

Link

The background of the magazine cover is a photograph of a large, multi-story stone building, likely a church or manor house, with a prominent tower. The building is partially obscured by trees with yellow autumn leaves in the foreground. The sky is a clear blue.

December 2025

Oakley, Deane, Newfound, Malshanger and
Wootton St Lawrence Community Magazine

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communities

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Link Magazine exists to be of service to the communities of Oakley, Deane, Newfound, Malshanger and Wootton St Lawrence. The sentiments expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial team. The editors take no responsibility for the accuracy of the contents of submissions.

With the exception of trade ads all other items for publication may be made free of charge. Please submit articles by the date given below for publication the month following. The **Link** editors reserve the right to decline or edit any contributions.

Link web-site oakleylink.org.uk

Please e-mail copy to: editor@oakleylink.org.uk

or post to 8 Caithness Close, Oakley, RG23 7NG

Deadline for 2025 issue: 8 December

Editorial

Happy Christmas to all our readers!

You will find details of all church services in the run up to Christmas on our centre pages, 20, 21 and 22.

Link would like to thank Deepak Mohan for his contributions to producing Link to a high quality over the last 5 years. He has decided that it is time to step down from the Link Editorial Team.

Please note that there is an early deadline for January Link because of Christmas closure at our printer's.

Chris Wassell

Thank you, Graeme Hewitt, for your cover photo of Oakley Church taken in November 2025



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Oakley Community Care

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New volunteer drivers always welcome

Please give us a call, we may be able to make life easier for you.

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Oakley Community Care is a Registered Charity (No. 1141310)

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A red van is parked on a light-colored surface in the foreground. In the background, there is a stylized city skyline with several buildings, including a prominent tall, thin tower with a pointed top. The sky is a light blue gradient.

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OAKLEY & DEANE PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCILLORS CHAT – COME SAY HELLO!

Tuesday 2 December
1 pm – 2 pm
The Barley Mow

We want to hear from YOU!
Whether it's ideas, suggestions, concerns, or questions — come
along and have a friendly chat with your Parish Councillors.

- Talk to us about what matters to you!
 - ✓ Local improvements
 - ✓ Community events
 - ✓ Village issues
 - ✓ Your ideas for Oakley & Deane

TOPS
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PRESENTS

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Friday 5 December 7.30pm
Saturday 6 December 2.30pm and 7.30pm
Evening only: Bring your own drink
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Ticket £2 (incl. wine £3)
Oakley Village Square
For information email: info@oakleypantomimesociety.co.uk

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BOOK YOUR CHRISTMAS WITH US

As we head into our favourite time of the year with family and friends full of cheer, we're setting up our festive menu from the 20th November - 2nd December as well as our sumptuous three-course Christmas Day menu.

We also have space for private functions joined with our Christmas buffet menu making the perfect party occasion here at The Barley Mow. Whether you're after our one and three course festive menu or our buffet menu perfect for adding on, we've got your Christmas covered.

For more information and to make a booking please visit our website or give us a call on 01256 808 454.

See our menu at: www.barleymow.co.uk/event/christmas/





Report from the Parish Council

The Parish Council would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us for the Remembrance Service on Sunday 9 November. Your presence and participation, whether in quiet reflection or active contribution, created a meaningful and respectful tribute to those who have served and sacrificed for our country.

We're delighted to share that the Pump Track is now complete. It's been wonderful to see so many people already enjoying the new facility, and we appreciate your patience during its construction, it was certainly worth the wait!

Looking ahead to Christmas, we warmly invite residents to Carols at the Pond on Saturday 20 December, starting at 6 pm at the village pond. This much-loved village tradition brings our community together in song and celebration, and we are honoured that The Worshipful the Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane, Councillor Colin Phillimore, will be joining us. Donations collected on the night will



support local groups and organisations.

Our Christmas tree will be installed at the pond on 2 December, kindly donated—as tradition—by the Malshanger Estate. The lights will come on daily at around 3 pm, just in time for the school run, and switch off at 11 pm each night.

We're also pleased to share that we currently have some available allotment plots. If you're interested in taking one on, please contact the Clerk for further information.

Finally, all Councillor vacancies have now been filled, giving us a full complement of 13 seats on the Parish Council. We warmly welcome our new members and look forward to continuing to serve our community in the year ahead. If anyone is still keen to support councillor projects in any way, please do get in touch.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas.

Kelly Green – Assistant clerk



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Pause For Thought



Thought for the Day

Here we are in December, and this is the time of the year when most people get busy preparing for Christmas, anticipating yearly traditions and celebrations and some colour in the darkest month of the year.

It's also a busy time for churches because there are a number of additional worship services such as Carol and Christingle services, Midnight Mass, etc. and many extra people who like to attend. However, what I've discovered quite recently is that church attendance is growing all year round!

Some research was carried out by the Bible Society (www.biblesociety.org) across the country. Between 2018 and 2024 attendance (at least once a month) increased by 50%, and the research was given the title "the quiet revival".

The research covers all age groups, and what is noticeable is that the growth is significant, particularly among young adults and those of retirement age. In my own church there are signs of this. They are also expressing interest in finding out more about the Bible.

So what is going on since, generally speaking, church membership and attendance have been in decline since the early 20th century? Is it to do with the Covid pandemic, the state of the world, environmental challenges?

I don't know, but I do know that Jesus is "the reason for the season"! He is the focal point of church worship and the Bible, and would love each one of us to discover that he is our Saviour, and that he is the Saviour of the world.

Derrick Norton

Feature



Christmas Comes to Oakley

*

Christmas comes to Oakley; it happens every year.
So come on, fellow villagers, let's all be of good cheer.

The world outside's not always great, but let's forget our fear.

Christmas comes to Oakley. I think I'll have a beer.

*

Santa comes to Oakley; he travels through the streets,
And gives a Christmas wave to all the children that he meets,
Accompanied by helpful elves all bouncing in their seats.

Santa comes to Oakley. I hope he gives out treats.
There is a glow in Oakley, from every Christmas light.

All the homes look lovely, shining in the night.

Some of them, especially, will fill you with delight.

There is a glow in Oakley, and everything's all right.

*

At Christmas time in Oakley, not everyone is glad.

Some folks are feeling lonely, some folks are feeling sad.

Let's show our fellow villagers there's comfort to be had.

At Christmas time in Oakley, they needn't feel so bad.



Dave Miles

Feature



A message from Hampshire Harmony

Do you like to sing?

Do you know that singing is good for you? It can reduce stress, improve lung function, and boost mood by releasing feel-good chemicals like endorphins and dopamine. Singing in groups fosters social connections and promotes well-being. Recent research suggests that group singing can even reduce symptoms of postnatal depression, providing both emotional support and a sense of community.



Two members of Hampshire Harmony, Susan Booth and Margaret Allen, are proof that singing works for happiness friendship and

health. When Susan and Margaret joined our choir in October 1970, like some of our current members, they were young mums looking for a weekly opportunity to leave cares and worries behind and have an evening of joy and of just being themselves. And 55 years later, they are still firm friends, singing well and taking on responsibilities.

