted out with safety boots, high-vis vests and hard hats before walking to the area being studied. Here we met Matt and Alex of Magnitude Surveys, who were carrying out the survey.

We helped take readings using Ground Penetrating Radar.



The Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) machine is a trolley like a large lawnmower. Underneath, aials send radio waves of different frequencies into the ground, where they are reflected or scattered by buried objects or changes in soil type. The return signal is linked with a very accurate GPS to mark the location. As you push the GPR machine along adjacent strips marked on the ground, the data recorded is fed into a computer program, which reconstructs it, showing areas of further interest at different depths. Although we did not use it, the investigators showed us a magnetometer, which they could pass over areas with a strong GPR signal to see if there is a high metal content.

Data collected by people from the village was of use in the survey and helped locate what could be the ROC post. Shane was a member of the ROC, so was able to provide additional evidence on the location, history and design of the post.

In 1953 the first hydrogen bomb, 200 times more powerful than Hiroshima, spread contamination over 7,000 square miles. Subsequently, as part of Britain's defences, the ROC was tasked in the event of war with establishing the sites and nature of nuclear explosions, and recording the subsequent spread of radioactivity. It would also have disseminated the 'four-minute warning' of air and rocket attack, and sounded air raid sirens – including at Oakington.

In total, 1,560 underground posts covering the country at about 10-mile intervals were constructed, the Oakington 'bunker' being opened for business in 1961. It was of reinforced concrete beneath compressed earth. Below a steel entrance hatch was a 15-foot shaft leading to two rooms – the loo and a monitoring room containing the necessary instruments, bunks and storage. In an emergency, the three observers manning the post could remain operational for two weeks.

It was equipped with four essential instruments. Information from a *Ground Zero Indicator*, when calibrated with other posts, enabled the position of nuclear bursts to be triangulated and could determine whether the explosion was an air or ground burst – important in assessing damage and warning vulnerable populations. A *Bomb Power Indicator* measured the strength of the blast, a *Survey Meter* measured current fallout, and a *Carrier Receiver* transmitted information directly from Fylingdales and Master Radar Stations to some 20,000 locations. These would initiate locally the 'four minute warnings' by siren for air attacks. Posts would fire maroons (a signalling rocket that produces a bright flash and loud bang) to warn of approaching fallout.

Posts were organised in 'clusters', reporting to Centres linked with Regional Seats of Government, responsible for taking control if central government failed. Oakington post was 7/E2. The "7" designated Bedford Centre and the "E" a cluster with its posts at St Ives, Oakington and Ramsey. 'Our' post, in common with some 800 others, was closed in July 1991 and demolished shortly after.

Stephen Gamble and Shane Guy

If you know someone who was in the Post crew, or have any other airfield story, please contact the Journal.



Oakington Primary School Parent Staff Association



We have come to the end of a busy term at Oakington Primary School with our main event, which many of the village attended, the **summer fete**. We are delighted to have raised over £1500 from this event which will go a long way to supporting trips for the next school year.

Over the summer term the children and our team of helpers which supports the **gardening club** have been busy planting around the school, and over the summer holidays we will be posting on the village and school Facebook pages when the produce is available. We have grown sweetcorn, potatoes, tomatoes, French and broad beans, courgette and summer squash this year. A “sum-up” QR code will be available for people to make donations for any produce they collect if they are able to donate, and this will be reinvested for next year.

Finally, we are coordinating the **village yard sale** on **7 September** so don't forget to sign up if you would like a stall for this. The sign-up deadline is 30 August to get your location in the map. Each pitch costs £5 and these funds raised go to the school PSA. Stall-holders keep all their takings. See the poster above and sign up with the QR code.



Angela Barber

Community Association



Well done to the team who planned the Village Day and the numerous people who helped to make it a delightful day! Thank you.

Bonfire Night – Why not join the Planning Team?

No sooner is the summer event done and dusted, we begin to focus on forming a Planning Team for Bonfire Night. Teams work best when people with varied skills and experience come together – working towards a common goal, of course! Please join us to have some fun, get to know your neighbours and share in our great community spirit – we need at least six people to register their willingness to join the Bonfire Night Planning Team.

Please register your interest by **2 September** at oakington.westwick.ca@gmail.com. If you have any questions about what's involved, do get in touch. Please note without a Planning Team we won't be able to run the event.

Fireworks on Bonfire Night?

Do we have somebody in the village with Fireworks training? Please let us know ASAP if you are willing to set up and fire a £1,000+ display on Bonfire Night. In the last few years we have had fabulous displays and it would be a shame if we had to stop for lack of trained personnel.

Treasurer needed for 2025

A chance to contribute to the community by enabling the Journal, Village Day and other activities to continue. If you have some experience in managing money, please get in touch to find out more.

*Irène Butlin & Elodie Cameron
on behalf of the CA committee*

Oakington Baptist Chapel

Sunday School

Held every Sunday during term time from
12.10pm – 1.00pm

Aimed primarily at ages 5 – 11 years

Would you like to learn about the Bible through discussion, Bible study, quizzes, puzzle sheets and craft activities? You are very welcome to join us.

Safeguarding policy, DBS checked staff, qualified first aiders.

For further details, please contact Lis Warboys
enquiry@oakingtonbaptist.org.uk or 07821 914477,
Oakington Baptist Chapel, Stocks Green, High Street,
Oakington.



Oakington Baptist Chapel