

# *Oakington & Westwick Journal*

February / March 2026



Clean sweep  
Primrose tea  
Mike on a bike  
New School Head  
Come over to Over

## What's On

### Weekly

Mon **Monday Cafe**, 10–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](mailto:elainebailey1@live.co.uk)

Tue **Senior Pilates**, 11.30–12.30pm. Pavilion. Classes throughout the week. Claire Young – 07766 554413

Tue **Cubs**, 6–7.15pm. Term time. Pavilion. Richard Young – [richard.young@crafthillscouts.org.uk](mailto:richard.young@crafthillscouts.org.uk)

Tue **Table Tennis**, 7.30–9pm. Pavilion. Gillian L'Angellier – 01223 234758

Wed **Mixed Ability Pilates**, 10–11am. Pavilion. Classes throughout the week. 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@elemental-fitness.co.uk](mailto:info@elemental-fitness.co.uk)

Thu **Little Steps** playgroup, 10–11.30am. Term time. Church Hall. [littlestepsoakington@gmail.com](mailto:littlestepsoakington@gmail.com)

Thu **Ten Sing**, 7–9pm. Term time. Histon Baptist Church. Terry King – [cambridgetensing@gmail.com](mailto: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

Thu **Squirrels**, 5–6pm. Term time. Ages 4–6. Oakington Primary School – [nikki.henrywood@oakingtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:nikki.henrywood@oakingtonscouts.org.uk)

Fri **Beavers**, 6–7pm. Term time. Ages 6–8. Oakington Primary School – [beavers@oakingtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:beavers@oakingtonscouts.org.uk)

Fri **Scouts**, 6–7.30pm. Term time. Ages 11–14. Pavilion. Cara Hanman – [cara.hanman@oakingtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:cara.hanman@oakingtonscouts.org.uk)

Sun **St. Andrew's Church**, 10am & 5pm. Regular Sunday Services. [www.standrewsoakington.co.uk](http://www.standrewsoakington.co.uk)

Sun **Oakington Baptist Chapel**, 10.30am & 6pm. Regular Sunday Services. [www.oakingtonbaptist.org.uk](http://www.oakingtonbaptist.org.uk)

Sun **Oakington Baptist Chapel**, 12.10–1pm. Sunday School. 5–11 years, term time. See poster on page 11

### February

Tue 3 Feb **O&W Community Association AGM**, 7.30pm. Pavilion. [oakington.westwick.ca@gmail.com](mailto:oakington.westwick.ca@gmail.com)

Fri 6 Feb **Minibus to Bar Hill**, 10am. To book ring Teri Seaber – 07711 531004

Fri 6 Feb **Mobile Library**, 1.50–2.20pm. Coles Lane.

Sat 7 Feb **Village Walk & Talk**, 10.30am. Meet by Church on High Street. Alice J – [OWNeighbours@gmail.com](mailto:OWNeighbours@gmail.com)

Sat 7 Feb **Repair Cafe**, 11am–2pm. Pavilion. Book at [sustainableow.co.uk/repair-cafe](http://sustainableow.co.uk/repair-cafe). [oakingtonrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:oakingtonrepaircafe@gmail.com)

Mon 9 Feb **O&W Parish Council**, 7.30pm. Pavilion. All invited. [clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk)

Tue 10 Feb **Coffee with a Cop**, 2.45pm. At Tuesday Talk & Tea, Church Hall. All welcome. Marian Cleaver – 01223 232897

Wed 11 Feb **Sustainable O&W**, 7.30pm. Church Hall. Details on website [sustainableow.co.uk](http://sustainableow.co.uk). [sustainableow@gmail.com](mailto:sustainableow@gmail.com)

Thu 12 Feb **Chess Club**, 7pm. Interested in joining? Contact Ranko Pinter – [ranpin@gmail.com](mailto:ranpin@gmail.com) or 07766 052025

Thu 12 Feb **O&W WI**, 7.30pm. Church Hall. Elaine Bailey – [elainebailey1@live.co.uk](mailto:elainebailey1@live.co.uk)

Fri 13 Feb **Country Dancing**, 8–10pm. Histon Methodist Church. Kathryn Coles – 01223 233191

Sat 14 Feb **Messy Church**, 3–5pm. Church Hall. Cate Lambert – [catelambert@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:catelambert@hotmail.co.uk) or 07533 152519

Thu 19 Feb **Philosopher's Café**, 7pm. Interested in joining? Contact Ranko Pinter – [ranpin@gmail.com](mailto:ranpin@gmail.com) or 07766 052025

Wed 25 Feb **Book Club**, 7.30pm. White Horse. "Raising Hare" by Chloe Dalton. Natalie – [nataliewant@hotmail.com](mailto:nataliewant@hotmail.com)

Fri 27 Feb **PSA Quiz Night**, 7.15–9.30pm. Oakington Primary School. For details and bookings see poster on page 11

### March

Fri 6 Mar **Minibus to Bar Hill**, 10am. To book ring Teri Seaber – 07711 531004

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Mon 9 Mar **O&W Parish Council**, 7.30pm. Pavilion. All invited. [clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk)

Tue 10 Mar **Tuesday Talk & Tea**, 2.45pm. Card Making – Jacqui Taylor. Church Hall. Marian Cleaver – 01223 232897

Wed 11 Mar **Sustainable O&W**, 7.30pm. Church Hall. Details on website [sustainableow.co.uk](http://sustainableow.co.uk). [sustainableow@gmail.com](mailto:sustainableow@gmail.com)

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Sat 14 Mar **Messy Church**, 3–5pm. Church Hall. Cate Lambert – [catelambert@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:catelambert@hotmail.co.uk) or 07533 152519

Sun 15 Mar **St. Andrew's**, 10am. Healing Service. "Find the wholeness you are looking for". [officeoakington@gmail.com](mailto:officeoakington@gmail.com)

Thu 19 Mar **Philosopher's Café**, 7pm. Interested in joining? Contact Ranko Pinter – [ranpin@gmail.com](mailto:ranpin@gmail.com) or 07766 052025

<b>BIN DAYS</b>	Fri 13 Feb, Fri 27 Feb, Fri 13 Mar, Fri 27 Mar.	<b>Black</b> bins
	Fri 6 Feb, Fri 20 Feb, Fri 6 Mar, Fri 20 Mar, <b>Mon 30 Mar.</b>	<b>Blue</b> bins
	Fri 6 Feb, Fri 6 Mar, Fri 20 Mar, <b>Mon 30 Mar.</b>	<b>Green</b> bins



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.

