

# Link

June 2026

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**12 Noon to 4.00pm**

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**Book your stall by Saturday 6 June 2026**

Village map available of stalls in the following week.



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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](http://oakleylink.org.uk)

Please e-mail copy to: [editor@oakleylink.org.uk](mailto:editor@oakleylink.org.uk)

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

**Deadline for July 2026 issue: 15 June**

## Editorial

Congratulations to those elected in the **Borough council elections held on Thursday 7 May 2026 representing Oakley & The Candovers:**

Marc Steven CONNOR for Basingstoke & Deane Independents with 1280 votes and

Alexander ROWLEY also for Basingstoke & Deane Independents with 1756 votes.

See letter from Alex on page 19.

The electorate was recorded at 8746 and turn-out 48.7%.

Congratulations also to Juliet Mary Henderson for The Conservatives who held onto her position on **Hampshire County Council** representing **Candovers, Oakley & Overton** with 2544 votes.

The electorate (also on 7 May 2026) was recorded at 14234 and turn-out 50%.

See Juliet's regular contribution to *Link* on page 10.

*Chris Wassell*

## CONTENTS

Village News .....	5,7
Health Matters .....	8
Feature: Hampshire County Council .....	10
Fund Raising.....	13,14
Feature: Basingstoke Citizens' Advice .....	14
Feature: News from Jolly Olly's .....	14
Young Oakley .....	15,16
Gardening .....	19
Letters.....	19
Conservation .....	20,21
Church News .....	22,37
Pause for Thought .....	22
Ladies' Societies.....	25,26
Local News.....	28,31,33
Feature: Action Hampshire.....	34
Freeads.....	34
Walking .....	35
Sport .....	36
Index of Advertisers .....	37
Information, Churches, Village Halls.....	38

## Oakley Community Care

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Wheelchair users must be able to transfer to the car unaided.

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We also have a limited numbers of wheelchairs available for loan.

*New volunteer drivers are always welcome*

**Please give us a call. We may be able to make life easier for you.**

**07376 574412**

Oakley Community Care is a registered charity (no. 1141330)

<b>Editorial Team</b>	Chris Wassell	01256 781923	<a href="mailto:editor@oakleylink.org.uk">editor@oakleylink.org.uk</a>
	Maureen Dallaway	01256 780788	<a href="mailto:maureen@oakleylink.org.uk">maureen@oakleylink.org.uk</a>
	Ann Davis	01256 782769	<a href="mailto:anndavis48@hotmail.com">anndavis48@hotmail.com</a>
	Christine Savage	01256 780711	<a href="mailto:christine@oakleylink.org.uk">christine@oakleylink.org.uk</a>
	John Glasscock	07803 336962	<a href="mailto:john@oakleylink.org.uk">john@oakleylink.org.uk</a>
	Peter Hayman	07771 690639	<a href="mailto:peter@oakleylink.org.uk">peter@oakleylink.org.uk</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Murray Simmons	01256 782916	<a href="mailto:murraysimmons@hotmail.com">murraysimmons@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Advertising</b>	Bruce Wassell	01256 781923	<a href="mailto:advertising@oakleylink.org.uk">advertising@oakleylink.org.uk</a>
<b>Distribution</b>	Paul Davis	07714 276 561	<a href="mailto:paul@oakleylink.org.uk">paul@oakleylink.org.uk</a>
<b>Finance</b>	Paul Davis	07714 276 561	<a href="mailto:paul@oakleylink.org.uk">paul@oakleylink.org.uk</a>

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 by Tristan Ford

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# Village



## Oakley Village Show Vintage and Classic Vehicle Display

Thank you to those who responded to last month's request for vehicles to join our display. We now have an interesting range from 1916 to 1989, with the earliest a 1916 Alldays and Onions "Allon"



motorcycle (see photograph).

I have been asked if the date range can be extended to include what are generally known as future classics as there are several in the village. We still have a few places available and would now like to invite vehicles up to the year 1999. Maybe we should now call it "Motoring Through the Ages."

If you have a car or motorcycle you would like to display, please email me on [gordonpuzey@gmail.com](mailto:gordonpuzey@gmail.com) and I will be in touch.

*Gordon Puzey*

## Summerdown Farms Ltd

We'd love to invite you to visit Summerdown. Many people know Summerdown for our award-winning peppermint chocolates, teas, and body, bath and home



products, but fewer realise that we're a local, family-run regenerative farm in North Hampshire and that

you can now visit us to experience the farm first-hand and hear the story behind our peppermint.

This season, we're opening up the farm through a series of immersive experiences, including guided farm tours, essential oil tours, bee experiences and even Pilates among the peppermint – all designed to help people slow down, connect with nature and see how our peppermint is grown and distilled.

One of the highlights of the summer is our pop-up dining experience, *Supper at Summerdown*. After the success of last year's sell-out evenings, we're delighted to announce two new dates this year. Please join us on either Friday 19 or Saturday 20 June for an enchanting evening in the heart of our Hampshire peppermint farm – an experience previous guests have called "a feast for the senses". Think long, warm June evenings, the scent of fresh peppermint on the air and the joy of dining alfresco with friends, surrounded by nature at its most beautiful.

### What to expect

Generous sharing platters to start, followed by marinated meats and seasonal vegetable dishes and rounded off with delicious desserts and a few of our very own peppermint treats. Every dish is prepared to reflect the flavours of the farm and the season. As one guest put it, "It is rare an event delights *and* surprises – this evening did both. Stunning attention to detail, exceptional food and beautiful environment."

You can find full information and booking details on our website [summerdown.com](http://summerdown.com).

*Laura and the Summerdown team*





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## What's coming up at The Barley Mow this Summer...

### Two classics for £22

Available from 5pm Mon-Thur  
Join us and enjoy two dishes of choice from our Classics menu. From iconic staples like beer-battered fish & chips to seasonal additions like chicken schnitzel, we have a great selection that come with no washing up!



### Lunch with us

Beat those midweek blues with our wonderful lunch deal. Enjoy a selection of sandwiches, wraps and classics paired with a drink for just £12.50.



### World Cup

Thursday 11th June - Sunday 19th July

Catch every kick, cheer and goal with us. Settle in with great food, perfectly poured drinks and a brilliant atmosphere from first whistle to final goal.



### Outdoor functions & parties

Soak up the sunshine in our beautiful garden patio, now open for bookings. Whether you're planning a celebration, party or get-together, it's the perfect space to enjoy great food, drinks and good company.



Barley Mow | Oakley Lane | Basingstoke | RG23 7JZ | 01256 636 635

Follow us on social to see more of what we've got planned this season. @BarleyMowatOakley

www.barleymowoakley.co.uk

# Village



## Oakley Village Show 8 August

With less than three months to go, the committee are gearing up for their busiest time. Plans are in hand, but experience shows that the best laid plans.... well, you know how it is!

So, what do you need to know?

First up, deadlines. If you are entering the container class, entries must be submitted by 30 June and writing class entries must be submitted by 10 July. All the details are in the schedule, so please don't be disappointed by missing the deadlines.

Secondly, we do encourage you to have a go this year and hope there is a class that appeals to you. It really is fun and we promise that all entries are appreciated as, without them, the exhibits part of the show is just rows of tables, (which might pass as modern art, I suppose, but misses the point of the show). Schedules are available online at [www.ocadoakley.org.uk](http://www.ocadoakley.org.uk) or from Jolly Olly's.

Thirdly, if the date is not highlighted in your diary, do it now! There will be plenty to do and see, with an arena displaying Nik Nak's entertainment for all the family, plus singers, dancers and displays by local groups. As usual, there will be a wide variety of stalls, most of them supporting local charities or small businesses and a good selection of food and drink, ranging from beer to WI cakes.

Finally, just a reminder that your programme automatically enters you for the raffle, where you can win either £100 cash or a hamper. Last year, despite appeals through Link and social media, we were

unable to trace the winners, which was a shame. (The money was

donated to St Michael's Hospice.)