Our fabulous MD, Clare Oliver, said, "Margaret and

Susan are living proof of the benefits of singing. Their voices are still amazing, and they still perform and learn new repertoire, all from memory. They are a true inspiration to us all, and we are so proud to have them still singing with us, with their wealth of experience and knowledge."

If you're interested in finding out if singing is for you, book a place at our new year Open Evening on 5 January 5 via our website hampshireharmony.org There will be an opportunity to hear the choir before then, at the Mayor's Carol Service 6 pm on 6 December at St Michael's Church, Basingstoke. We look forward to meeting you.

Margaret Allen, Publicity Team, Hampshire Harmony Choir

The photograph below was taken in the 1970's and the uniforms were dark blue with light blue blouses and matching satin shoes! The uniforms have changed many times over the years!



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Feature

Age Concern Hampshire launches Christmas campaign to support older people during winter

Age Concern Hampshire is launching its annual Christmas campaign, *Past, Present and Future*, to support older people through the challenges of the winter season. This year's campaign shines a spotlight on three key issues that can have a serious impact on later life: winter pressures, falls, and isolation and loneliness. By raising awareness of these challenges, the charity also hopes to generate vital funds and attract new volunteers, helping to secure the longevity of its essential services across the county.

Winter can be a particularly difficult time for older people. Age Concern Hampshire is addressing these winter pressures by helping residents to access essential financial support and providing guidance with form-filling through its Information Service. This includes assistance with benefit applications that can help with heating and fuel costs. By removing these barriers, the charity ensures that older people receive the support they need to stay safe and well during the colder months.

Fall prevention is another crucial focus. Through its Care and Wellbeing Centres and Foot Care clinics, Age Concern Hampshire helps older people maintain mobility, manage foot health and reduce the risk of accidents. These services not only protect physical

wellbeing but also contribute to independence and confidence at home.

The campaign also tackles isolation and loneliness, which can intensify during the Christmas season. Support is available at the charity's Care and Wellbeing Centres, or through assistance in the home via the Help at Home service. In addition, practical support and social groups help older people to stay connected, engaged and supported throughout the winter.

Volunteers are central to Age Concern Hampshire's work all year round. From offering companionship to supporting practical services in centres, their dedication ensures that older people in Hampshire receive care, connection and independence. Anyone interested in giving their time can find out more by visiting: ageconcernhampshire.org.uk/volunteer-hampshire/give-time-by-volunteering.

The charity is also inviting donations from individuals and corporate supporters. Every contribution, big or small, helps fund essential services and allows Age Concern Hampshire to respond flexibly to the evolving needs of older people across the county. To support the Christmas campaign and make a donation, please visit justgiving.com/campaign/ach40.

Sarah Jacobs

Feature

 **Read Easy Basingstoke**

*With the Christmas term at last in sight!
Things could hardly be better!
Reading can be fun for some adults.*

It's a startling fact that more than 2.4 million adults in England can barely read or cannot read at all. Read Easy UK was set up in 2011 to tackle this problem and now has over 80 volunteer-led groups across the country. Since our Basingstoke group formed in 2019, we have enrolled 75 readers onto our free, one-to-one coaching programme, of which 43% successfully graduated or made significant progress. Our reader ambassador has been busy promoting our work through interviews with the BBC and local radio and has also met our local MP. Thanks to her nomination, Basingstoke Read Easy won the Community Project Award at the *A Place to Be Proud Of* event in June 2025. She said, "It took me

two years working with my Read Easy coach and now I no longer feel embarrassed that I have dyslexia and found learning to read difficult."

Feedback shows that improved reading can transform lives.

We have a small, enthusiastic team working to support our coaches and reach out to potential readers who could use our help. We would love to get more people on board to add their ideas and talents to our group.

Could you offer your skills as our Publicity Organiser, liaising with local and social media? If networking is your thing, we are also looking for a Referrals Networker to seek reader referrals from local agencies and organisations.

So, if you're keen for a new challenge in the New Year, please contact us at basingstokerecruiter@readeasy.org.uk for details of how you can help change lives for the better or find out more at readeasy.org/groups/basingstoke/

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Fund Raising

Celebration of Christmas in aid of the Hampshire Medical Fund

12 December at 7:30 pm, Winchester Cathedral

The *Celebration of Christmas* concert is taking place at Winchester Cathedral on Friday 12 December. It is a magical evening of readings, carols and beautiful music raising money for local charity, the Hampshire Medical Fund, which funds cutting-edge medical equipment at our local NHS hospitals. Tickets cost from £20.

Visit www.hampshiremedicalfund.org/events for more information or tickets.

Jo McGivern

Health Matters



A big thank you to our Patient Participation Group (PPG) members for supporting us with the flu/covid clinics this autumn. Thanks to the dedication of the practice staff, we have been able to offer a comprehensive weekend programme of additional appointments for flu and covid vaccinations alongside our community clinics.

Adult Flu and Covid Vaccination Programmes

If you have not had a flu vaccination, are over 65, or have been invited due to an underlying health condition, please call the practice and book an appointment. The flu vaccination programme will end on the 31 March 2026 (as long as supplies are available), whilst the covid vaccination programme will close on the 31 January 2026.

Covid vaccinations can still be booked through the National Booking Service: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/covid-19-services/covid-19-vaccination-services/book-covid-19-vaccination/> or telephone 119.

Child Flu

Our surgeries continue to vaccinate eligible children who are aged 2 – 3 yrs or 4 – 17 yrs with an underlying health condition. Any children who missed their flu vaccination in school will need to contact the School Health Service.

Contacting the Watership Down Health practices:

1) Walk Ins – We have 3 sites at Kingsclere, Overton and Oakley with opening times displayed on our front doors and our website. Kingsclere and Overton are open from 08:00 to 18:30 hrs Monday to



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2) Main telephone number – 0333 034 1033. If you prefer to use of our 'Call Back' service, please make sure that you remain available for the receptionist's call. Please use this number for all urgent matters.

3) Website – Our website is available at: <https://watershipdownhealth.com/> where you can submit an e-consult request as well as find advice, guidance and help. We also have a Facebook and Instagram page where you can find information on changes in opening times, temporary closures and health advice.

4) Generic Email address: The following website link is helpful if our dedicated page is paused for maintenance: hiowicb-hsi.watershipdownhealth.com

Christmas and New Year Opening Times:

Monday 22 to Wednesday 24 December – Open
Thursday 25 (Bank Holiday) to Sunday 28

December - Closed

Monday 29 to- Wednesday 31 December – Open



Thursday 1 January 2026 (Bank Holiday) – Closed

Friday 2 January 2026 – Open

Medication Requests over the Holiday Season

As the holiday season can be a very busy time for the practice, do submit your medication requests and repeat prescriptions as soon as possible. The easiest way to do this is via the NHS App or via our website at: <https://watershipdownhealth.com/services/managing-your-health-online/online-forms/repeat-prescription-request/>

You can also contact the PPG if you need help with the NHS App. They can put you in touch with the person best placed to help you with getting the most out of the app.

When the practice is closed, please call NHS 111 for advice. The practice will display the Christmas and New Year Community Pharmacy rota and opening times on our website and main front doors of each practice once received.

From All Our GP Partners, Doctors, and Team, we wish all our Patients and their Families a Very Happy and Festive Christmas and New Year.