*Cover Photo: Frosted Leaf, December 2022 – Geoffrey Butlin*

## Welcome & Repair Cafe

A visiting family recently commented on how friendly the village seemed, because they were greeted by everyone they passed. And certainly Oakington and Westwick generally feels like a very friendly and safe place to live.

If you do have any concerns about safety or anti-social behaviour in the village, or would just like to hear about the work done by our local police, then why not come along to "Coffee with a Cop". This is a regular feature in Cottenham and is being kindly hosted in Oakington for the first time by the "Tuesday Talk & Tea" group on 10 February.

*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),  
Ela Yates (business manager),  
Adrienne Chaplin (distribution),  
Ranko Pinter (chair).

Send contributions to  
[oakwestjournal@gmail.com](mailto:oakwestjournal@gmail.com)  
or phone: 01223 233510 (Jenny)  
or 01223 233208 (Graham)

**DEADLINE FOR APR/MAY 2026 ISSUE: 6pm Tuesday 17 March**

To advertise in the Journal,  
please email  
[oakwestjournal@gmail.com](mailto:oakwestjournal@gmail.com)

Advert costs	Single	1 year*
Business card	£21	£84
1/4 page (portrait)	£33	£132
1/2 page (landscape)	£63	£252

\* Six for the price of four

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

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

Once you get talking to people you meet in the village, some amazing stories can come out – so many people have led interesting lives. On page 22 read about Mike Scrivener, who among many other things is (probably!) the oldest former Oakington football team member at 95.

There are lots of regular and special events over the next two months where you can meet up and chat!

*Jenny Prince & Graham Tregonning,  
Editors*



## Sustainable Oakington & Westwick Repair Cafe

**Saturday 7 February at the Pavilion, 11am – 2pm.**

Come along to the annual Repair Cafe, and enjoy the community buzz together with delicious cakes and lunchtime vegetarian snacks! Everyone welcome, whether or not you also have something which needs repair.

Repairs are FREE (although donations gratefully accepted). You can bring along knives or garden tools which need sharpening, clothes or jewellery which needs mending, bikes, household items, gadgets or small appliances which

need fixing or aren't working properly – and have them repaired for free, saving them from being thrown away and you from having to buy new.

Our volunteer 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 can be booked in advance to guarantee they will be seen – the booking link is on

[sustainableow.co.uk/repair-cafe/](http://sustainableow.co.uk/repair-cafe/) But if the booked slots are full, you've already booked something or you don't get round to booking, you can bring your item on the day, first come first served, and if there's time we'll fit it in.

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](mailto:oakingtonrepaircafe@gmail.com).

In partnership with Cambridge Carbon Footprint.



*Jenny Prince, Repair Cafe Team, Sustainable Oakington & Westwick*

## Journal Archiving

We have a complete set of Journals from 2014 to date. One set is stored in the Parish Council Offices and the other with the Cambridge Collection in the Central Library. The latter also has a fairly extensive collection of old local photos.

The Parish Council have more recent copies of the Journal, as downloadable pdfs, [oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk/The\\_Journal\\_29386.aspx](http://oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk/The_Journal_29386.aspx). The Oakington & Westwick history website has the most extensive collection of old Journals, a few going back to the 90s: [oakingtonhistory.co.uk/journal-archive](http://oakingtonhistory.co.uk/journal-archive)

If you have any pre-2014 Journals that you would be happy to part with, we would love to have them.

*Jenny Prince & Graham Tregonning, Editors*



# Pippa Westoby

## LETTER CARVER

I'm a Lettering artist based in Cambridge. My work consists of hand carved memorials, house plaques, garden ornaments, and painted lettering for births, anniversaries and weddings. All my work is bespoke. You can see more of my work on my website : [www.pippawestoby.co.uk](http://www.pippawestoby.co.uk) or on my Facebook page : Letter Carving in Stone - Pippa Westoby.

Contact email :  
[pippa\\_westoby@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pippa_westoby@yahoo.co.uk)



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## From the Councils

### Parish Councillors

**Chair:** Tony Starling  
[cllr.starling@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.starling@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk)

**Vice-Chair:** Stephen Moore  
John Bailey     Julie Grove  
Ranko Pinter     Daniel O'Donovan  
Linda Wellard     Two Vacancies

### Parish Website

[www.oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk](http://www.oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk)

### Correspondence to the Council should be addressed to the Clerk:

Mrs Laura Lawrence – Email:  
[clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto:cllr.warrengreen@scambs.gov.uk)  
Tom Bygott – 07765 475513  
[cllr.bygott@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.bygott@scambs.gov.uk)

### County Councillor

O & W, Longstanton, Northstowe, Over  
Luis Navarro – 07817 211960  
[luis.navarro@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:luis.navarro@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)  
On Facebook:  
[longstantonoakingtonnorthstowe](https://www.facebook.com/longstantonoakingtonnorthstowe)

### Member of Parliament

St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire  
Ian Sollom  
[ian.sollom.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:ian.sollom.mp@parliament.uk)  
[www.iansollom.org](http://www.iansollom.org) Facebook: IanFSollom

## VILLAGE INFORMATION

### Community Association

[oakington.westwick.ca@gmail.com](mailto:oakington.westwick.ca@gmail.com)

### Oakington & Westwick Neighbours (OWN) – 07902 111786

[OWNeighbours@gmail.com](mailto:OWNeighbours@gmail.com)

### Oakington Primary School

01223 232328  
[office@oakington.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@oakington.cambs.sch.uk)

### Pavilion Booking Administrator

Tony Leadley – 07936 024587  
[oakingtonpavilion@gmail.com](mailto:oakingtonpavilion@gmail.com)

### Village Stores & Post Office

Thiru Kunaratnam – 01223 232327

### Hardship Fund

Contact Jo on 07714 760582, Bee on 07718 068941, Celine on 07541 997299 or [oak.west.hardship.fund@outlook.com](mailto:oak.west.hardship.fund@outlook.com)

## From our Parish Council

**New Parish Councillor.** We are pleased to report that Daniel O'Donovan was co-opted onto the Parish Council at our January meeting. We look forward to working with Daniel. That leaves us with two vacancies. Do consider joining the team.

**Speed Reduction Measures.** We are sympathetic to concerns regarding the introduction of measures to limit speeding in the village and regret that they became necessary because of the inconsiderate and illegal action of a large, and increasing, number of drivers.

The Parish Council is committed to improving the enjoyment of life in the village for all residents, including those living on Cambridge Road, and pedestrians and cyclists who are most affected by drivers speeding.