We hope that all of that has encouraged you to come and enjoy a great village family day out. And if you are able to help on the day, especially at the end of the afternoon, when we are flagging, we would be ecstatic! (anndavis48@hotmail.com)

*Ann Davis on behalf of the show committee*



## Report from the Parish Council

The Parish Council reconvened at its Annual General Meeting on Thursday 14 May. We would like to congratulate Cllr Gary McAlister on remaining as Chairman, and Cllr Trevor Green on continuing in his role as Vice Chair.

So, what's happening in June?

We are very pleased to announce that the Newfound public cricket nets will soon be installed. This will be a fantastic asset for the community and our local cricket teams alike, providing improved facilities for practice and recreation.

OCA will also be holding their Front Garden Stalls event on Saturday 13 June 12 – 4 pm, and the Parish Council will have a pitch at the Barley Mow pub during the event. Please do pop down and say hello - we would love to see you there!

Our next Councillors' Chat will take place at Jolly Olly's from 1 – 2 pm on Tuesday 26 May. Our Coffee and Chat mornings continue to be thoroughly enjoyed by residents. If you haven't attended before, please feel free to join us at Newfound Pavilion on Thursday mornings from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm for tea, biscuits, and conversation.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 18 June at 7 pm in the Newfound Pavilion. All residents are warmly welcome to attend.

*Kelly Green – Assistant Clerk,  
assistantclerk@oakleydeane-pc.gov.uk*

**OAKLEY & DEANE  
PARISH COUNCIL**

**PARISH COUNCILLOR  
CHAT SESSION**

Come along for an informal chat with your local Councillors.  
This drop-in session is open to all residents.

---

📅 **Tuesday 30 June 2026**  
🕒 **1:00 – 2:00 pm**  
📍 **Jolly Olly's, Oakley**

---

Speak directly with your councillors in a relaxed setting.  
Share what matters to you and help shape the  
future of our community.

**No appointment needed - just pop in.  
Everyone is welcome.**

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**All Welcome**

## Access to Appointments has changed

As highlighted in our last newsletter, we have now implemented our new GP Triage system.

### NEW ONLINE BOOKING

Starting Wednesday 20 May 2026

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Please see below for videos of the new system available via Youtube:

**How to Use GP Triage - For patients (short version):** [youtube.com/watch?v=RlfpB47Xwx8](https://youtube.com/watch?v=RlfpB47Xwx8)

**How to Use GP Triage - For patients (full version):** [youtube.com/watch?v=6KuSKDoyETg](https://youtube.com/watch?v=6KuSKDoyETg)

Please note that our reception team will continue to be available between 08:00 – 18:30 hrs Monday to Friday, for queries and other appointments, but we encourage use of the online service for speed and efficiency, for all those able to use it.

### NHS App – Change of Address Service

Please note that the NHS App developers are testing a Change of Address service. For more information, please visit this link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/confirm-your-home-address>

### RSV programme eligibility

Who is eligible for the RSV vaccine in the UK?

1. Older adults

Adults aged 75–79

Adults aged 80+ (no upper age limit) - Newly added from 1 April 2026.

2. All residents in care homes for older adults - Eligible regardless of age due to higher risk.

This is a major part of the 2026 expansion.

3. Pregnant women - Offered RSV vaccination from 28 weeks of pregnancy to protect newborns.

4. Infants - The UK already offers nirsevimab (a monoclonal antibody) for newborns and young infants as part of the infant RSV programme.

### Covid Spring Booster Update

Vaccinations will continue to be available until the 30 June 2026 for adults aged 75 and over, residents in care homes for older people and immunosuppressed patients. As we have completed all planned clinics, patients will need to call 119 until 29 June to book appointments at a range of community pharmacies.

### NHS app support drop-in clinic

The PPG will be running a walk-in clinic for anyone needing assistance with the NHS app on Tuesday, 30 June, 9 – 11 am at Kingsclere surgery.

**The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Watership Down Health** will be held at Overton Surgery, Overton on Monday 29 June at 6 pm.

All patients aged 18 years and over who are registered with Watership Down Health are invited to attend

The Annual Accounts will be available for inspection at Oakley, Overton and Kingsclere Surgeries from Monday 15 June.

Nominations for membership of the Executive Committee should be submitted to the Chairman by Monday 15 June and must be supported by at least 2 patients aged 18 years and over.

Notice of any resolutions to be considered should be given to the Chairman by Monday 15 June and must be tabled by not less than 10 patients aged 18 years and over.

For more information contact Chairman, Sue Berry – 01256 770565 or Secretary, Sue Carter - 01256 770681

## Coeliac UK North Hampshire Group

### Safe BBQs if Gluten-free guests are coming over

Christopher Kidd, Director of Commercial Services at Coeliac UK shares his personal story of navigating gluten-free BBQs with some simple tricks.

### Food safety

Cross-contamination happens when gluten-free food comes into contact with gluten-containing foods, surfaces or utensils, because even very small amounts of gluten can cause symptoms.

Chris relies on a few simple tricks to ensure his summer gatherings are safe and inclusive for all.

Go entirely gluten-free: Most supermarkets have GF sausages, burgers, etc., which are free from wheat.

Create safe zones: If a fully gluten-free grill is not possible, thoroughly clean with hot soapy water before you start. Use clean foil or a separate tray on the grill to keep gluten-free food separate and safe.

Keep utensils dedicated: Ensure that plates and serving utensils used for gluten-free options never touch gluten-containing items.

For more information on cross-contamination and how you can stay safe, visit our website at [coeliac.org.uk/cross-contamination](http://coeliac.org.uk/cross-contamination)

### Next meet-up

Saturday 20 June 10:30 - 12:00 at Waitrose Café, Basing View

**Contacts:** To contact the Local North Hants Group, please email [northhampshire@coeliac.org.uk](mailto: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](http://www.coeliac.org.uk/local-groups/north-hampshire)

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## **Hampshire County Councillor Report, Candovers, Oakley and Overton Division Support to help rural businesses tackle crime**

Rural businesses across Hampshire are being encouraged to sign up to a new free app designed to help tackle rural crime.

The EyesOn app, funded by Donna Jones, Police and Crime Commissioner, and supported by Hampshire Police, provides a direct and secure way for rural businesses, landowners and workers to share information with each other and with local policing teams. It replaces the previous DISC system and has been developed using feedback from those already working in our rural communities.

The app allows users to:

Report incidents quickly in a police-ready format

Share information securely with local groups and officers

Use precise location tools such as what3words for rural areas

Help police identify patterns and target organised criminal activity

This is a practical step forward in strengthening communication between rural communities and the police, helping ensure that officers can respond more effectively to the challenges faced in more isolated areas.

If you are involved in a rural business or work in the countryside, I would encourage you to download the app and consider joining the local network.

As always, please remember that emergencies or crimes in progress should still be reported via 999.

### **Hampshire's first Best Start Family Hub**

As chairman of the Children and Young People Select Committee, I am delighted to see the launch of Hampshire's first Best Start Family Hub in Leigh Park – an important step forward in how we support families across the county.

This is about making life simpler for parents and carers. Instead of having to navigate lots of different services, these hubs bring support together in one place – from pregnancy and early years through to starting school. That includes things like parenting advice, health visiting, early learning support and help for families with additional needs.

What's particularly important is the focus on early help. By identifying needs sooner and supporting families earlier, we can improve outcomes for children and reduce the need for more intensive interventions later on.

This is just the start. Around 30 hubs are planned across Hampshire by 2029, with more opening over the next year – including in places like Gosport, Alton and Andover.



It's a practical, joined-up approach that reflects something simple but important: giving children the best start in life doesn't happen in silos – it happens when services work together, locally, around families.

### **The Government's Special Educational needs and Disability (SEND) reforms**

Hampshire already started two years ago. Hampshire County Council, is responsible for around 500 schools and our 40 libraries. Over 90% of our schools are rated outstanding or good. One of the key areas of focus is Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Getting the right school place for a child with SEND can be incredibly difficult because of national legislation and the lack of sufficient funding from central government.