Coeliac UK North Hampshire Group Travel Guides

It's that time of the year when we start to think about next year's holidays. Coeliac UK has produced guides to a number of different countries to help you prepare for your visit and to make life easier so you can relax during your stay.

Each guide includes information on gluten-free products and venues (if available), useful phrases in the local language so you can tell people about your dietary requirements and details about the levels of awareness of coeliac disease and gluten-free in the country you're visiting. Also contact details for the local coeliac disease organisation (if there is one) and which dishes in the local cuisine you should be avoiding.

Christmas Meal

We are returning to the BCOT Restaurant, Worting Road, Basingstoke RG21 8TN on the evening of 4 December. A three-course meal served entirely gluten-free will be served.

Next meet-up

There will not be a meet-up in December.

Contacts

To contact the Local North Hants Group, please email northhampshire@coeliac.org.uk

Join our Facebook page Coeliac UK North Hampshire Local Group, or see our events on the North Hampshire Coeliac UK website page www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/north-hampshire

North Hampshire Prostate Cancer Support Group October Meeting

Antiques - either appreciated (normally by the older generation) or ignored (by the younger)! The group were privileged to have Alan Stone from Squirrel Antiques, who came with two of his team to head up the group's monthly meeting with their lively and fascinating presentation.

Alan started by giving a bit of background and history to the family business, recalling the early days when as a youngster the family converted the old public toilets into the present shop, and his gleeful abandon in the task of knocking the old tiles off the wall. The business has now expanded to three shops, two in Basingstoke and one in Salisbury, with the original being the longest living shop in the town.

He highlighted that they have an increasing role as the town's archivists, with a collection exceeding that of the Willis museum. They typically create their own exhibition a couple of times a year. He added that many of the local charity shops also benefit from the gifting of items which Squirrel have no market for.

Alan introduced his colleague Andrew Wilkinson, who has even appeared on the BBC as an expert on old gramophones.

Now came the fun – a 'Fiona Bruce' type challenge from the Antiques Road Show game. He presented three gramophones and after a brief introduction to each, challenged group members to guess the value, before disclosing their approximate values ranging from about £120 right up to somewhere around £5000. He explained that the winner was unique, as not only were a limited number of that model ever made, but it had been signed by the crews of both the Oxford and Cambridge boats celebrating the 100th anniversary of the event's founding.

Andrew went on to highlight that with items such as this, the appeal would have been less to a gramophone collector but would be significantly prized by someone collecting rowing memorabilia. Thus, for an antique dealer the skill is understanding the wider appeal.

Whilst the talk was longer than normal, the Group really appreciated the time spent by Alan and his team especially as it had involved him closing the shop for the afternoon.



We regularly hold public awareness events, encouraging men especially those over 50 to ask for the simple PSA blood test which, whilst not foolproof, is a useful guide to potential issues. At our awareness events we are meeting more who are getting regularly tested.

Keith Bunker

Ladies Societies



Oakley Afternoon WI—October 2025 Report

At our well attended meeting this month Janet introduced our speaker, Robin Maddy, who gave a very interesting talk about the history of magic and the music hall. Robin interspersed his talk by demonstrating various magic tricks. He told us about many famous magicians from the past such as Maskelyne, Harbin, Selby, Goldin, Hertz and finally Houdini. Harry Houdini was the son of a Jewish Rabbi. He started his career as a traditional magician and eventually, after becoming incredibly strong, started his escapologist act which brought him worldwide fame.

There followed a question and answer session and Carol gave a vote of thanks.

Tea and cake were enjoyed, birthday cards and flowers presented, and the raffle drawn.

Forthcoming events include the Christmas lunch at Test Valley Golf Club on 3 December and the annual Christmas Party on 15 December.

Our monthly meetings are held on the third Monday of the month at East Oakley Village Hall (the Green Hut). Visitors are made most welcome at the meetings and are also invited to come along to the coffee mornings held at the Barley Mow on the last Monday of the month.

For further details please contact Janet on 01256 782734.

Janie Vickers



the jars, ribbons and labels. There'll be some happy hands at Christmas with the resulting lovely gifts!

The Rooksdown Revellers WI, which began in March 2017, meet at 7:30 pm on the fourth Thursday of each month at The Sycamore Centre, Sycamore Way, Winklebury RG23 8AB. This friendly and welcoming group, several of whom also enjoy membership of the Oakley & Deane WI, has seen a recent rise in membership, now at 16, as word spreads of their varied activities. Apart from the regular meetings to which a guest speaker is often invited, on offer also is a book club, a walking group, an allotment group and an annual quiz, along with occasional trips to the cinema, the theatre, and forays into London.

If this kind of 'revelry' appeals please contact pat.dominey152@icloud.com

Annie Vicars



*Affiliated to
Hampshire County
Federation of the WI*

**The Rooksdown
Revellers indulge in
some 'handy'
revelry!**

The Rooksdown

Revellers WI certainly revelled in something different at their October meeting: a demonstration of, leading to, the creation of their own, beautiful all-natural hand scrubs!

President Nicola, who also practises her various natural remedy treatments at www.thepinkplace.org.uk as part of their wellbeing services for people living with cancer, first treated all to a sample of her own ready-made hand scrub and taught how to exfoliate, moisturise and massage their own hands effectively.

Following this, it was 'all hands to the pump' or perhaps to the salt, the sugar, the oil, the dried lavender and rose petals, as each member combined the ingredients, under Nicola's excellent tutelage, to produce their own concoctions – she'd even supplied

Oakley and Deane WI

In November Oakley and Deane heard from Martin Webster, a volunteer with ShelterBox. This is a global community with a shared purpose: no-one without shelter after disaster. They provide a tent, tool kit, kitchen set, blanket and solar lights. They started in 2000 to help after disasters and, sadly, there is a growing need with so many disasters.

The Jumble Sale was very successful last month. Members had enjoyed a visit to Queen Mary's Studio to see My Boy Jack. We look forward to a Xmas meal at the Golf Club next month. The Secretary explained

Ladies Societies



how free courses from the WI could be accessed on the computer.

There was a competition for home-made biscuits which were then enjoyed with a hot drink. Next month's meeting will be a Xmas celebration with a visit from the Purple Singers. All welcome at Andover Road Village Hall on 9 December at 7:30 pm.

Oakleydeanewi.weebly.com

Jean Freeman

Oakley and Deane WI

Mr Flaherty's Private Theatricals, a small local but highly acclaimed theatre group gave a "stand out performance" of *My Boy Jack*, which tells the story of Rudyard Kipling and his grief for his son Jack, who died in the First World War.

Oakley and Deane WI, Oakley Afternoon WI and other organizations were asked to crochet or knit poppies as a backdrop for the performance which was in aid of the British Legion Poppy Appeal. "And didn't we do well" as you can see from our photo. Thank you to all the ladies who took part in this amazing event.

We don't make jam, we do sing Jerusalem, but

Oakley and Deane WI are really a group of lovely ladies who enjoy supporting other Basingstoke and Deane groups and charities. We have monthly meetings with great speakers, a walking group and a Scrabble group, various outings and trips and also support each other. There are national campaigns which we support and the WI have done a lot of good for women over the years.