The Parish Council has, over a number of years, sought to limit speeding traffic by lowering the speed limit and introducing advisory speed cameras, which also gather speeding data. We are very sorry to report that drivers have too often ignored these voluntary measures.

Initial results show a reduction in speeding along Cambridge Road, and, as drivers become used to the speed cushions, they are driving at a slower, steady pace.

For those driving along Cambridge Road, there is no need to brake before each cushion, as some drivers are doing; please just proceed at a steady pace keeping below the speed limit.

We will review the effectiveness of the speed cushions in twelve months to see if they have increased residents' safety and limited the speed of traffic. More information on the technical aspects of the scheme can be found in our County Councillor's report in this edition on page 6.

**Community Right to Bid (Asset of Community Value).** Parish councils and community groups can ask the District Council to list certain buildings or land that they believe are important to their community's social wellbeing or social interests.

If these assets come up for sale, there is then a six-month window to allow the community to prepare a funding bid before the property comes on the open market.

The Parish Council originally nominated the White Horse pub as an asset in 2015 and again in 2020, recognising its importance to village life. We are now looking to submit a renomination as a review takes place every five years. Part of the process requires gathering evidence/testimonials from the community that you support this listing. So, if you use the White Horse please send us a comment on what you value about the pub – [clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk)

**New Local Plan.** As some of you know, there is a consultation on a new Local Plan which will determine the amount and type of development in the area of Greater Cambridge over the next ten years and will certainly impact upon Oakington and Westwick. The Parish Council has commented on a number of issues including: the lack of clarity of the green space between Northstowe and Oakington; the increase in traffic, including heavy lorries, through the village by the proposed creation of a "business park" at Slate Hall Farm and further warehousing near Bar Hill and Boxworth; finally the insistence that the business park includes improved flood mitigation for the village. For those interested in finding out more about the Local Plan, visit [greatercambridgeplanning.org/local-plan](http://greatercambridgeplanning.org/local-plan)



Tony Starling, Chair

### From our County Councillor

**Telecommunications Mast.** Progress is being made on proposals to install two telecommunications masts to improve mobile coverage in and around Northstowe. A restrictive covenant between the County Council and Meridian Trust is being amended to allow equipment on the existing water tower and at Longstanton Park & Ride.

A planning application has now been submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council (Ref: **25/04958/PRIOR**) and is open for comments. Improved coverage could bring near-term benefits for Oakington & Westwick and may also support future network expansion as later phases of Northstowe are developed.

**Bus Service.** Although responsibility for bus services now sits with the Mayoral Combined Authority (CPCA), their reliability and accessibility remain a major concern for our community. Encouraging public transport and active travel is essential for a growing area and brings wider environmental and health benefits.

In January I met with officers from CPCA and Stagecoach to explore options for improving services and making buses a more viable alternative for residents. Meaningful changes are difficult while current fencing works remain in place, but discussions were productive and a number of ideas are being considered for trial once those works are completed.

**Cambridge Road Traffic Calming: Design, Safety and Engagement.** The traffic calming measures on Cambridge Road were delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council as part of a Local Highway Improvement (LHI) scheme jointly submitted by Girton and Oakington & Westwick Parish Councils. The scheme responds to long-standing concerns about excessive vehicle speeds, a record of collisions, and the tragic death of a young woman on this road.

The aim was to secure consistent compliance with a 30mph speed limit along the full length of the route. Standard-width speed cushions, used widely across Cambridgeshire, were installed in line with national guidance (Traffic Calming: LTN 1/07). These were chosen because they are among the few measures proven to reduce speeds reliably over longer distances and at reasonable cost. Other features, such as build-outs or raised tables, typically slow traffic only at isolated points and were therefore less suitable.

The cushions support the extended 30mph limit and were essential in securing police support, as compliance without physical measures was considered unlikely. New street lighting has also been installed throughout the zone to ensure visibility of the cushions during hours of darkness.

All works followed the County Council's standard design and safety process. A Designer's Risk Assessment examined visibility, road width, speeds and lighting, and this was independently reviewed through a Road Safety Audit, leading to further improvements including additional lighting columns. Designs were checked twice and comply with recognised national standards.

Parish Councils were consulted throughout the process, with designs reviewed, approved, and refined in response to feedback. A joint site walk-through in November 2024 led to final adjustments, including repositioning one set of cushions.

The scheme is now in its monitoring phase. A Stage 3 Road Safety Audit is due in early 2026, and its findings will be reviewed and acted upon where necessary. Parish Councils and County officers will continue to monitor safety, speeds and community feedback.



*Cllr Luis Navarro*



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### From our District Councillors

**Reminder for postal vote renewals.** The rules brought in by the Elections Act 2022 mean that postal votes have to be renewed every three years. If you completed a postal vote application before October 2023 and did not renew by 31 January, it will be necessary to create a new postal vote application, ensuring that your application is received at least eleven business days before the District Council May election date.

The easiest way for residents to re-apply is online at [www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote](http://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote), but the council can send paper forms to anyone who needs them. Please email [elections@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:elections@scambs.gov.uk) if you have any questions or wish to cancel your postal vote.

#### Local Government Reorganisation – Consultation.

At an extraordinary meeting on 24 November, South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) reviewed draft business cases for five unitary reorganisation options to replace the current two-tiered structure where the District and County Councils are responsible for different functions:

- Option A – Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire + East Cambridgeshire
- Option B – Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire
- Option C – Cambridge City + South Cambridgeshire + Huntingdonshire
- Options D and E – The same for us as Option B but with different arrangements for the north of the county

By 21 votes to 6, it resolved to **recommend Option B** as the council's response to Government ahead of submission. My group and I voted for Option C because the two new unitary authorities would be better balanced in terms of population and because South Cambridgeshire would be better protected from becoming fully urbanised with Cambridge's growth being concentrated in our villages.

On 17 December, the Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness confirmed that a statutory consultation is expected to begin in **early February** and will run for seven weeks, covering a number of areas across England including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The purpose of the consultation is to allow councils that did not submit proposals, along with other interested parties, to formally comment on the plans. At this stage, the Government has not expressed any view on the merits of individual proposals and no final decisions have been taken.

The Government has invited councils involved in local government reorganisation to consider postponing their scheduled **May 2026 elections until 2027** to free up capacity for reform delivery. Councils must have submitted views by mid-January, after which the Secretary of State may make an order delaying elections for participating authorities. Town and parish polls would proceed as normal. My view is that it is essential for local democracy for the elections to proceed as normal.