I hear from parents who've waited months and sometimes felt let down by the system. That's why Hampshire has approved plans for 1,000 additional specialist SEND places between 2025 and 2030. Since 2018, we've already created more than 750 new places, with another 350 in progress. Hampshire is ahead of much of the rest of the country.

For over two years, we've been rolling out our Transforming SEND programme across Hampshire - building better, more consistent SEND provision into everyday mainstream schooling, as well as creating specialist new schools. Our aim is to ensure that more children and their families get the right support, without having to fight "the system" for it. That work is already making a difference for families across the county.

Where appropriate, the strongest outcomes are often achieved in mainstream schools with specialist provision and Resourced Provision, combining targeted support with inclusive settings so children can stay local, learn alongside their peers, and avoid long daily journeys.

The government's new schools white paper, *Every child achieving and thriving*, published last month, is a significant shift in SEND policy. It acknowledges what Hampshire families have been telling us for years: too many children have been let down by a government system that forces parents to battle rather than be supported.

The reforms promise earlier intervention, even more specialist resource in mainstream schools, and £3.7 billion in new investment nationally.

Hampshire is already moving in that direction. But the new framework won't fully take effect until 2029 at the earliest. The places - and two new specialist schools - that Hampshire is already building, and the mainstream provision we're transforming right now, are what families actually need today. *Cllr Juliet Henderson*

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# Fund Raising



## Young Lives v Cancer

**M**y name is Paul Weston; I am 60 years old and have lived on Oakley Lane for over 25 years. Last August my life-long friend, Steve, received some devastating news about his 6-year-old granddaughter, Fliss. While on holiday in Spain Fliss fell seriously ill and was originally diagnosed with septic arthritis. Once back in the UK, after multiple tests, it was found she had leukaemia.

This was shattering news for the whole family. Fliss is going through several forms of painful treatments which have been very tough for her. The road ahead for her will be very difficult and her family have been suffering emotionally with her.

Young Lives v Cancer are supporting Fliss's family and many, many others by,



amongst other things, providing accommodation nearby to specialist cancer centres. The closest to Oakley is in Southampton. Fliss's Mum and Dad have been using the one near the Children's Cancer Hospital in Bristol. Parents of children suffering from cancer often have to travel long distances to be with their child. Young Lives v Cancer support the parents by letting them have a place to stay and provisions, close to where their child is being cared for.

Like most of the friends of the family, I felt completely unable to help, apart from offering emotional support. Fliss's parents told me how amazingly helpful the charity had been for them so I decided to do a sponsored bike ride to raise money for this great charity.

My aim is to cycle from John o' Groats to Land's End over 12 days in June. This will mean covering an average of 80 miles a day in that period; roughly 900 miles. My oldest son, Dan, will be my support driver from John o' Groats to Kendal. My younger son, Ben, will do the same from Kendal to Gloucester. My wife Helen will support me from Gloucester to Land's End.

### The timetable is as follows:

Friday 29 May drive from Oakley to John o' Groats  
 Saturday 30 May cycle John o' Groats to Bonar Bridge  
 Sunday 31 May Bonar Bridge to Fort William  
 Monday 1 June Fort William to Glasgow  
 Tuesday 2 June Glasgow to Moffat  
 Wednesday 3 June Moffat to Kendal  
 Thursday 4 June Kendal to Bootle  
 Friday 5 June Bootle to Wolverhampton  
 Saturday 6 June Wolverhampton to Gloucester  
 Sunday 7 June Gloucester to Bridgwater  
 Monday 8 June Bridgwater to Hatherleigh  
 Tuesday 9 June Hatherleigh to Bodmin  
 Wednesday 10 June Bodmin to Land's End

Where I cannot stay with friends or relations on the route, I have booked accommodation, paid for out of my own pocket. All sponsorship money goes directly to Young Lives v Cancer via the Just Giving page below. All I would ask is if you can visit the Just Giving page using the link or QR code below, have a read about Fliss and her family, look at the picture gallery and if you can spare any pennies that would be brilliant.

I have set myself a massive fundraising target to



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# Fund Raising



reach. Fliss and her family mean a huge amount to me and if you can help in any way, it will be going to a great cause.

[www.justgiving.com/page/paul-weston-1](http://www.justgiving.com/page/paul-weston-1)



Scan to donate

Paul Weston

## Feature



### News From Jolly Olly's Coffee Shop

#### Colour and Company Club

The calming and therapeutic benefits of colouring are well known. It is an easy and rewarding activity that anyone can participate in, but is not too complicated to prevent a little chat alongside. I felt it might be nice to introduce a Colour and Company Club at Jolly Olly's. So, between 2 pm and 3 pm every Tuesday in June, I will be reserving a table for anyone who would like to come along and colour! As a trial offer, it will cost just £2. We will provide the colouring sheets, pencils and pots of tea and biscuits for sharing. Booking is advised but not essential.

#### Wool Please!

The needles have been clicking and the wool has been disappearing! If you have any unused wool that you would like to donate to our Saturday knitting club, please drop it off at the shop. All the items the team produce are sold for charity.

#### Fathers' Day

If you are looking for a gift idea for Fathers' Day, don't forget we sell vouchers. The Summerdown mint chocolate is also delicious and a real treat for Dad!

#### Cash Preferred! Thank You!

Thank you to those who have responded to our sign in the shop and paid by cash rather than card whenever possible. Cash is much less expensive to bank for us. By using it you are helping us to keep our prices lower.

#### Calling all Cyclists..

Visit us with you bike any weekday between 2 pm and 3 pm in June and we will give you free tea with any cake or sandwich purchased on quoting code JOLLYCYCLEJUNE.

#### Reminder...

We are open on Mondays!

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Find us on Facebook, Trip Advisor and Instagram

## Feature



### What does the Renters' Rights Act mean for you?

Citizens Advice Basingstoke is an independent charity providing free, confidential and impartial advice for local people.

Here, we look at the Renters' Rights Act, which came into effect on 1 May 2026, bringing some big changes for renters in England, including:

You can't be refused by a landlord or letting agent because you have children or receive welfare benefits.

You won't have to enter a bidding war. Landlords can only advertise a fixed price and cannot accept higher than what they advertised for.

You won't have to pay more in advance. Landlords can only charge one month or four weeks' rent before you move in.

Your landlord will only be able to evict you if they

have a reason, called a 'ground', e.g. if you have rent arrears, cause a nuisance to your neighbours or if they want to sell the property or live in it.

You can find out more about preparing to rent from a private landlord on the Citizens Advice website: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/starting-to-rent-from-a-private-landlord/preparing-to-rent-from-a-private-landlord/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/starting-to-rent-from-a-private-landlord/preparing-to-rent-from-a-private-landlord/)

If you are in need of advice, whatever your enquiry involves, please call our advice line free on 0808 2787829. Details of our weekly drop-in advice sessions held in Buckskin, Oakridge, Popley and the town centre library can be found on [www.cabasingstoke.org.uk](http://www.cabasingstoke.org.uk). Alternatively, please send in your enquiry online using our client enquiry form: [www.cabasingstoke.org.uk/email](http://www.cabasingstoke.org.uk/email).

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Lucy Sweet



## Hello from St Leonard's Pre-School

Did someone say pizza? This term during cooking week all the children will be making pizzas.

They will be making the base and then selecting from a choice of toppings. We are fortunate at St Leonard's to have a different volunteer each day to help the children make pizzas.

As part of our transition process for children starting school in September, school starters will be having regular PE sessions. This will also involve developing their self-care skills. The children will have shorts and t-shirt to change into. They will be practising getting changed and dressed afterwards and putting their socks back on which, when you are only three or four years old, is quite tricky!



The photo is from the visit to the pre-school by our community police officer Andy Jones.