You can find out more about Oakley and Deane



WI by going to Facebook facebook.com/oakleyanddeaneWI or our website oakleydeanewi.weebly.com

Conservation



Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust Rustles in the leaves

As autumn brings misty mornings and crisp evenings, one of our most familiar garden visitors - the European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) - is preparing for its long winter sleep. These round, brown mammals, famously covered in around 7,000 yellow-tipped spines, are a much-loved feature of Britain's wildlife and an important part of our natural heritage.

Often called the gardener's best friend, hedgehogs are expert nocturnal foragers. They emerge at dusk to snuffle through long grass, flowerbeds, leaf litter and

vegetable patches in search of worms, beetles, slugs and other invertebrates, making them natural pest controllers. Hedgehogs have a keen sense of smell and a remarkable ability to remember the location of abundant food sources.

Mostly active from April to October, they thrive in a variety of habitats, including woodland edges, farmland, parks and suburban gardens, wherever shelter and food are plentiful. Solitary creatures for most of the year, they roam several miles each night in search of food and mates, coming together only during the breeding season in late spring and early summer. *(Continued on page 19)*



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Conservation

By this time of year, hedgehogs are busy feeding as much as possible to build up fat reserves before hibernation begins. As temperatures drop in November, they retreat to sheltered spots such as under sheds, log piles or dense shrubs, creating a nest of leaves and twigs known as a hibernaculum. Inside, their heartbeat slows dramatically and their body temperature drops, allowing them to survive for months without food.

Sadly, the familiar hedgehog is now facing real challenges. Once a common sight in gardens across the UK, numbers have declined sharply over recent decades. Habitat loss, pesticide use and busy roads have all taken their toll, leaving hedgehogs struggling to find safe places to feed and hibernate.

Fortunately, small actions at home can make a big difference. Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust recommends leaving areas of long grass, creating safe corridors between gardens and avoiding harmful chemicals. These all help provide the refuge that hedgehogs need. Every connected green space can become part of a larger, life-saving network for this cherished species. With a bit of care and community effort, we can help ensure hedgehogs remain a welcome part of our gardens for generations.

Find out more about hedgehogs on the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust website: hiwwt.org.uk/wildlife-explorer/mammals/

Helen Skelton-Smith



Jubiloaks

The regular users of the multi-user path from Oakley to Kempshott will be well aware that, following the fall of a tree over the fence towards the railway, Network Rail asked the landowner, Manydown, to carry out a safety audit through Long Break to the end of Wells Copse. During October eight trees were mostly monolithed and banded to avoid re-growth - sadly including four oaks.

During the above work our volunteers moved to the Kempshott end of the path to crown-lift walnut trees which have seeded on the field edge and cut back shrubby growth on the edge of the path.

One of the items on our volunteers' work plan for this year, agreed with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council, was to replace the vandalised seat at Battledown. This led to a second community event to install a second log seat, where so many walkers and cyclists stop for refreshments. The log was donated by Malshanger Estate, prepared and moved to the site by Oakley Men's Shed, with Oakley & Deane Parish Council funding materials - many thanks to everyone involved.



*The Jubiloaks team, www.jubiloaks.org.uk.
jubiloaks@btinternet.com*



Oakley Woodlands Group

Coppicing gives us the opportunity to notice all sorts of things in the woods. Most recently, while making safe a fallen birch tree, I spotted an enormous hole in it. When standing, the hole would have been perhaps three or four metres up the tree. It had clearly been hollowed out, possibly as a roost or nest, although there was no debris such as feathers, down or even moss, which suggests that it had not been inhabited.

Curious to find out more, I turned to Google Lens, an app that searches the internet for information based on a photograph. The answer came back that it was gnawed out by either a porcupine or a beaver. We have a lot of wildlife in Cowdown, including some rarer species, but we do not host either of these beasts, so I am stumped.

The tree was dead and had clearly broken off some way above the base. We will probably never know what chewed it out, but it does serve as a reminder that it is not only the Woodlands Group that works in the copses. And, talking of working, our work party dates for December are below. Don't forget that the woods are a great place to walk off that Christmas excess, or you could pre-empt it and come and join our work parties.

Work party dates: Saturday 13 and 27, Wednesday 3 and 17. 10:00 to 13:00. In Cowdown copse on Pack Lane.

Alan Merry, Email: oakleywoodlands@gmail.com



Christmas Services

Sunday 7 Dec	9:00am	Advent Communion @ Wootton St Lawrence
	10:30am	Advent Service @ St Leonard's
	3:00pm	A Mini-Christingle for the little ones @ St Leonard's
	4:30pm	The BIG Christingle for everyone @ St Leonard's
Sunday 14 Dec	8:00am	Advent Communion @ St Leonard's
	10:30am	Advent Service @ St Leonard's
	7:00pm	Candlelit Carol Service @ St Leonard's
Saturday 20 Dec	3:30pm	Blue Christmas @ St Leonard's <i>for anyone facing a difficult Christmas</i>
Sunday 21 Dec	10:30am	Advent Communion @ St Leonard's
	3:30pm	Wootton Christmas Party @ Wootton St Lawrence
	4:00pm	Wootton BIG Sing @ Wootton St Lawrence
Wed 24 Dec	3:00pm	Family Crib Service @ St Leonard's
	5:00pm	Candlelit Crib Service @ Wootton St Lawrence
	11:15pm	Midnight Communion @ St Leonard's
Thurs 25 Dec	8:00am	Christmas Day Communion @ St Leonard's
	10:30am	Christmas Family Celebration @ St Leonard's



Church News



Wootton Christmas Party Sunday 21 December –

Join us from 3:30 pm for crafts and games and festive treats. We're going to fill St Lawrence with colour and good cheer, so don your brightest Christmas jumper & bring along a bauble to hang on the tree.

Back by popular demand is the **Wootton BIG Sing.** from 4– 6 pm enjoy a fun-filled Christmas celebration event with musical performances, poetry, readings, carol singing and much more!

Kintsugi wellbeing courses

We are delighted to announce that our next Kintsugi wellbeing courses are starting again in January 2026.

Our passion is to reduce stress levels in our busy days so we can live happier and healthier lives. Inevitably things go wrong - relationship breakdowns, financial problems, health issues, work issues, etc, and we can get stuck in a downward spiral.

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Monday 5 January 2026, 1:30 – 3:30 pm

Or Thursday 8 January 2026, 7 – 9 pm



At St Leonard's Centre, Oakley

This course is a safe and confidential place for a group of 12 people to strengthen resilience, courage and wellbeing. To register your interest or secure a place, as places go quickly, please email:

kintsugihope@oww.church

Lynda Cant

Oakley Methodist Church

All welcome at the Methodist Church coffee morning on Tuesday 9 December from 10:30 am to 12 noon. £1.50 for a bottomless cup of tea or coffee and biscuits. Come and meet old friends and new. The charity for the year is Dementia UK. We look forward

to welcoming the Woodland well-being walkers at the end of their walk.