*Cllr Tom Bygott*



Contact details for all Councillors are on page 5.

Thank you to all the residents and community groups who have been contacting me for support in finding District Council services that you have needed over the winter months. As we approach spring the needs will change so feel free to be in touch as you need more information or guidance from SCDC officers.

**Food collections update.** Food waste collections started in some areas of South Cambs in January and will be introduced in Oakington & Westwick later this year. SCDC will write to all residents in advance with specific information. The collection dates will also show on your bin collection calendar: [greatercambridgewaste.org/find-your-bin-collection-day](http://greatercambridgewaste.org/find-your-bin-collection-day)

**Bringing empty homes back into use.** I've been spending time with the SCDC Empty Homes officer in Oakington, where activity on bringing empty homes back into use is proactive and positive. People are responding well in the village to the initiative, and to understanding the value to residents of bringing houses back into use, the implications of government levies of keeping some homes empty (probate policy/law), as well as understanding how businesses involved in bringing homes back into use can benefit from VAT breaks as a result of working on these. See [www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/empty-homes](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/housing/empty-homes) for more information.

**SCDC pledges £900,000 3-year Service Support Grant funding.** SCDC has just committed Service Support Grant funding of £300,000 a year to local groups. This funding has almost doubled compared to the previous budget, made possible by prudent management of the council's finances and a recognition of the acute need for these services.

For your reference when looking for support, grant recipients include (amounts are per year):

- Over Day Centre – £30,000 to provide transport and hospital discharge support service for older residents
- Cambridge and District Citizens Advice – £105,000 to provide free, confidential advice services to residents
- Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre – £10,000 to deliver specialist support for survivors of sexual violence
- Support Cambridgeshire (CCVS) – £20,000 to strengthen the local voluntary and community sector
- Hope Against Poverty CIC – £14,400 to provide a Wellbeing Programme for people experiencing anxiety, bereavement, or social isolation.

Examples of others receiving funds which I know from my case work will be of interest in our ward include: Blue Smile children's mental health charity; Home-Start home-visiting services; Ormiston Families helping families facing adversity; Care Network Cambridgeshire for Community Car Schemes; Sew Positive using sewing to help address mental health challenges, social isolation, or economic inequality; The Voluntary Network helping older residents maintain independence; CamSight helping people with low vision and blindness. More information can be found here: [tinyurl.com/exbkw6eu](http://tinyurl.com/exbkw6eu).

*Cllr Natalie Warren-Green*





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## **Cambridge Cats Protection Making a better life for cats**

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or kitten in our care. For neutering advice call 01223 236 188.  
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Cats Protection is a registered charity (203644 (England and Wales), SC03770 (Scotland) and  
is listed as a Section 107 Institution by the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland, 20,070

## Environment Action Group

Back in December our **Flood Mitigation Group**, together with members of the Parish Council (PC), met on-site with representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council to discuss areas of localised flooding and puddling in the village. Some of these may be due to poorly maintained small watercourses such as ditches and pipes. We also examined a report from the Northstowe developers concerning their current and future monitoring of groundwater levels in the area. Our village pond, which we know is affected by groundwater levels, was among the sites under study. The report suggested that there is little chance of a link between construction work and water levels in our village. However, the promised regular monitoring of water levels during the construction of Northstowe phase 3A will be essential in order to prevent any issues similar to those experienced with the Kingfisher Pond near Longstanton where levels appeared to be lowered during construction of earlier phases of Northstowe.

Regarding the **Cambridge25** proposals for a business and logistics park in our parish, since the previous edition of the Journal we have written to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to request that improvement of flood mitigation on Oakington Brook should be a planning condition of development. The response that we received was encouraging and indicated that this is already included in the Draft Local Plan policy. We are happy to report that Andrew and Geoffrey have a meeting with the head planner in February.



*Pavement Clearing December 2025*



**The Oakington and Westwick  
Community Association**

**Annual General Meeting: Tuesday 3 February 2026**

**Oakington Pavilion, 7.30pm**

All residents of Oakington and Westwick are welcome to attend the meeting, a great opportunity to meet friends and neighbours and hear more about the rich and varied Community Groups.

Village groups are invited to share a brief update during the evening, as well as the Community Association updates from the last 12 months, including feedback from Village Day 2025.



**Footway sweeping:** An excellent job was done in December by a number of volunteers who worked hard to sweep up leaves and other debris from pavements in many parts of the village. We are very grateful to the volunteers who organised and carried out this important work to make our footways safer, tidier, and easier for people to use. We are especially grateful to Graham Tregonning for steering this work with such energy and enthusiasm.

We have also been in discussion with the group **Histon and Impington Green Spaces (HIGS)** on a proposed project to monitor water quality and flow rate in the Beck Brook and its tributaries. If HIGS is successful in securing a grant for water testing equipment, this project would allow collection of water quality data over three years from across the Beck Brook network, including at several sites in our parish. This would give a strong baseline against which to track any changes due to land use, climate change, pollution incidents, and the like. We await further news from HIGS, but if you are interested in helping, please contact John (johnterry23@hotmail.co.uk) or Andrew (andrew.denniswater@gmail.com). Some SOW members have shown interest in joining us.

Finally, at the end of November, the EAG harvested and sold about 60 Christmas Trees which nicely boosted the group's funds. A contribution has been made to the Allotment Society in appreciation of their help. This was the fourth and last year of sales, as all available trees have now been harvested.

*Stephanie Smith*

## Understanding Grief

Forthcoming dates for free Understanding Grief sessions run by Arthur Rank Hospice Charity:

- 25 February, in person at hospice 10–11.30 am
- 24 March, online 7–8.30pm
- 21 April, in person at hospice 10–11.30 am

To book a place or for more information:  
[haysouthcambs.co.uk/support/understanding-grief-arhc/](http://haysouthcambs.co.uk/support/understanding-grief-arhc/)

Histon & Impington Friends also offer a six week "Hope Again" programme: [www.hifriends.org.uk/activities/hope-again-bereavement-support-programme-2/](http://www.hifriends.org.uk/activities/hope-again-bereavement-support-programme-2/)

*Editors*



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### Oakington C of E Primary School



I would like to make a short introduction to myself as the new Headteacher at Oakington Primary School and to say how excited I am to have taken up the position this term.

A little bit about me – I trained as a primary teacher in the 1990s and have had a range of positions within the education sector since then including a spell in Gambia, West Africa, as a teacher trainer. My most recent post was as Headteacher of Cambridge International School in Cherry Hinton Hall, where I worked from September 2013.