We are open term time only on Monday 9 - 12 pm, and Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 9 - 3 pm for children aged two to four years.

If you would like to know more about the preschool, please contact us on 07772378265 or email [preschool@oww.church](mailto:preschool@oww.church) or look at our website [stleonards-preschool.co.uk](http://stleonards-preschool.co.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.

*Caroline Edwards, St Leonard's Pre-School Manager*



We are loving these sunnier days and have the bikes out ready to go most mornings! We have been able to do more water play, which is a fun opportunity to explore and experiment – also developing our skills including colour mixing and recognition, pouring, filling, turn taking, fine motor control and building language.

We raised a brilliant sum from our raffle and so are using these funds to book in some exciting activities over the Summer term.

*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.



## Oakley Scout & Guide Premises Committee Charity Number 302204 AGM invitation

Date: Monday 15 June 2026, Time: 7:30 pm

Venue: Oakley Scout & Guide Premises, St John's Piece, Oakley, RG23 7JQ

Shape the future of our shared premises.

We invite all members, supporters and friends of the Oakley Scout and Guide communities to attend our Annual General Meeting. This is a wonderful chance to celebrate the year's achievements, discuss plans for our shared premises and collaborate on future projects. New faces and long-standing members alike are warmly welcomed.

Review milestones and highlights from the past year.

Elect committee officers.

Provide feedback and new ideas.

Contribute to decisions about premises development.

Refreshments will be provided. Come along, share your voice and help us build a better space for everyone!

*Caroline Lloyd*



## News from Cranbourne

It's been another busy month at Cranbourne, filled with GCSE exams, student leadership elections and school trips.

Our Year 9 students had the opportunity to tour Winchester University and learn more about what it's like to be a student there. They found out about different pathways into higher education and the types of courses on offer, before viewing one of their lecture halls and having a go at



delivering a lecture to their peers! Touring the campus and seeing the halls of residence had them envisioning what their future as a student could look like and

they spent the coach journey home excited about life beyond Cranbourne.

Year 9 Drama have been participating in a creative careers project delivered by Scratch Built Productions, where they are working towards a Bronze Arts Award (Level 1). They had a fantastic



time exploring immersive theatre and puppetry in an exciting workshop delivered by Becky and Nick. Our students are looking forward to being a

part of Basingstoke Festival later this month and supporting the opening of The Toy Hospital.

We're delighted to have been awarded the Bronze Green Trees Award from the Woodlands Trust in recognition of our efforts in making Cranbourne greener. We're already making plans to achieve our silver and gold award very soon!

The PE Department are busy with preparations for our day of sport, where students embrace their house spirit as they compete in various activities. It's always wonderful to see our students get so competitive whilst displaying fantastic showmanship and support to one another. Austen House took home the gold last year, but who will be 2026's winners?

*Chloe-Mai Parfitt*

## Celebrating Success at Testbourne

At Testbourne Community School, we've been excited to reintroduce our house system this term, alongside a refreshed approach to recognising student achievement. Our recognition points reward positive behaviour and encourage contributions in lessons. From answering correct questions to having a top score in quizzes, recognition points are our way of helping children see their achievements reflected in a wider contribution towards their houses, encouraging teamwork and accountability.

We're aiming high, working towards a 6:1 ratio of positive recognition points to behaviour points, reinforcing a culture where success and effort are at the forefront. We have also been rolling out badges for students to earn, reflecting how many recognition points they've earned. These have been made in-house by our very own DT department using their laser cutter machinery for a custom design. When a student achieves 100 recognition points, they are awarded their bronze badge, 200 points and they achieve a silver badge and when a student gains 300 points they get their gold badge.

This has been a great initiative so far this year, with every Friday morning dedicated to awarding certificates for those who have achieved the most recognition points that week. We continue to be proud of our students and their dedication and success to their learning.

*Matthew Turner*

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# Gardening

## Oakley Gardening Club

At our gardening club meeting on 11 May, we welcomed Pamela Holt talking to us about French landscapes and their gardens, arrangement of plants, shrubs, plus where the statues should be placed. Pamela also spoke about the history of the gardens and showed us some slides, which were very interesting.

Our next meeting will be on 1 June at St



Leonard's Centre, Oakley, at 7:30 pm on an introduction to garden design by Katherine Lee. We welcome all visitors. For more information, please contact Maureen on 780788.

*Diane*

# Letters

## Thank You

Thank you to everyone who voted in this year's Borough Council election. I am very grateful to everyone who placed their trust in me to represent Oakley & The Candovers as a borough councillor. Whether you voted for me or not, I will do my best to represent all residents across the ward.

Many people will already know me through my community activities over recent years in Oakley including events, Neighbourhood Watch, the Parish Council and helping residents with local matters. I have tried to listen to people and help where I can, and that will continue in this new role. Being involved locally has always mattered to me and, over the years I have learned a lot from the people and groups who do so much for our community.

A lot of my time over recent years has been focused on Oakley, and this new role gives me the opportunity to work with people right across the ward. Oakley & The Candovers is made up of many different communities, each with their own priorities and local challenges. I look forward to working across the area in the years ahead, helping make sure that the views and priorities of our local communities are not overlooked as the future of North Hampshire is shaped.

The election may now be over, but the work continues. Becoming a Borough Councillor gives me

another way to help local areas and work on the issues that matter to residents.

Thank you again for all the support, encouragement and conversations along the way. I look forward to continuing to work with people across the area in the years ahead.

For any questions or ideas:

Email [alex@alexrowley.uk](mailto:alex@alexrowley.uk) | WhatsApp 07445 093986 | Phone 01256 592443

*Alex Rowley*

## Dear Editor

It is amazing how AI has crept in to so many aspects of our lives and it was only the other day I happened to look on the bottom of the container that claims, "I can't believe it's not butter." Well, it isn't butter, the truth is in the title. How can an 86 year old man, along with I am sure many others, be so gullible. It spreads better than the real thing, pricewise too it certainly comes out as good value, but there is not an iota of dairy product in its make-up.

Water, vegetable oil, rapeseed, palm, sunflower - in varying proportion, salt and emulsifiers - but no mention of butter. So should that word - even though it's "not", be on the packing at all.

It's a confusing old world.

*Graeme Hewitt*

# Conservation



## Oakley Woodlands Group

The Woodlands Group is on its summer recess at the moment, but it is a good time to have a look round the woods and do a bit of tree spotting.



Birch (*Betula pubescens*) is a common species of tree found in St John's and Cowdown copses. It is a native tree which can grow up to 30 metres tall. It has white bark, and the trunk can be quite rough. The twigs are used for the traditional besom (witches broom). It is a relatively short-lived tree that rots quickly once on the ground, and fungi can frequently be seen growing on fallen or dying specimens. Several specific fungi are associated with birch including the poisonous fly agric.

The tree also provides food and habitat for more than 300 insect species, making it important for the food chain that sustains a variety of wildlife. Woodpeckers often find lodgings in holes in birch, and the seeds are eaten by birds including greenfinches.



Birch is a pioneer species. It spreads easily by suckering and is often first to colonise scrub land ahead of other trees in natural reforestation. An example of this can be seen on the land adjacent to Cowdown copse, between Fox Lane and the copse. (See photograph). As with many trees, they have myths attached, and in early Celtic mythology bundles of birch twigs were used to drive out the spirits of the old year. Perhaps this is where they became the preferred mode of transport for witches.

Don't forget: no work parties until September.  
Email: oakleywoodlands@gmail.com

Alan Merry

## Hark to the Bees and Pollinators!

Have you been to the Willis Museum, Basingstoke *Inside the Bee Hive* exhibition yet? (On until 28 June) If not, do go, as it tells you so much about our bees and



pollinators, their history, their importance to us, honey production, our natural world and what we can do to keep them thriving. It is indeed a fascinating 'Bee Story'. And I want to continue this story with mini monthly updates on what's up with the bees and pollinators through the seasons. So do read on!