Trish Kinchington



Church News



Letters



Christmas Wishes

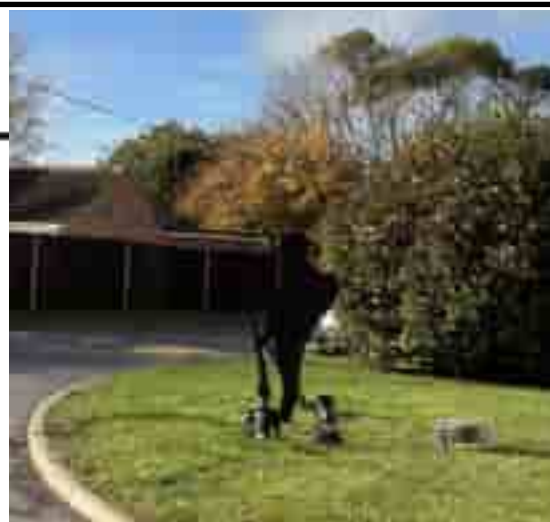
Margaret and Derek Burgess wish all their friends and neighbours a very happy Christmas and best wishes for a peaceful and healthy New Year.



Dear editor

As an Oakley resident, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for all the poppy remembrance markings displayed around the village. Of particular note to me are the lamp post large poppies - a recent addition, but so noticeable and this works well including all areas of the village. I also note the soldier silhouettes... which look like they are business initiatives.

I understand it is individuals like Ian Warner, Oakley's ADHOC, Oakley WIs and individual businesses like Bakers who make this all happen, including the poppy donation collection points.



It's at times like this. I feel honoured to be part of such a wonderful village.
An appreciative Oakley resident.

Dear Editor

On behalf of Oakley & Deane Women's Institute I am writing to thank all of the contributors and attendees at our Jumble Sale held on 25 October in the Green Hut. We raised a substantial sum which will go towards paying for speakers and the hire of the hall over the next year.

As a separate issue I would like to point out that unsold items *do not go to landfill*. Instead they are redistributed to various other worthy causes, with some clothing and toys sent to Ukraine and other items spread to various good causes which includes a donkey sanctuary fundraising group. Food items left over from the tombola will be given to the Food Bank. Our members contribute various items to this cause monthly. Once again thank you for the donations and cheerful support.

Lynn Martin, Vice President, Oakley & Deane WI

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Young Oakley



Cuckoo Meadow

We've seen Autumn out by learning all about different animals, apples and leaves. We also created some very cool rockets and firework pictures.

We are now getting very excited for the festive season, which will include our nativity and a visit from Father Christmas with his ponies after our Christmas party – it's going to be a spectacular sight!

Merry Christmas to everyone and we look forward to updating you again in the New Year.

Georgia Hawken, Cuckoo Meadow Pre-School Secretary

About Cuckoo Meadow Pre-School: We are a small and friendly pre-school located in the Rathbone Pavilion of North Waltham. The children who attend come from many areas including Oakley, Dummer, Hatch Warren, Kempshott and Beggarwood. They all agree that the location and wonderful, caring staff mean it is more than worth the short journey. To find out more, please contact Jo or Fiona on 01256 398 172.

Hello from St Leonard's Pre-School

December is a busy month with many different events. At the start we are having a sponsored week at pre-school to raise money to buy a range of new resources including pedal bikes and story sacks. All the children will be involved in the different activities. The children will be making a reindeer head band and trotting around our figure-of-eight track four times, they will be throwing snowballs into numbered buckets, they will be pinning the nose on Rudolph and going on a Christmas treasure hunt to find a cracker, bauble, a present, Father Christmas hat, a Christmas tree, nativity characters and a star.

The children will be practising for our Nativity in St Leonard's Church on 18 December. Everyone will be able to dress up in costumes as Mary, Joseph, angels, stars, shepherds and kings. They will be learning songs and words to share with their families.

On the last afternoon of term, we will be having a



Christmas party with food, games and dancing. We are looking forward to a special visit from Father Christmas!

If you would like to know more about the preschool, please

contact us on 07772 378265,

or email preschool@oww.church or look at our website stleonards-preschool.co.uk.

We look forward to hearing from you.
Caroline Edwards, St Leonard's Pre-School Manager

Thursdays 10-11.30am
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Basingstoke Sea Cadets



Do you have enthusiasm and a passion for working with young people? Would you like the opportunity to help launch young people for life, whilst enhancing your skills and meeting new people? Basingstoke Sea Cadets would love to hear from you.

We provide a head start in life for young people through nautical adventure and fun. Our volunteers work directly with young people and behind the scenes, to help make a positive difference. We are based in Winklebury and are currently looking for enthusiastic adult volunteers to join us.

We are looking for Unit Instructors, who will be hands on, teaching cadets. You will run lessons and activities that help cadets progress through the Sea Cadets Experience, gaining qualifications and confidence as they go. This role is ideal if you can

Young Oakley



support young people on a regular basis, are happy to throw yourself into teaching activities and seek a rewarding role where you will be the key to helping them flourish into confident, capable young adults.

We would also love to expand our Unit Management Team (UMT). If you aren't able to commit to a regular volunteering role, there are still plenty of ways you can get involved. No commitment is too small. You could volunteer in roles such as secretary or fundraising, which are perfect if you are not able to be at the unit every week, or if you have a specialist skill you would like to share.

There are no specific requirements for these roles. Having the right attitude and a passion for improving the lives of young people are the most important things. If you are reliable, keen to learn new things and enjoy working as part of a team, please do contact us at tsmaryrose.communications@outlook.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

Kerri Picton-Robinson

Local News



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A Christmas Celebration
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We invite you to join us for a concert of Christmas Favourites and Carols, special with highlights from our 2025 concert programme.

7:30 pm on Saturday 6th December 2025
At Church Cottage, Church Square, Basingstoke, RG7 1 7QW

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Local News

Overton Choral Society

As we draw to the close of the first part of our 2025/26 season, we would like to thank you for your support and wish you a very merry Christmas.

Our final offering for 2025 is our annual carol concert on Monday 15 December at 7:30 pm with the Overton Sinfonia in St Mary's Hall, Overton. There will be the opportunity not only to sing well-known carols but also to contribute to St Michael's Hospice. Last year we raised nearly £800 during the evening.

We are very pleased to be able to welcome the Mayor of Basingstoke, Cllr Colin Phillimore, to our concert and hope you have time to talk to him whilst enjoying our delicious refreshments.

Lyn Hardy, Chair, overtonchoralsoc@gmail.com

Andover Chamber Choir Presents *Voices from the Manger*

Andover Chamber Choir celebrates the festive season with their Christmas concert, *Voices from the Manger*, a beautiful journey through the Nativity story told in words and music.

Under direction of their new Musical Director, Lucy Hole, the Chamber Choir presents a programme of evocative carols and seasonal pieces, bringing to life the various perspectives of those witnessing the birth of Christ. The music is complemented by seasonal readings, including poetry by Christina Rossetti and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, which further explore the different aspects of the Christmas narrative.



Basingstoke Concert Band
invites you to their
Annual Christmas Concert
at
Queen Mary's College, (Main Hall)
Cliddesden Road, Basingstoke RG21 3HF
on
Sunday 21 December 2025 starting at 3 pm
Tickets £10 (U16 free) available from:
band members, at the door, or visit:
<http://ticketish.app/event/35289>
Join us for a concert of festive songs, carols old and new and, of course, traditional favourites for you to join in with!