It is great to now be Headteacher of a village primary school and I am very much looking forward to working with the wider community to enhance provision at the school.



Amanda Gibbard  
Oakington Primary School

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*Clare.Cronk@cambridgeshire.gov.uk*

Clare Cronk, Education appeals panel officer  
Cambridgeshire County Council

### Grey box recycling collection in Oakington Village Shop



A trial scheme to collect items which you can't recycle in the blue/green bins. We are currently taking Marigold rubber gloves. Please take them, holey but clean and dry, to the grey box in the shop. For other things check: [sustainableow.co.uk/reuse-repair-recycle](http://sustainableow.co.uk/reuse-repair-recycle)

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### Oakington Primary School

PSA invites you for our annual quiz night on Friday 27th February 7:15pm - 9:30pm



## QUIZ NIGHT

Pre-book your team of up to 6 members by Friday 20th Feb using the QR code or <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/QO594WGN>

Entry cost is £5 per person.

Bar Opens 7:15pm

Quiz Runs from 7:30-9:30pm

Bring your own snacks



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### Sunday School

Current topic: How Joseph saved his family.

Sessions held every Sunday during term time from 12.10pm - 1.00pm for ages 5 - 11 years.

Learn about the main events in the Bible and the key people, what they did and what happened to them.

Discussions, Bible study, quizzes, puzzle sheets and craft activities.

You are very welcome to join us.

For further details, please contact the Chapel:  
[enquiry@oakingtonbaptist.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@oakingtonbaptist.org.uk) or 07821 914477  
Safeguarding policy, pre-employment checks and DBS checks for staff, qualified first aiders on site.

## Clubs and Groups

### 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.

### Sustainable Oakington & Westwick

We ended last year with a very enjoyable wreath-making workshop, making sustainable Christmas creations, every one unique. Our first meeting of 2026 was another workshop, this time discussing “green” New Year’s resolutions for ourselves and the local and national community. Ideas included: eat more vegan food, support



national eco organisations, reduce snack plastic waste, wear jumpers at home, buy from charity shops, consider food boxes from local suppliers, be aware of the environmental impact of AI, move money to a more sustainable bank, “make my school get multiple bins!”

SOW’s next event is the Repair Cafe (see page 3). Our next monthly sessions are on Wednesdays **11 February** and **11 March**. Details will be posted on the website. We also look forward to seeing how the bulbs planted in the pollinator-friendly verges come up this spring!

*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 second Wednesday in the month.

[sustainableow@gmail.com](mailto:sustainableow@gmail.com) / [sustainableow.co.uk](http://sustainableow.co.uk)

### 1<sup>st</sup> Oakington Beavers

2026 is Beavers’ 40th Birthday year and we’re looking forward to celebrating later in the year. At Christmas we said goodbye to our oldest Beavers as they moved up to Cubs, and have welcomed in a new group of Beavers. We are looking forward to another term full of fun, including a hike, sleepover, Morris dancing, learning about global issues and contributing to our local community by collecting for the food bank.

We’re currently at capacity, but if your child is interested in joining Beavers in the future, please get in touch.

*Kathryn Bigg*



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

For more info: [Nikki.Henrywood@oakingtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:Nikki.Henrywood@oakingtonscouts.org.uk).

### 1<sup>st</sup> Oakington Squirrels

We’ve spent the dark months thinking about space, what makes us feel good and things to celebrate. We’ve done some great turn taking and helping each other and even joined the Oakington Scouting Christmas Concert for the first time to sing with Beavers.



As part of Scouts, being helpful is central to our philosophy so the Squirrels looked at ways to help out at home, doing five good turns over Christmas. We also set ourselves personal challenges including becoming more independent, helping around the house, feeding pets, and even climbing a volcano! Our Squirrels all rose to their challenges and we are so proud of them.

We are currently full, but to join our waiting list or if you would be interested in helping with a group of amazing 4–6-year-olds, please contact [nikki@oakingtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:nikki@oakingtonscouts.org.uk)

*Nikki Henrywood*



Squirrels (aged 4–6) meet 5pm on term-time Thursdays at Oakington Primary school. If you are interested in joining our waiting list or knowing more, please email [nikki.henrywood@oakingtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:nikki.henrywood@oakingtonscouts.org.uk)

### 1<sup>st</sup> Oakington Scout Group

The scout group is looking ahead to Easter already. Every year, we join other Crafts Hill Scout troops on Easter Camp for a busy weekend of adventuring outdoors. This camp gives the scouts more opportunities to practise independent skills including fire lighting and cooking their own meals, as well as a whole host of scouting activities like hikes, archery and bushcrafts. It can be quite a big step up for the newer and younger members but our more ‘seasoned pros’ are always happy to share their years of carefully gathered knowledge with the first-timers. We are really pleased to have had funding from both Tesco’s and Harry’s Legacy to help us renew our camping equipment for the whole group and this camp will be a wonderful opportunity to put it to use and to create great life experiences for the young people taking part.

The scouts currently have a small number of spaces for 11–14-year-olds interested in joining. Get in touch with us to find out more. We also welcome people interested in volunteering – both at sessions or behind the scenes on our committee – so do get in touch.

*Cara Hanman*



Scouts (11–14) meet 6–7:30 pm on Fridays at the Pavilion. For more details contact Cara: [cara.hanman@oakingtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:cara.hanman@oakingtonscouts.org.uk)

## Clubs and Groups

### Oakington & Westwick Tennis Club

#### New committee members needed!

The Tennis Club AGM is coming up in February (date TBC) and we're in need of a couple of volunteers to join our small but friendly committee. Being on the committee is not an arduous task as the club is a very simply-run affair. Please do consider how you could help, especially if you have been a member of the club for some years.

If you'd like some more information, please email [oakingtontc@gmail.com](mailto:oakingtontc@gmail.com) and we'll be happy to talk through what being on the committee entails.

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](mailto:oakingtontc@gmail.com).

### 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. More info: Gillian L'Angellier – 01223 234758.

### Tuesday Talk & Tea

We meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 2.45 – 4.45pm in St Andrews Church Hall. We normally have a talk, demonstration or activity, followed by a tea which includes sandwiches, scones and home-made cake.

At the January meeting we had a selection of table games in which we all took part.

**10 February** will take a rather different form. We are hosting 'Coffee with a Cop' which is open to anyone wishing to raise matters and questions to the one or two policemen who are coming to discuss their work in the community. We will be offering tea and coffee with a selection of cake and scones to those attending.