## There are three main types of bees:

The solitary bee, the much loved bumblebee, the honey bee. May is a very busy month for all of these bee types. This month I will focus more on the solitary bee.

Solitary bees have a very short life-cycle as they emerge from a 10 - 11 months pupae 'sleep' between March and May. Their priorities are to mate, find a nest, lay eggs and provision the emerging larva. Solitary bees are the most important bees for our fruit farmers as the bumblebees and honey bees take longer to get going and, without the solitary bee, we wouldn't have our orchard fruits, soft fruits and other foods which depend on April - May pollination.

[charlesbutler400foundation.org.uk/](http://charlesbutler400foundation.org.uk/)

The egg-laying task is hard work as she creates a single chamber per egg, often in a long tube like structure as you see in the bug hotels, sealing it up before she starts on the next egg. Once she's done [after 4 to 6 weeks], she's worn out and dies.

The size and variety of solitary bees is huge. There is no need to be nervous around these bees as most are stingless and, those that have very mild stings, are certainly not that interested in us humans as they are far too busy trying to fill their tubular nests with as many eggs as they



# Conservation



can for that short active life.

*Kenneth and Barbara Robson on behalf of CB400 Foundation*

*Please contact us on 07725 832964 if you want to know more about bees and how to help them and our natural environment.*

## Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

### The cuckoo is back

The call of the cuckoo 'cuck-oo, cuck-oo' is one of the most evocative sounds of spring, carrying over open countryside, reedbeds and edges of woodland. Males are the first to return and they waste no time announcing their presence loudly as they establish territories and attract females.

The cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*) has a grey head, barred underparts and bright yellow eye-ring. Sleek and falcon-like, it has pointed wings that droop slightly when perched and a long, graduated tail. It gives an uncanny resemblance to a sparrowhawk in flight and the two are often confused - look at the tail to help distinguish between them.

The cuckoo has an extraordinary breeding behaviour. Rather than building a nest, cuckoos are brood parasites, laying their eggs in the nests of other birds such as reed



*Cuckoo—Jon Hawkins\_Surrey Hills Photography*

warblers, meadow pipits and dunnocks. The female waits patiently for her moment, often when the host is away, before swiftly laying a single egg. Remarkably, these eggs often closely resemble those of their host species.

Once hatched, the young cuckoo wastes no time. Using a remarkable instinct, it pushes any other eggs or chicks out of the nest, ensuring it receives all the food brought by its unsuspecting foster parents. Its loud begging call mimics a whole brood of chicks, prompting the adults to work tirelessly, even as the young cuckoo grows far larger than them. Cuckoos are also valuable insect hunters, feeding largely on invertebrates, with hairy caterpillars a particular favourite - prey avoided by many other birds.

Cuckoos are long-distance travellers, spending the winter in sub-Saharan Africa before returning to the UK in spring. Their stay is short-lived: many adult cuckoos begin their return journey south as early as late June, with young birds following weeks later on an instinctive migration to Africa.

Sadly, the cuckoo's call is no longer as widespread as it once was. Declines in UK populations are linked to habitat loss, pressures on their host species and challenges along migration routes.

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust works to drive nature's recovery by restoring and protecting vital habitats, from reedbeds and wetlands to woodlands and grazing marshes, supporting cuckoos and the species they depend on. By restoring these habitats at scale and creating richer, more connected landscapes, the Trust is helping ensure that this much-loved sound of spring continues to echo across our countryside for years to come. Find out more about how to support the Trust by joining as a member on the Trust website: [hiwwt.org.uk/support-us](http://hiwwt.org.uk/support-us)

*Helen Skelton-Smith*



**OVERTON  
ART  
GROUP**

Save the Date! Overton Art Group Summer Exhibition Saturday 22 to Sunday 23 August, Overton Recreation Centre, Bridge Street.  
*Nandita Hoyes*



*Balloon over Oakley, 26 April 2026, Chris Burrowes*

# Church News



## Oakley Methodist Church 160th Anniversary

Our little chapel by the pond is 160 years old this year and we are celebrating with an open weekend on 13 and 14 June.

You may be surprised what goes on in the chapel during the week so come along on the 13 June from 2 to 4:30 pm and have a look at the displays from our groups who meet weekly or monthly as well as our Tuesday fortnightly coffee morning. We will also have a history table and light refreshments will be available with donations to charity.

Our anniversary service will be held on Sunday 14 June at 10:30 am followed by refreshments and a special anniversary cake.

Everyone is welcome and we look forward to seeing you there.

*Dick Chatterton*

## Oakley Methodist Church

All welcome at the Methodist Church coffee morning on Tuesday 9 June and Tuesday 23 June 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*

**Oakley Methodist Church**  
1866 2026  
**160th Anniversary Celebration**

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June**  
**Open Afternoon**  
2.00 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.  
Displays from Flower Groups, Youth Group,  
Lace Group and Chapel History.  
Refreshments Available

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June**  
**10.30 a.m. Anniversary Service**  
Followed by Refreshments

Everybody welcome at the  
Chapel By The Pond

# Pause For Thought



## Pause for Thought

I wonder if you have been as interested as I have in the adventures of the Artemis space mission recently. To see the technology that enables humanity to explore new horizons is something I've always found fascinating, and space would be top of my list of places to explore if I was able.

I grew up watching science fiction programmes like Star Trek with my family so maybe that's where the interest started: "To explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilisations, to boldly go where no one has gone before". Science fiction is still one of my favourite genres of books to read as I love how authors can explore very real issues in an imaginative way.

One book I love is called *To be taught, if fortunate* which follows a long term space mission in the far future seeking possible inhabitable worlds. The title is taken from a recording sent into space in 1977, spoken by the then secretary general of the UN: "I send greetings on behalf of the people of our planet.

We step out of our solar system into the universe seeking only peace and friendship, to teach if we are called upon, to be taught if we are fortunate. We know full well that our planet and all its inhabitants are but a small part of the immense universe that surrounds us and it is with humility and hope that we take this step".

I love that the heart of this quote, and the book that uses it for its title, is curiosity - what can I learn from those who are different from me? We know that as humans we can often be motivated by fear of the other, but this quote challenges that, and encourages us to put aside our worries, to be open, to ask questions and to be willing to learn. In a world of fear, curiosity is the antidote as it takes us outside ourselves, to experience something new. So let me encourage you today to be willing "to be taught, if fortunate".

*Rev Ceri Deosun*

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# Ladies Societies



## Oakley Afternoon WI

The speaker at our April Meeting was Graham Bowyer. His talk was entitled *Japanese gardens*. He told members about three different Japanese gardens. These were the Diemyo Garden, the Temple Garden and the Tea Garden. He explained the origins and meaning of these gardens and the various plants grown in them.

Following this most informative talk Annee Charland then gave the vote of thanks.

Tea and cakes were then served. This was followed by some business including a report about the lovely day some members had spent at Bowood Gardens on a trip with Mervyn's Coaches. There was a reminder to bring bottles along for the tombola stall at the village show.

Our monthly meetings are held on the 3rd 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 07905279702.

*Janie Vickers*

## Oakley & Deane WI

The hall where Oakley & Deane WI hold their monthly meetings, Oakley Village Hall, Station Road, has recently had a defibrillator installed on an outside wall. So our WI organised a defibrillator & CPR familiarisation for some of our

members and other people from the village. This was followed by refreshments, and all attendees said that if they encountered someone who was having a heart attack or cardiac arrest, they felt confident about what should be done.

Our WI have collected toiletries for the foodbank for several years. Recently we took the last few months of donations to the foodbank: they are given to foodbank clients and to those in the local refuge.

On 12 May Oakley & Deane WI had our annual meeting and a quiz. There were seven members who were nominated for the committee and Sally D was appointed as president unopposed. For a bit of fun we had a quiz in teams, with nibbles on each table.