The concert takes place at 7 pm, Saturday 20 December, St Mary's Church, Andover. Tickets are £18 on the door or £15 in advance from The Lights (in person and online) or through choir members. Under 16s are admitted free. Refreshments are included.

Proceeds are in aid of Andover Food Bank, providing essential support to local individuals and families in crisis this winter.

Veronica Bacon



**Overton Choral Society
Christmas Concert**
With Overton Sinfonia
**Monday 15 December 2025
at 7.30pm**
Musical Director: **Paul Turner** | **St Mary's Hall, Overton** | Tea and mince plus carols
Raising funds for **St Michael's Hospice** | Free entry - Donations on exit please
All Welcome



ANDOVER CHAMBER CHOIR
Voices from the Manger
An evening of carols and poems
with Andover Chamber Choir
7pm, Saturday 20th December 2025
St Mary's Church, Andover
Tickets: £18 on the door, £15 in advance (over 16s). Free. Refreshments included. Available at The Lights, in person (St Mary's and online) and through 1114 members. Proceeds in aid of Andover Foodbank.
www.andoverchamberchoir.co.uk

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Local News



Probus Learn About Local Hero

Natalie Lerner gave an outline of Captain John Aiden Liddell VC MC whose 1915 burial in South View cemetery, Basingstoke, was attended by many dignitaries and public crowds.

Although he was born near Newcastle in 1888, during the first world war his family was living at Sherfield Manor which today is Sherfield School.

Captain Liddell had joined the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and was responsible for a machine gun section that remained unsupported for 43 days, during which he was wounded. For this action he received the MC.

Before the outbreak of the war, he had trained as a pilot, flying a Boxkite at the Vickers school at Brooklands and following recuperation he joined the Royal Flying Corps and was stationed in northern France/Belgium.

On 31 July 1915 he, together with an observer/gunner, was flying a two-seater RE 5 biplane at 5,000 feet over Bruges when they were fired on by enemy aircraft. Badly wounded, with a shattered right thigh he lost consciousness and the plane dived 3,000 feet before he was able to regain control.

The plane was badly damaged and with the crew member also wounded he managed to fly back to base, saving not only the plane but also the life of his observer. Captain Liddell had his right leg amputated but died a month later. He was 27 years old.

His body was brought back to England where a Catholic mass was held in London before travelling to Basingstoke where it was met with a full military band and paraded through the town to much public admiration. His observer attended the funeral.

The posthumous VC was presented to his father by the King at Buckingham Palace.

Several commemorative plaques of Captain John Aiden Liddell



VC MC are found around Britain, but two can be found in Sherfield on Loddon, with his name on the village war memorial and on an engraved paving stone atop a brick plinth near to the village cross roads. See probusbasingstoke.club for more information.

Paul Flint



Barry Hare

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Local News



Whitchurch Silk Mill – Winter News

As the year draws to a close, Whitchurch Silk Mill is busy with creativity and exciting opportunities to get involved. Whether you're passionate about textile art, heritage preservation, volunteering or crafting, there's something for everyone this season.

Visible Threads: Jane Sanders Exhibition

We're thrilled to announce our winter exhibition, Visible Threads, running from 6 December to 22 February 2026. This captivating showcase features the work of Jane Sanders, a textile artist from Newcastle upon Tyne, whose distinctive portraits of iconic musicians are stitched using a 1960s Singer sewing machine and an eclectic mix of materials. Jane's unconventional approach combines fabric, thread and quirky mixed media to bring famous faces to life in a vibrant and imaginative way. Her work has gained international recognition, and we're proud to host her at the Mill. Visit our website to learn more about Jane's techniques and inspirations.

Support Silk Weaving – Big Give Campaign

We're taking part in the Big Give's Christmas Challenge campaign to raise £5,000 to train the next generation of silk weavers. This vital initiative will help preserve endangered heritage skills and ensure our historic looms continue to operate. Every

donation made online via our page on the Big Give website between 3 and 10 December will be doubled thanks to match-funding, making your support go twice as far. If you believe in keeping traditional crafts alive, please consider donating. You will find the link via our website or by searching for Whitchurch Silk Mill on the Big Give platform.

Sue Tapliss



Feature



News From Jolly Olly's Coffee Shop A Jolly New One!

We are delighted to welcome Sam Reeves

to the Saturday team. I know that you will enjoy her warm and friendly manner and I am confident that she will be a great asset to Jolly Olly's.

Teenage Cancer Trust

You have already raised over £200 for the cause! Thank you! Between now and Christmas we are hoping that you will help us to increase this total. We will have a *Cute and cuddly prize draw* (toys kindly donated by David Trangmar) and a *Guess the number of coffee beans in the jar* challenge. You can also donate direct 6 for 1z (For The Teenage Cancer Trust)

Quiz Night

We will be holding a Christmas quiz night on Friday December 12. Tables are priced at £20 (maximum four people per table) and all the entrance



money will be donated to The Teenage Cancer Trust. There will be a prize for the most festively dressed person and food and drink to get you into the spirit of the season. Booking is essential either by popping into the shop or by email picardwebber@btinternet.com.

December Opening

There is a possibility that we may have to close on Wednesday 3 December. We are working on a potential solution but will keep you posted via Facebook.

Our last day of trading before Christmas will be Saturday 20 December. We will re-open on Saturday 3 January.

Finally the team would like to thank you for your support and smiles over the past year and we all wish you a very merry Christmas.

Please look for updates on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

32 Oakley Lane, Oakley RG23 7JY (Tel 01256 782658)



Hampshire County Councillor report— Candovers, Oakley and Overton Division

Budget Consultation- Have your say

Hampshire County Council's budget consultation launched on 4 November and runs until 11:59 pm on Sunday 7 December 2025. This consultation seeks residents' views on how the Council can prepare its budgets up to April 2027, in light of rising costs, increasing demand for services, and continued underfunding by central Government.

Hampshire has a long-standing reputation for managing public money responsibly. Since 2008, the County Council have saved £734 million from the annual budget through early action, efficiency, and innovation. Hampshire has maintained high-performing services and one of the lowest council tax rates among county councils in England.

Despite these efforts, financial pressures, particularly in social care and school transport, continue to grow. These are common to councils nationally – and without fairer funding from Government in these key areas, and for local authorities to have greater flexibility to set Council Tax responsibly in their areas, Hampshire faces a budget shortfall of approximately £143 million in 2026/27, rising to £230 million the following year.

For example:

Each month, 30 older people who were previously paying for their own social care run out of money so we have to step in to cover the costs - adding £18.7 million to the annual bill.

Residential care costs for older people rose by £15 million in the last year.

The number of younger adults requiring complex care packages has risen dramatically and now costs an extra £5.28 million each year.

The number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans to help support their additional needs has grown by 33% since 2022/23.

School transport costs, including for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, have more than doubled in three years from £43 million to £94 million.

The public consultation invites feedback on a range of options to help balance the budget to 2026/27, including:

- Lobbying Government for funding and legislative change
- Delivering further efficiencies
- Generating additional income
- Reviewing and potentially reducing or stopping some services
- Introducing or increasing charges
- Delaying spend

- Increasing Council Tax
- Using reserves as a short-term measure

Residents can participate via the online response form at: www.hants.gov.uk/budgetconsultation

The full information pack and details of how to respond, including requesting paper copies, are available on the same webpage.