**10 March** – Jacqui Taylor will be giving a demonstration of card making.

14 April – Elaine Bailey is giving a talk entitled 'The eight most wasted foods and what we can do with them'. She will include some tasters and useful hand-outs.

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 / [mariancleaver@gmail.com](mailto:mariancleaver@gmail.com).

### Messy Church



Held on the second Saturday of the month, 3–5pm at St Andrew's church hall. All families welcome. Messy Church is doing church differently: a chance for the whole family to spend time together, enjoying craft activities, eating together, celebrating and sharing the gift of God's love. For any further information, contact Cate: [catelambert@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:catelambert@hotmail.co.uk) or 07533 152519.

### Oakington Vikings



Our Teams and Contacts  
First Team Winston & James 07834 465188  
Under 15s & Welfare officer  
Winston 07968 716290  
[www.facebook.com/OakingtonVikingsFC](http://www.facebook.com/OakingtonVikingsFC)

### Country Dance Club

Jane and I look forward to seeing you at the next two country dates: **13 February** and **13 March**. Country dancing is a super way of keeping fit as well as meeting new friends. All the dances are called and we have excellent musicians to dance to. You can also just come along and listen to the music, if you so wish. See you there.

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.



### Help with Paying Water Bills

Cambridge Water have several schemes to help lower income households.

The Assure tariff entitles households with an income less than £22,011 (increasing by £1,500 with each child) to discounts on their water bills. The Assure Assist tariff is for if you have no current household income and entitles you to a 100% discount for up to eight weeks. Importantly, many benefits are not counted when working out your income for these tariffs.

To find out more about both go to [cambridge-water.co.uk](http://cambridge-water.co.uk) and search for "help with paying".

The Charitable Trust fund at [www.sswct.org](http://www.sswct.org) can help you clear water bill arrears. Finally, Water Sure can help large families or those with medical conditions, who are receiving benefits but are on a meter, to fix their costs.

Also, especially at this time of year – make sure you know where your stop tap is!

Editors (reader's suggestion)



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## Clubs and Groups

### Why I love ... Book Club

I enjoy Book Club as it provides the opportunity to read books that challenge and might not be on my personal reading list, and to hear other folks' opinions and views that are often diverse.

Angela

A local reading group is so important in a village – it's about being in a community and wanting to be part of that community. Meeting others, being curious about the books and authors is crucial but that's not all – as quoted by Brian Solis, "Community is more than belonging to something; it's about doing something together that makes belonging matter."

Maria

I love Book Club as it's an opportunity to share a passion for reading with others in the community, and to be challenged to read books I wouldn't typically choose.

Natalie



I really enjoy Book Club. Attending a book club gives you the chance to share meaningful stories. For me it is not just about reading a book, it's about hearing new perspectives and having conversations that spark new ideas that inspire us to think outside the box.

Mel

Contact [nataliewant@hotmail.com](mailto:nataliewant@hotmail.com) if you'd like to join!

### Oakington Singers

How lovely it was to have had so many opportunities to sing beautiful carol arrangements in 2025! Our run-up to Christmas was especially busy and it was a nice for our choir to feel so much in demand. We provided the musical entertainment for the residents' Christmas party at Abbeyfield in Girton, for Girton Golf Club's Christmas dinner and for the Cambridge WI Federation's Christmas brunch celebration. We were also invited to sing at two Christmas shopping events, firstly at Oakington Garden

Centre (see photo) and then at Frank's Farm in Elsworth. We also staged our first ever solo Christmas concert at St Andrew's Church, Oakington, to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. All this in addition to our annual tradition of leading the Christmas singing, also at St Andrew's, for the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany services.

We are delighted to be welcoming a couple of new members



to swell the ranks this term, some of whom joined us for a rather enjoyable social meal and AGM at the White Horse last month. Have you thought about giving us a try?

**Come and Sing!** We are a four-part community choir and our youngest member is just 22. We would love to share the pleasure we get from singing with more people. You do not need to be able to read music as tunes can be easily learnt by ear. We like to think that there's something for everyone in our repertoire, from very modern through to quite traditional.

Feel free to contact Helen Williams, 01223 232614, or just turn up to for our Monday rehearsal. We are confident that, however tired you may feel, you will come away rejuvenated and set up for the week. How do we know? It's something our members so frequently say at the end of our rehearsal.

Helen Williams



We are a four-part community 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 01223 232614 / [helenwilliams5@outlook.com](mailto:helenwilliams5@outlook.com) or just drop in.



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**'The things in soil are too small to care about and climate change is too large to imagine.'**

This quote is from Helen MacDonald, a Cambridge professor, from her award-winning book, '*H is for Hawk*.' It's about training a goshawk, one of the biggest and most powerful birds of prey. Even as a child she was determined to become a falconer. She also hoped that the training would help her deal with her father's death and the book also covers the complicated relationship man has with nature.

She writes that humans have problems understanding time and scale. There is plenty of survey evidence that we in the UK like our wildlife to be of a decent size (and pretty). That's why we like deer, red squirrels, otters, badgers, kingfishers and barn owls: so microscopic soil fauna and flora don't stand much of a chance in the popularity stakes. In practice, the number of species below the soil far outnumber that above ground level. Without soil we would have no plants or animals above the ground. Soil was formed billions of years ago when the very first plants and fungi, which were clinging to rocks near water, started to decompose. From then on, plants started to grow at scale, paving the way to today's green planet.

But industrial farming is starting to put soil at risk and it's estimated that over 30% of the world's topsoil has been lost in the last century. To stop this loss, we must try to



understand what makes up soil, to take care of it and especially to retain its organic content. Apart from being vital for all food and ecosystems on the planet, the soil is a massive store of carbon, having a huge influence on our climate.

Are we really too small-minded to understand the long-term significance of climate change? Research suggests we can move out of the way of a fast-moving ball, but we have trouble dealing with long-term aspects of life. Climate change is one of those aspects.

Additionally, we have trouble understanding the complexity of climate science. It involves chemistry, physics, economics, social science, geography, earth science, meteorology, data analysis as well as challenging language. Furthermore, we have to deal with the climate change doubters, many of whom have an axe to grind about reducing carbon use. They may be keen to continue the use of fossil fuels for financial or political reasons. Their arguments may not be persuasive but they can put doubt in our minds, just as tobacco companies did years ago about the relationship between smoking and lung cancer.

So top marks to people in Oakington who have embraced ways of reducing our carbon footprint, by opting for solar panels, electric/hybrid vehicles, air heat pumps, ground source heating and better insulation of their homes. Clearly, you are able to think long-term.