Oakley & Deane also have a walking group that meets the last Sunday in the month plus other days during the month when they can be fitted in and a Scrabble group that meets once a month.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 9 June at 7:30 pm at Oakley Village Hall, Station Road, Oakley. We are having a Midsummer Cabaret Kings of Swing with Paul Hudson. This should be a nice evening with a chance to wear our posh frocks and pearls.

Any ladies over 18 are always welcome at our meetings to see what we do and what events we organise. The entrance is free for your first two visits. You do not have to be able to make jam or cakes to join this WI. It is a great way to discover friends you have not met yet and to promote women's views and discuss problems.

Future events and reports on past activities can be found on our website [oakleydeanewi.weebly.com](http://oakleydeanewi.weebly.com) and on our Facebook page [facebook.com/oakleyanddeaneWI](https://www.facebook.com/oakleyanddeaneWI). We can also be contacted by email

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

*Barbara, on behalf of Oakley & Deane WI*

*Editor's note: A list of all village locations where Defibrillators are located can be found in each Link on page 38.*



members and other people from the village.

The session was run by three people from *Saving lives together*. They had lots of dummies so we were all able to have a go at CPR and they explained exactly how to use a defib. We ended with questions, including how to do CPR and a defib on women by cutting through bras, and this can increase the number of women getting help, which is normally low

## Basingstoke Ladies Probus Club

### Five great women!

At the April meeting, the members of the Basingstoke Ladies' Probus Club sat mesmerized



indoors by the achievements of five women scientists to whom so much is owed, all explained by Dr Ian Goodall. A retired headteacher of Yateley School with degrees from four UK universities and an encyclopaedic knowledge of his subject, he brought the following very much to life:

Marie Curie (1867–1934) was a Polish-born physicist and chemist who pioneered the study of

# Ladies Societies



radioactivity. Working with her husband Pierre Curie, she discovered polonium and radium and laid the foundations of modern nuclear science. After his death, she became the first female professor at the University of Paris and led vital First World War medical innovations, including mobile X-ray units that treated over a million soldiers. She was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize.

Rosalind Franklin (1920–1958) was a British scientist whose X-ray crystallography work was crucial to revealing the structure of DNA. Her “Photograph 51” provided key evidence of the molecule’s double helix form. Although her contribution was not fully recognised during her lifetime, her research was essential to one of the greatest scientific discoveries of the 20th century.

Dorothy Hodgkin (1910–1994) was a British chemist and Nobel Prize winner who advanced X-ray crystallography to determine the structures of key biological molecules. She solved the structures of penicillin, vitamin B12 and insulin, transforming medicine and enabling new treatments, particularly for diabetes. Despite chronic rheumatoid arthritis, she continued to lead major scientific breakthroughs and became the only British woman to win the Nobel Prize in chemistry.

Rachel Carson (1907–1964) was an American biologist and author whose book *Silent Spring* exposed the environmental damage caused by synthetic pesticides. Her work led to major policy changes, including restrictions on DDT, and helped launch the modern environmental movement. She

combined science and writing to bring ecological issues to global attention and influenced the creation of the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Lynn Margulis (1938–2011) was an American biologist who transformed evolutionary theory with her endosymbiosis model. She proposed that complex cells evolved through symbiotic partnerships, such as mitochondria originating as independent organisms. Her ideas, initially widely rejected, are now fundamental to biology.

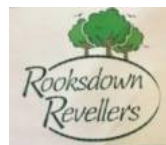
As well as highlighting their discoveries, Dr. Goodall was clear how these very special people had to work extra hard to gain recognition, because they were women. Understandably he had a particularly appreciative audience.

If interested to know more about BLPC membership and the upcoming programme, contact:

The Admin Secretary -

[reverendjane@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:reverendjane@hotmail.co.uk) - 07754 296994

Annie Vicars



Affiliated to Hampshire County Federation of the WI

‘It’s never too late...’

Being in the main “ladies of a certain age”, the Rookdown Revellers WI were particularly interested to listen and learn from their April speaker, a personal trainer who changed her life some years ago through developing a passion for exercise and healthy living, imparting her knowledge particularly to menopausal and perimenopausal women.

Sari Kalanti, a theatre nurse by day, delivered to her very receptive audience some blistering statistics, reflecting the allocation – or lack of – funding for women’s health, along with facts and figures relating to the menopause and preventable osteoporosis through strength training and exercise. A very solid message was, “It’s never too late to work on both” and the speaker expounded particularly her view on the benefits of that controversial subject, HRT – its pros and cons. She had her audience right there!

But thoughts were provoked in a different way on a recent outing to Bletchley Park, the British government’s cryptological establishment in operation during World War 2. This establishment was the base from where Alan Turing and other agents of the ultra intelligence project decoded the enemy’s secret messages, most notably those that had been encrypted with the German Enigma Tunny cipher machines. Indeed, experts have suggested that the Bletchley Park code breakers may have shortened the war by as much as two years.

If curious to know more about this active group, contact [pat.dominey152@icloud.com](mailto:pat.dominey152@icloud.com) Annie Vicars

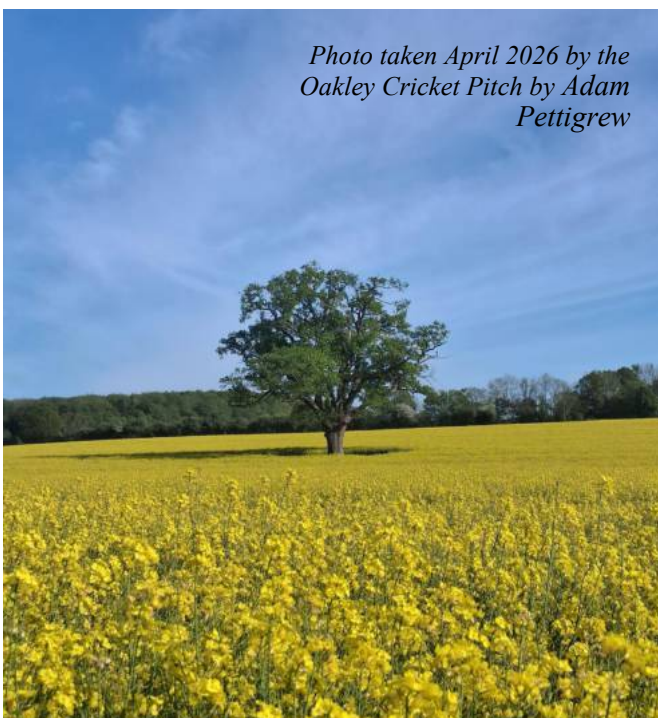


Photo taken April 2026 by the Oakley Cricket Pitch by Adam Pettigrew

Graham Brown

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# Local News



## Andover Chamber Choir invites audiences to revisit childhood with *Rhymes and Recollections*

Andover Chamber Choir is set to transport audiences back to the carefree days of youth with their charming and evocative upcoming concert, *Rhymes and recollections: a choral collection of childhood songs*. This unique performance weaves together familiar nursery rhymes, beloved literature and masterful choral arrangements that celebrate the wonder and nostalgia of childhood, promising a captivating evening for all ages.

The programme is an eclectic and beautifully curated mix, showcasing the choir's versatility and passion for diverse choral repertoire. Highlights include John Rutter's charming *Five childhood lyrics*, a playful arrangement of *Teddy bears' picnic* by Andrew Carter, and Eric Whitacre's ethereal setting of the Rudyard Kipling poem *The seal lullaby* - a piece renowned for its poignant beauty. Adding a rich layer of literary charm, the evening will be interspersed with prose from iconic children's authors, including A A Milne and Beatrix Potter, grounding the musical pieces in cherished childhood narratives.

The programme touches on the universal themes of innocence, memory and comfort, and Andover Chamber Choir invites everyone - from those who grew up singing these tunes, to music lovers discovering them anew - to join them for an evening of musical reflection and joyful recollection.

The concert takes place at 7:30 pm, Saturday 18 July, Farleigh School, Andover, SP11 7PW. Tickets are £15 on the door or £12 in advance from The Lights (in person and online) or through choir members. Under 16s are admitted free.