County Councillor Grants

The County Councillor Grant scheme is operating once more, with a lesser amount of £5,000 and new criteria as follows:

- Grants are only available to organisations, not individuals.
- Organisations cannot apply for the same project in consecutive years.
- Applications must demonstrate community benefit, especially if from religious or statutory bodies.
- A maximum of £1,000 per project is now in place.
- Grants for seasonal or time-specific events must be awarded before the event date.
- All funded projects must acknowledge County Council support in promotional materials.
- Previous grant awards (from the last two years) will be considered during evaluation.
- Preference may be given to organisations without access to other funding sources.

These changes aim to ensure the scheme remains fair, transparent and aligned with the Council's strategic priorities while managing financial pressures. To apply please use the following link:

Parish Council Bus Shelter Grant Scheme

Hampshire County Council has launched a new grant scheme to help Parish Councils replace or refurbish bus shelters – making them more attractive, visible and welcoming for passengers. Funded through the Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) 2025/26 Bus Grant, this scheme is all about improving local infrastructure and encouraging more people to use public transport.

Who can apply? Parish Councils which own and maintain existing bus shelters.

How much is available? Up to £15,000 per shelter site – for either refurbishment or installation of a new shelter at an existing site.

When to apply? Applications are open now and must be submitted by 28 February 2026. Awards will be made on a rolling basis from early 2026.

Parish Councils will need to provide quotes from commercial suppliers as part of their application.

For more details, including the application form and guidance, visit Hampshire County Council's website or contact the Passenger Transport Team at: passenger.transport.enquiries@hants.gov.uk

Juliet Henderson



Oakley Bowling Club News

The winter sees members pursuing the sport in different ways. Some play at the local indoor clubs. Others choose to play short mat in our clubhouse. Some hibernate. Whatever they do, we try to keep members in touch with each other by playing friendlies against indoor clubs, entering competitions designed for outdoor clubs and by providing a weekly programme of social events.

The first indoor friendly saw us go down to a heavy defeat at Loddon Vale, not surprising given how many of the team lacked indoor experience. However our forays into the indoor competitions were more productive as our teams in the Ambler/Fuller trophy at Loddon Vale beat Aldermaston and Howard Park and in the Moreton Cup at Longmeadow we beat Andover.

Our social evenings have been great fun. Our social committee, led by Wendy, gives us a fresh theme each week and these have included a fun music quiz, a spooky evening (for Halloween), and a chilli night (for Guy Fawkes). Members have attended both the County and the North Hants Women's luncheon. There is much more to happen and already we have sold all the tickets for our Christmas Dinner at BCOT.

October saw our contractors carrying out the work to ensure that the green continues to be a high-quality surface. Eight Avonmore employees, who never seemed to get in each other's way, soon completed the scarification, hollow coring and slit tining whilst, at the same time, transporting into the green six



tonnes of top dressing. Seeding, spraying and applying the dressing followed and soon they were on their way - so different to when club members struggled to carry out the work. Next autumn, we may sell tickets!!

There is always something happening at the Club. For information go to oakleybc.org.uk. Alternatively, phone Spencer on 01256 780418 or Diane on 01256 781465.

Spencer Kerley



Free Ads

All entries should be sent in writing to Maureen Dallaway, by **8 December 2025** for inclusion in next month's Link. Entries may also be sent by e-mail to freeads@oakleylink.org.uk Please include an address or telephone number.

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Walking



Woodland wellbeing walks December

Come and enjoy scenic walks around our local woods and fields.

2nd, 3rd & 4th Tuesdays.

☉ Finishing with a sociable cuppa @ Methodist Chapel ☉

Start Point for Walks:

Tuesday, 9 Dec. 10 am - Village Pond. ☉ B

Tuesday, 16 Dec. 10 am - St John's Rd lay-by. R

Tuesday, 23 Dec. 10 am - East Oakley Village Hall [aka The Green Hut]. R

Other Details:

Start time: 10 am

Pace: gentle

Duration: 1 hour approx

Routes: varied

B = walk led by Barbara [07722 757057]

R = walk led by Richard [07549 021174]



admired the beautiful dahlias in the walled garden before crossing the bridge and making our way back to the wood on the opposite side of the lake and returning to Rooksdown. We noted some interesting fungi on a fallen log on the return journey, namely Slimy Porcelain mushrooms (*right*).

Our second walk was on 26th when we walked in the Winchester area starting near St Catherine's Hill. We walked along the side of the hill and then walked up to the Pilgrims' Trail where we had great views over Winchester. From there we continued South, passing a war memorial at



Oakley Ramblers

Our first walk in October was on 8th, when a group set off from Rooksdown walking through the spinney and across the Tadley Road to reach The Vyne in



Sherborne St John. We had excellent weather all day and noted the changes indicating autumn is nearly here. We made good time across the fields and met Karen, who joined us in Sherborne. We crossed the rewilding area and the fields to reach the entry to Morgaston Wood.

We all enjoyed a drink in the Vyne café and



Hazeley Down (*above*) and then turned on to the Monarch's Way. We followed this to Twyford and then joined the Itchen Way and turned back towards Winchester. After walking under the motorway, we turned left and joined the St James' Way to take us past St Cross and back to our start point where we stopped off at the Cadence café for a well-earned drink before returning to Oakley.

Oakley Ramblers is a friendly and sociable group and always welcome visitors who can try us out before joining. Our planned walk dates for are Wednesday 10 December, and a post-Christmas walk on Monday 29 December.

Find us on Facebook or visit our website for more information. www.oakleyramblers.org.

Corrine Thomas

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Wired Electrical Services 29

Fencing

Bob Berry Fencing 27

Funeral Directors

L Titcombe & Family 9
Spencer & Peyton Limited 27

Garden Services

Goslings Garden & Fencing 24
Green 'n' Tidy Gardens 23
Oakley Lawn Cutting 11
SW Contract Services 18
The Green Room 17
Trees & Hedges 11
TreeScene 32

Hairdressing

Hair Beauty 29
Mobile Hairdressing 4

Health Care Services

cf foot clinic 23
Clear Ears 6
ItalDent 40
Oakley Osteopathic Clinic 18
Square One 29

Heating and Plumbing Services

Catlin Plumbing & Heating 40
Mark Smith Plumbing
and Heating 6
NJP Heating Services 12
Oakley Gas & Heating 9
Paul Baker Plumbing
& Heating 9
W G Shenton Plumbing
& Heating 24

Home Improvements

Access4Lofts North
Hampshire 32
Field & Field 6
Sky View Roofing & Building
Services 29

Home Maintenance

James McCombie
Renovation 32
Oakley Handyman Services 23
Property Care 18

Locksmith

CNG Locksmith Services 17

Man and Van Service

Need A Van 4

Memorial Masonry

Haven Memorials 4

Nurseries and Playgroups

Acorns Nursery 12
St Leonard's Playschool 11
The Barn Nursery 29

Painters & Decorators

Aaron Ford Decorating and
Home Projects 18
All Aspects 9
Barry Hare Painting
& Decorating 32
Haynes of Oakley
painter and decorator 23
PSC Decorating Services 9