A film, based on Helen MacDonald's book, is about to be released in cinemas. It too is called '*H is for Hawk*'.

*John Terry*

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## Hobbies

### Video Game Review

Hobby games are titles designed for long-term engagement, often appealing to players who enjoy investing time and creativity into their gaming experience, playing for a few hours every day. Unlike casual games, hobby games typically feature deep mechanics, expansive worlds, and communities that encourage ongoing participation.

Some of the most popular hobby games include **Minecraft**, **The Sims**, **Stardew Valley**, and **Animal Crossing**. These games allow players to build, customise, and explore at their own pace, fostering creativity and personal expression. Multiplayer titles like **World of Warcraft**, **Fortnite** and **Roblox** also fall into this category, offering social interaction alongside competitive gameplay.

Their popularity stems from the creativity, replayability and community the games encourage. Players can set their own goals, whether it's designing a virtual home, farming crops, or competing in online battles. Frequent updates and active communities keep these games fresh and engaging, creating a sense of belonging and accomplishment. Most players enjoy talking with their friends whilst playing the game, making it a social occasion.

While hobby games are rewarding, there is the possibility of risk. Excessive play can lead to time management issues, impacting work, school, or relationships. Some include in-game purchases, which can encourage overspending. If you enter your card details to make a purchase, ensure they are not saved; that should prevent accidental purchases later on. Some children have spent thousands on their parents' credit cards in these games. Additionally, online communities may expose players to toxic behaviour or cyberbullying; much like social media. However, when people engage with them in a healthy, balanced way, they are great fun, teach creativity and problem solving, as well as giving people a way to connect with their friends.

Ming Tregonning

This is the last of our video game reviews from Ming Tregonning, who works as a lead video games project engineer at Splash Damage in Bromley. If you, or someone in your family has a favourite game, video or board game, why not write in and tell us about it?

[oakwestjournal@gmail.com](mailto:oakwestjournal@gmail.com)

### Allotment Society

Oakington Allotment Society are delighted to have been awarded a grant of £4,500 by South Cambs to be used for rainwater collection and storage. There has never been a communal water supply for allotment use on site so after two very dry and hot summers it will be very welcome.

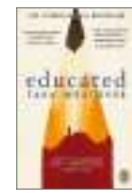


The parish allotments on Cambridge Road are privately owned and managed by an Allotments Committee. There is currently a waiting list for plots. Contact [ann.rayner42@icloud.com](mailto:ann.rayner42@icloud.com) for more information.

Ann Rayner

### Book Club

**'Educated'** by Tara Westover



This is a powerful memoir about growing up in rural Idaho, in an ideological straitjacket. Tara had no formal schooling, doctors, or even a birth certificate — her survivalist parents kept her off grid, working in a dangerous scrapyard and relying on herbal remedies. She was seventeen before she stepped into a classroom. What follows is her extraordinary journey from isolated life to earning a PhD from Cambridge University and becoming an academic.

It's not just about academic triumph, this is a deeply human account of family loyalty, abuse, and the cost of self-discovery. Westover writes with quiet strength, never sensationalising the trauma, but not softening it either. It's inspiring and heartbreak — education opens doors for Tara, but it also pulls her away from the world she knew.

A thought-provoking examination of what an education really is, and was enjoyed by the book club. If you'd like to join us we are discussing '**'Raising Hare'**', a memoir by Chloe Dalton, on Wednesday 25 February at 7:30pm in the White Horse, all welcome.

Walter

Contact [nataliewant@hotmail.com](mailto:nataliewant@hotmail.com) for further info.

### Gardening Notes

**February:** Cut back old leaves on hellebores to expose their beautiful flowers and prevent disease. Enjoy the first snowdrops and **aconites**. Ornamental grasses can be cut down before new growth starts. Prune bush and shrub roses by removing dead, diseased or damaged branches. Cut out old and leggy growth and reduce the rest by a third. Late flowering clematis can now be cut back to a pair of buds about 30cm from the ground.

Sow tomatoes, chillies and peppers, which all need a long growing season, and keep them somewhere warm. Autumn fruiting raspberries can be cut to the ground now. They will fruit on the new season's growth. Chit seed potatoes in a light, cool place for about six weeks before planting out.

**March:** A good time to divide perennials like hemerocallis, phlox and helianthus by digging up a clump, dividing and re-planting. Deadhead bulbs but leave the leaves to die back naturally to feed the bulbs for next year. Pinch out sweet peas to make bushier plants. Pot up dahlia tubers and leave somewhere frost-free until growth appears.

Once the weeds start to grow it is safe to direct sow broad beans, carrots, parsnips, beetroot and peas. Hardy annual flower seeds can also be sown. Courgettes, cucumber and sweetcorn can be started off in the greenhouse. Onion sets can be planted but protect with net to stop the birds pulling them out. First early potatoes can go in towards the end of the month but be prepared to earth up if frost is forecast.

Here's to a successful gardening year!

Ann and Peter Rayner



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## Orchards & Over Day Centre

### OCOP Team's Biodiversity Plans.

As you may have noticed (or possibly not!) the Oakington Community Orchards (OCOP) Team have been trying to establish wildflowers, mainly in the Recreation ground orchard, to increase biodiversity. We have counted over 30 different wildflower species in the Mill Road orchard and more than 40 at the Recreation ground orchard across the course of the summer. Unfortunately they are rather sparsely distributed and so don't make a colourful display. Along with the flowers we are seeing a wider range of insects, with butterflies particularly attracted to the Creeping Thistles.



We were excited to spot a 22-spot ladybird, and not quite so excited to spot a large number of harlequin ladybirds, also known as Asian lady beetles. These were introduced from Japan in 2004 and come in a wide range of colours. They particularly like our warm homes during the winter, as you may have noticed.



In order to promote the growth of the wildflowers we need to reduce the nutrients in the soil; we do this by raking off the grass (and any leaves) after winter mowing. If you would like to help us with this project and/or have any ideas for further promoting the wildflower area please contact us. Email: Oakington Community Orchards Team (OCOP) at [oakcomorchards@gmail.com](mailto:oakcomorchards@gmail.com) or phone Graham on 01223 233208 and leave your details.

*Graham Tregonning*



### Over Day Centre

**Providing day care for older people for 36 years**



The centre provides professional care and a place for older people to socialise. Open Monday to Friday, from 9.30 till 3.00, activities are provided by staff and professional entertainers throughout the day. Activities include: live music, crafts, quizzes, chair-based exercises, gardening, animal visits, tabletop games, bingo... and more! There are also day trips to farms, museums and tea-rooms, as well as an annual picnic on board a narrowboat.