Proceeds are in aid of Andover Young Carers, providing vital support and respite to young carers in Andover and the surrounding area.

Veronica Bacon

## Do you love to sing? We do.

All members of Hampshire Harmony love to sing together, songs ranging from pop and jazz and folk songs to songs from shows and even choral sacred music. There's something for everyone at a concert by Hampshire Harmony. We are an upper voice choir based in Basingstoke, with a growing reputation across the county.

We have just returned from the Fareham Music Festival, where we competed in four contrasting sections ranging from songs from the shows to single voice choir. We achieved honours

grades in all four sections, winning the cup again this year, for choral sacred music.

You can hear us as we sing alongside Tenors Unlimited at The Lights, Andover, on Thursday June 11 and also on the afternoon of July 12 at Costello School, Basingstoke, for our annual concert, *A Summer Serenade*. Tickets and more information are available via the website at [hampshireharmony.org](http://hampshireharmony.org)

We have lots of fun together; we run workshops and have training days in addition to our regular practices on Monday evenings. Our MD, Clare Oliver, is a wonderful leader and voice coach, who is ambitious for our future. We shall be singing at the Tower of London this Christmas!

If you are thinking of joining a choir and you are an adult, who sings Alto, Mezzo or Soprano, contact us via the website and follow us on Facebook and Instagram so you can keep up with what's on.

You can also meet us at St Bede's Summer Fair 5 June and at the Oakley Village Show 8 August.

We look forward to entertaining you or maybe to you joining us. 🎵 🎵

Margaret Allen

ANDOVER CHAMBER CHOIR

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## Overton Choral Society

The first concert given by the Hampshire Choral Festival at Thornden Hall on 9 May was very well received. The joint choirs of Botley Choral, Overton Choral and Winchester City Choir, with soloists Helen Bailey, Anna Loveday, Thomas Humphreys and John Upperton performed Rossini *Petite Mess Solennelle*. Conducted by David Burgess with accompanist Katherine Jones and accordionist Ben de Sousa, it was an exciting work to sing.

Each year, the seven choirs that make up the Hampshire Choral festival are given a choice to sing one of two works and six of the seven requested to sing the *Charpentier Te Deum* which we have not performed since 1999, so we will all be performing together in Romsey Abbey, date soon to be released.

We are in the final rehearsals for our Summer Concert with afternoon tea on Saturday 20 June in St Mary's Hall. We do hope you can come. Tickets are already selling so please don't miss out. All allergies catered for and please be aware that the entrance to St Mary's Hall has steps.

Lyn Hardy

## Probus Club Cruise the Basingstoke Canal

A relaxing afternoon spent cruising the Basingstoke canal was enjoyed by members and their spouses of the Probus Club of Basingstoke. Organised by Probus member Chris Perkins MVO, a retired RAF officer, he explained, "We boarded at Odiham and travelled a return journey to Church Crookham with an on-board galley serving snacks and drinks and commentary by "Skipper" Tony Webb who pointed out places of interest and wildlife en-route".

They travelled on the boat 'John Pinkerton' which was named after the original contractor when the canal was opened in 1794 connecting Basingstoke with the River Thames at Weybridge via the Wey Navigation. Over the years there were tunnel collapses, bankruptcies, falling demand and constant limited water supply which all conspired to ensure the canal was never a commercial success. A planned connection from Basingstoke to meet the Kennet & Avon canal at Newbury never came to fruition. By 1950 the lack of maintenance meant the canal was derelict and it took fifteen years of restoration until 1991 for the canal to be opened as a fully navigable waterway for 32 miles.

Today, the Basingstoke canal provides a superb facility for water activities, a haven for wildlife (it is an SSSI) an amenity for recreation and wellbeing, and a heritage asset thanks to the team of volunteer restorers of the Basingstoke Canal Society. Today, it is run by the Basingstoke Canal Authority financed by Hampshire and Surrey County Councils and local councils along its restored length.

For more information about the Probus Club of Basingstoke see [www.probusbasingstoke.club](http://www.probusbasingstoke.club) or email their secretary [secretaryprobusbasingstoke@outlook.com](mailto:secretaryprobusbasingstoke@outlook.com) or phone 07814 937202.

Paul Flint

### Jazz on a summer's afternoon

Join **Basingstoke Concert Band** for a relaxing afternoon of live jazz and summer favourites on

**Sunday 5 July 2026 at 3 pm**

Sit back and enjoy an entertaining programme of toe-tapping music in the welcoming surroundings of **Sherfield-on-Loddon Village Garden**

Your ticket also includes tea or coffee and a delicious slice of home-made cake

Venue: Sherfield-on-Loddon Village Hall, Reading Road, Sherfield-on-Loddon RG27 0EZ

Tickets: **£12 (under 16's £5)** available from: <https://ticketlab.co.uk/events/BCBand#/>

or directly from band members

Bring family and friends and spend a delightful summer afternoon enjoying great music, refreshments and community spirit

Overton Choral Society presents  
**Summer Concert**  
with afternoon tea  
Celebrating over 100 years of our choir with a medley of classical favourites  
Saturday 20 June 2026, 2.30pm. Doors open at 2pm  
St Mary's Hall, Overton  
Tickets  
£15 per person  
Ticket price includes a full afternoon tea  
Admission by pre-booked ticket  
Scan the QR code to book online  
or visit  
[www.overtonchoralsociety.org.uk/events.php](http://www.overtonchoralsociety.org.uk/events.php)  
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ACCA

# Local News



## Whitchurch Silk Mill

Whitchurch Silk Mill has an exciting programme of events this June and into early July, offering something for everyone, from creative workshops and fascinating talks to family-friendly activities and special community celebrations.

A highlight of the month is the flower festival (19 – 21 June, 10:30 am – 5 pm), celebrating creativity, nature and the local community. Visitors can enjoy a wide variety of imaginative floral installations throughout the Mill and its grounds, including fresh, crafted, stitched and recycled designs. There will also be demonstrations and activities for families, plant and honey stalls, and a unique opportunity to explore soil health with the Soil Smiths, who will examine visitors' soil samples under a microscope. Pre-booking is essential, with tickets priced at £10 for adults while children under 16 go free.

Earlier in the month, the Mill hosts a delightful regency picnic (6 June, 3 – 7 pm) on the banks of the River Test. Following last year's success, this elegant outdoor event returns with refreshments, performances, craft activities and the chance to explore the Mill. Guests are encouraged to dress in regency attire for a truly immersive experience.

For those interested in history and textiles, an online talk on 11 June explores the recreation of a suit worn by George Washington in 1789, using silk woven at Whitchurch. This fascinating international collaboration highlights the Mill's continuing role in historic textile production.

Looking ahead to July, visitors can also enjoy an engaging talk on 7 July about Levi Strauss & Co., tracing the origins of blue jeans and the global influence of denim, presented by the company's historian.

The Mill's popular heritage craft workshops continue throughout June, providing hands-on opportunities to learn new skills. These include a beginner's crochet session creating classic "granny squares," a

weaving workshop where participants make their own wall hanging, and a full-day willow workshop to craft a decorative chicken sculpture. These sessions are ideal for beginners and experienced makers alike, with all materials provided.

Visitors wanting a deeper insight into the Mill's workings can join the silk production tour (23 June). This guided experience takes participants behind the scenes to see historic looms in action and hear the stories of the Mill's skilled weavers, bringing this unique piece of industrial heritage to life.

Most events require advance booking, and tickets can be purchased via the Mill shop or website. Whether you are looking for a relaxing day out, a

creative workshop, or a chance to learn something new, Whitchurch Silk Mill offers a rich and varied programme this summer.

*Sue Tapliss*

**Big Wheel**  
**Sunday 14 June 2026**  
 War Memorial Park, Basingstoke  
 Join the Journey, Support the Cause

Pick your distance  
 9.5 miles 23 miles 57 miles 78 miles

Little Wheels Children's Lap  
 Pedal or scoot around the park!