Pest Control

Pest Response Ltd. 12

Pet Services & Supplies

Paws at Home Ltd. 18

Plastering

Nick Goodall Plastering 12

Pubs & Restaurants

The Barley Mow 6

Roofing Contractors

ITC Roofing 9
JB Roofing 24

Soft Furnishings

Honeysuckle Interiors 23

Sport & Leisure

Beechdown Club 2

Taxis

Oakley Chauffeur Services 30
Totally Airports 9

Water Softeners

AMS Mayfair Ltd. 4

Will Writer

Whitchurch Wills Limited 29

Windows & Conservatories

Hayward Glass and Glazing 23
Oakley Windows 39
S J Hunt Windows 4
TF Windows and Doors 4

Local Government Reorganisation

Local Government Reorganisation Consultation Now Open

Many of you will remember that earlier this year several councils submitted proposals to the government about how local government might be reorganised across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton. The government has now opened its formal consultation on these proposals, which will run until 11 January 2026.

The consultation sets out four different unitary models for how services such as highways, planning, waste, social care and education could be delivered in future. At the moment, Hampshire works on a two-tier system, with responsibilities shared between Hampshire County Council and the district or borough councils. Parish councils, including ours here in Oakley and Deane, sit alongside this structure and focus on local community matters.

The new proposals would replace the current county and district or borough councils with single-tier unitary councils responsible for all the services currently delivered by those two tiers. Parish councils would remain in place, continuing their local role, but would work alongside a single principal authority rather than two.

Although the consultation covers a wide area, the outcome will shape how services are run here in Oakley, Deane and our neighbouring villages for many years to come. Everything from how roads are maintained, to how planning decisions are made, to how community services are supported would sit under whichever new structure is chosen. It is important that residents, parish councils and local groups are aware of what is being proposed and have the chance to respond.

You can read the proposals and respond online by visiting: gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-hampshire-isle-of-wight-portsmouth-and-southampton

If you have views on what matters most for our area, I would encourage you to take a look. If you can, please also pass the details on to neighbours, friends or any groups you are part of so more people have the chance to take part.

For any questions or ideas:

01256 592443 | alex@alexrowley.uk Alex Rowley

Editor's Note: An article from Citizens Advice entitled *Switching your internet, phone or TV provider* can be found on Link's website oakleylink.org under *Current Issue* then *Extra Link* articles.

LOCAL INFORMATION

Oakley Community Association

Secretary - Eve Askew, www.ocaaoakley.org.uk,
OCAoakley@live.co.uk

Councillors & Politicians

Member of Parliament, Basingstoke

Luke Murphy - luke.murphy.mp@parliament.uk 07946 617981

47 Winchester Street, Basingstoke, RG21 7EF

Parish Councillors:

Fred Bullions	Dave Condcliffe
Sherrie De Kiguchi	Ian Ellison
Jayne Grant	Amanda Hayman
Carl Jeffreys	Vince Kitley
Ken Krafer	Steve Neems
Alex Rowley	
Gary McAllister (Chair)	
Trevor Green (Vice Chair)	

Parish Clerk : Nicola Beere, 1 Station Road, Oakley

clerk@oakleydeane-pc.gov.uk or 07983 500372

Assistant Clerk: Kelly Green

assistantclerk@oakleydeane-pc.gov.uk

Borough Councillors:

Paul Gaskell Cllr.Paul.Gaskell@basingstoke.gov.uk 07812 894479

Hannah Golding 07305 123671

cllr.hannah.golding@basingstoke.gov.uk

Julian Jones Cllr.Julian.Jones@basingstoke.gov.uk 0794 6475700

County Councillor: Juliet Henderson

juliet.henderson@hants.gov.uk 862413

Estate Agents

Brookenhurst Estate Agents, 6 Rectory Rd 700280

Police - 101 or 999 in an emergency

Gas Emergencies 0800 111 999

Health (111 or 999 in emergency)

Defibrillators (Call 999 first) are located at:

The Fox

The Barley Mow

The Green Hut (Hill Road)

The Infant School,

The Cricket Club

Peter Houseman Field.

The Andover Road Village Hall

The St Leonard's Centre

Doctors' Surgery 0333 034 1033

Out of hours call 111

CHURCHES

Church of England

St Leonards (Oakley)
St Lawrence (Wootton)
All Saints (Deane)

Website:

www.oakleywithwootton.org.uk

Church Office: St Leonard's Centre,
Rectory Rd, Oakley
Tel 782724 9:00 am -1:00 pm week-
days

office@oww.church

Revd Ben Kautzer ben@oww.church
01256 420903

Contacts for Deane:

Deidre Coles - Warden Tel 781495

YouTube channel: Search St Leonard's Church Oakley for
Church@Home and Kids@Home services.

Methodist

Chapel by the pond

Website:

[https://www.bhbccircuit.org.uk/
churches/oakley.html](https://www.bhbccircuit.org.uk/churches/oakley.html)

Hill Road adjacent to the village pond
in East Oakley

Revd Claire Simpson

revclaire72@btinternet.com

Tel: 01256 323103

Roman Catholic

St Joseph's and
St Bede's

Website:

www.stjosephsbasingstoke.org.uk
171a St Michael's Rd, Basingstoke,
RG22 6TY

Fr Paul Leonard,

Parish Office -Tel: 323595

office@stjosephsbasingstoke.org.uk

Community Church

Websites:

www.lifespringcommunitychurch.org
or www.hopebasingstoke.org

St. Luke's Hall Overton

or Sarum Hill Centre, Sarum Hill,
Basingstoke

Contact: John and Wendy Thurston
(780135)

or Paul and Ann Davis (782769)

Village Shops

Annie's Oakley - Meon Road

Cakes by Maze - Rectory Road 07349 888237

Coop - Oakley Lane 780857

Craft Kits N Bits - 4 Rowan Tree Road 020 3488 5499

Hair Beauty - Meon Road 780745

Honeysuckle Interiors - Meon Road 780831

Lara's Beauty Workshop - Meon Road 07726 207203

One Stop - Oakley Lane 780227

Geoff Aubrey and Sons - Butcher - The Vale 01256 373297

Village Café, Jolly Olly's - Oakley Lane 782658

Village Pharmacy - The Vale 782381

Oakley Scout Group

TBD

oakley@bwds.org.uk

Oakley Girlguiding

Caroline Lloyd

c45lloyd@outlook.com

VILLAGE HALLS

East Oakley Village Hall ("Green Hut") - Hill Road

Booking Secretary 07788 423252 or email: booking@oakleygreenhut.co.uk

Website: www.oakleygreenhut.co.uk

St. John's Centre - St. John's Road

Contact Church Office: 782724

Oakley Village Hall - Andover Road

Contact: 781229

St Leonards Centre - Rectory Road

Contact Church Office: 782724

NOTE: If you wish to add an item or correct any entries, please send
an email to: john@oakleylink.org.uk Last amended: 17/11/2025

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**Unit 11, Folly Farm, Kingsclere Road, Basingstoke,
RG26 5GJ sales@oakleywindows.co.uk**



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