A freshly cooked two-course lunch is served daily, along with hot and cold refreshments in the morning and afternoon.

The centre has a salon, a visiting podiatrist, and an assisted bathing facility to allow clients to enjoy a warm soak. A garden, designed with accessibility in mind, has raised beds and ample seating.

We offer a **FREE minibus service** for residents of Oakington and Westwick to and from Over Day Centre. Anyone wishing to join us is also offered a **FREE 'taster day'** to see if they would like to join us.

For more information and daily rates, call 01954 231807, or email [lead.care@overdaycentre.co.uk](mailto:lead.care@overdaycentre.co.uk)

*Halina Szulakowska, Administrator*

*Centre Manager: Hayley Smith*



### Wassail 2026

*About 120 people from Oakington & Westwick and beyond enjoyed music, dance and tradition at the Orchard Wassail on 17 January.*

### Tandems, Camels and Accordions: Tales from a Long Life

One of Oakington's village elders must surely be 95-year-old Mike Scrivener.

Mike has recently been sharing some fascinating stories from his long journey over cups of tea at the Crossroads.

Mike was in the second ever intake at Impington Village College, in 1941 when he was 11 years old. As a kid, Mike had a job working for the greengrocers at the bottom of Castle Hill in Cambridge, where he would take a bike around the colleges delivering fruit and vegetables. Mike also played football for both Oakington and Histon.

In the summer of 1948, 18-year-old Mike and his 16-year-old brother David set off on a tandem bike to go and see England vs Australia in Leeds via visiting Granny in Sheffield, staying in youth hostels along the way. Having watched the game, they decided that rather than cycling straight back they would detour via Wales, Chester, Betws-y-Coed and Dolgellau. The last stretch of their two-week journey was Stratford-upon-Avon, where Mike remembers soaking his feet in the river.

Mike played piano accordion in the Ron Maze band as a teenager. They used to practise in the Rose and Crown pub in Histon, and played at Impington Village College every Thursday evening for a dance class which would be full of 50 to 60 young people dancing to music such as St Bernard's Waltz and Velella. For this Mike would earn £1 – a welcome addition to the seventeen shillings a week he was earning as an apprentice dental technician.

In 1952 Mike joined the RAF police to do his compulsory military National Service, and did his basic training in Hereford and then Neverhaven. He was top of his group and was therefore chosen to be in the Provost Police 4 district, which covered Felixstowe, Peterborough and Stevenage. This was a prestigious role which involved providing security for assets, people and information.

In 1953 Mike married Joyce in St Michael's, the thirteenth-century thatched church in Longstanton which has barely changed to this day.



When Mike left the RAF in 1955, he went to work for the Corona drinks factory on the Newmarket Road as a salesman. He had a round of regular customers and would go door to door doing domestic sales of orangeade, cream soda, dandelion and burdock, ginger ale and squash. He did well enough that he was made inspector-in-charge of six rounds.

After four years, Mike's old boss asked him to go back to being a dental technician, a career which saw him take contracts all over the world for the next 34 years, living in Germany, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Libya and Riyadh. The latter allowed him to indulge his passion for scuba diving when he would do a 320-mile round drive from Taif to Jeddah,

clocking up 148 registered dives. You would have to be careful not to hit a big lizard or a camel on the roads, not least because there was no such thing as a wild camel; they all belonged to someone and you didn't want to have to pay a fine to the local chief.

In between times, Mike worked as a postman, developed several properties including seven houses in Longstanton, owned part shares in a racehorse and learned to fly in a Piper Cherokee in the USA. Oh, and he met Queen Elizabeth II whilst he was recovering from a serious accident in Addenbrookes. Until very recently Mike was still driving a car but his pride and joy when he was younger was his Vincent Rapide 1000cc motorbike which had a sidecar for his wife Joyce and their young child!

When Mike finally retired in the late 1980s, his retirement lasted just nine months before he got fed up and needed the structure of a job. He started working at the Royal Mail sorting office on Mill Road, getting the mail off the trains, sorting it and putting it on other trains to go back out. He upset the unions as this was a privilege job and he'd only been working there six weeks but he got it because, courtesy of his days at Corona, he had a licence to drive an electric vehicle which no one else did.

So next time you see Mike on his daily walk down to the village shop to get his paper, stop and say hello. You'll recognise him from his 'Not everyone looks this good at 95' cap. As he's about to turn 96, maybe it's time for a new one?

Diane Waldron



Mike at St Michael's

### Old Oakington Recipes

Here are another two extracts from the collection of Doris Nicholas, who was born in Oakington in 1901 and lived here all her life. The first is not so much a recipe as a shopping list for a “Primrose Tea” – a village celebration to welcome the Spring. The whole village must have been expected, judging by the quantities!

#### Receipt for Primrose Tea, February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1912

21 ¾ boneless ham

2 ½ teas

½ stone lump sugar

30 lbs cake

7 lbs butter

1 ½ gall milk

The cake would, of course, very likely have been Oakington Cake, for which ingredients but no method is given:

#### Oakington Cake

2 ½ flour. 1 pkt Norfolk baking powder. 1 ¼ butter & lard. 2 currants. Peel. 3 eggs. 1 ½ sugar. Cup of brandy.



In later years the Primrose Tea would likely have been held in the WI Hut. One of the Government surplus buildings sold after the 1914-1918 War, this was erected in 1931 on Water Lane where the Arcadia Gardens entrance now is, on a field belonging to Doris's family.

### Where Was This?



The photo in the last Journal, from Ralph Warboys's *History of Oakington* collection, was the High St Bakery in the early 1900s. This is how it is today. That was an easy one, right?



*The WI in the 1950s. Doris sits front centre (with her legs crossed). The small boy is Dick Barker!*

Doris and her husband John, like many others at the time, had a terrible struggle in the 1930s trying to make ends meet. To supplement their income from their dairy farm they grew pyrethrums for Covent Garden, which were taken by train from Oakington to London. Their granddaughter Lillon remembers that Oakington Station was well used because of its proximity to the Cottenham orchards. It won prizes for its appearance because the hedge by the Cambridge platform (the one that still exists) was clipped with the word “OAKINGTON”!

*Jenny Prince & Lillon Harrison*

This next one will be a real challenge. It was taken in the 1930s, but from where?





## Oakington & Westwick Christmas 2025