Scan the QR code to sign up now!

Find out more: [stmichaelsospice.org.uk/big-wheel](http://stmichaelsospice.org.uk/big-wheel)

**BMVC**  
 Basingstoke Male Voice Choir

*Sounds of Summer*  
 A concert by the Basingstoke Male Voice Choir

7:30 pm on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June  
 All Saints Church, Southern Rd, RG21 3EA

Doors open at 7:00 pm  
 Tickets £12:00 from Ticket Source:  
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/bmvc>

<https://basingstokemvc.org.uk>

**u3a**  
 Overton & District

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times - Charles Dickens

Brian and Jacqueline Sutton return to tell us about the life of the great author and social campaigner; his stories, wisdom, characters and human; his controversial love life including 'The invisible woman'.

The Charles Dickens you never knew. Join Mr and Mrs Bumble in the front parlour...

Join us for this talk on  
 Wednesday 17 June at 10 a.m.  
 St Mary's Hall, Overton  
 Free to members - Non-members £3 on the door

# Feature



## Action Hampshire

### Understanding Rural Affordable Housing and Its Potential Role Locally

**D**o you know a young person who has had to move away because they couldn't afford to live locally?

In many rural parts of Hampshire, housing is expensive. Younger adults, aged 35 and under, are often forced to move away, families can struggle to find suitable homes, and key workers may be unable to live in the communities they serve.

Rural affordable housing helps address this challenge. These are homes offered at costs local people can afford, including affordable rent and shared ownership options. Applicants must have a connection to the local area, ensuring homes go to those who already live, work or have family there.

Even a small number of affordable homes (five to ten properties) can make a real difference. They help younger residents stay close to family and friends, support those living in overcrowded housing or looking to downsize, and enable key workers such as teachers, carers and tradespeople to live locally.

Affordable housing also benefits the wider



*New rural exception site in Longstock delivering five affordable homes for local people*

community. For example, research by the Rural Services Network shows that just ten new homes can generate £1.4 million in economic activity and support 26 jobs, helping sustain schools, shops, pubs, and other essential services.

Action Hampshire works with local communities and parish councils to explore opportunities for affordable housing. You can help by contacting your parish council to highlight the need in your area, and by encouraging them to contact us to discuss how new affordable homes could benefit your community.

*Luke Buckland, Community Projects Assistant*

# Free Ads



*All entries should be sent in writing to Maureen Dallaway, by 15 June for inclusion in next month's Link. Entries may also be sent by e-mail to [freeads@oakleylink.org.uk](mailto:freeads@oakleylink.org.uk) Please include an address or telephone number.*

Comta Rubasse **dining/stand chair**, modern design, sturdy white moulded plastic, chrome steel legs; approx. dimensions: 49 cm W x 52.5 cm D x 77 cm H. No obligation inspection welcome. Can deliver locally. £15 tel. 07879 467242.

**Purple leather small satchel**, quality leather with carry handle, detachable shoulder strap with comfort pad; two internal compartments with zip closures, lilac fabric lining; buckle straps on side for umbrella; two external pockets with magnetic clasps; approx. 39 cm W x 29 cm H. No obligation inspection welcome. Can deliver locally. £20 tel. 07879 467242.

Artist's proof print "**Bearmen of the Board**" signed by the artist Sue Willis - delightful depiction of six teddy bears as board members, sitting at a table with agendas, pens, etc; print size is approx. 25 cm

high x 53 cm wide; moulded wooden frame size is approx. 40 cm high x 67.5 cm wide. No obligation inspection welcome. Can deliver locally. £60. tel. 07879 467242.

Collection of 8 x

### **Commemorative Mugs of Royal Occasions:**

Coronations: Queen Elizabeth II (x 2), King Edward VIII; Silver Jubilee: Queen Mary & King George V, Queen Elizabeth II (x 2), Prince Charles & Lady Diana Spencer wedding (x2). No obligation inspection welcome. Can deliver locally. £15. Tel 07879 467242.



**Plate to cover bobbin** on Stella Elna Sewing machine. Would the lady living in The Drive who collected the named sewing machine for free come to collect this found item. Tel. 07766282890

# Walking



## Oakley Ramblers

On a warm, sunny Sunday in April a group walked a 6.5 mile route around the village of Wherwell and its surrounding area. We started the walk by visiting the beautiful Wherwell nature reserve, a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, with the River Test meandering through it. Then, we continued beside fields and down a hawthorn-edged path which opened out to give beautiful views across the Test Valley. The walk also



took us through the hamlet of Goodworth Clatford and Harewood Forest which was awash with bluebells.

On Wednesday 13 May a small group enjoyed a beautiful walk in the Odiham and Winchfield area. The walk took us through fields, pasture, past a lake, through an old working farm and along the Basingstoke canal. We saw plenty of wildlife



including some ducklings, a fledgling blue tit and a deer. This walk will be repeated on another day as the poor weather forecast put off a few this time.

One of our members, Pat, has recently completed a sponsored 26-mile walk for the Alzheimer's Society. She walked the route near Stonehenge in just over nine hours and 6 minutes in very variable weather,

starting with fog then changing to beautiful sunshine and ending with heavy rain. Congratulations to Pat on an excellent achievement and for raising almost £1000 for the Alzheimer's Society,

Oakley Ramblers is a friendly group; we always welcome visitors who can try us out before joining. Our planned walks for June are Wednesday 10th, Thursday 18th, and Sunday 28th. Details of our walks are published on our website a week before the walk takes place. Why not come along and try us out in 2026?

Find us on Facebook or visit our website for more information. [www.oakleyramblers.org](http://www.oakleyramblers.org).

*Corrine Thomas*



## Woodland wellbeing walks, June

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 June 10 am - Village Pond ☉ B

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

Tuesday, 23 June 10 am - East Oakley Village Hall [aka The Green Hut] ☉ B

Other Details:

Start time: 10 am

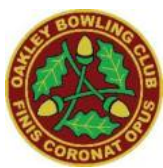
Pace: gentle

Duration: 1 hour approx

Routes: varied

B = Barbara led [07722 957057] R = Richard led [07549 021174]





## Oakley Bowling Club News

The season opened with President Diane Yarrall welcoming members to the traditional opening spoon drive. Life then became busy. The opening weeks had more lows than highs. In the first week's Whitchurch league matches, only one of our four league teams managed a win although we bounced back in the Basingstoke Men's league, with maximum five-point victories for the "A" team at Kingsclere and for the "B" team at home to

social committee and all the members who provided a gargantuan picnic supper.

New members are always welcome at Oakley Bowling Club so, if you missed our recent open day, but would like to have a go, just call Norman on 07711 685772 or Diane on 01256 781465. They will arrange for you to be met at the green, shown our splendid facilities and made aware of our special bowling and social membership offers. More information about the club can be found at [www.oakleybc.org.uk](http://www.oakleybc.org.uk).

*Spencer Kerley*



Marnell. The bounce was short lived. Fleet United trounced us 40-15, at home, in the Tony Allcock trophy (for over 60s) and this was followed by a defeat in the national double rink competition where Alton won 33-29.

The first friendly of the season was against Longmeadow Indoor Club. They came looking for revenge as we had won earlier in the year on their indoor green. It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon, but it was Longmeadow that emerged comfortable winners. Sadly, our second friendly against Pewsey was cancelled as Pewsey could not raise a team.

Our social programme continues throughout the summer though, necessarily, at a lower intensity than in the winter. We had, at Malshanger, a barn dance, the first for many years, and this proved a fun event as the Black Velvet Ceilidh Band attempted, not always successfully, to teach us the moves. Thanks go to the





# Oakley Rounders Challenge 2026

Sunday 5 July  
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Final at 6.00pm



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Tuesdays June 9 and 22  
10:30 am to 12 noon

All welcome at the Chapel by the Pond

[www.bhbcircuit.org.uk/churches/oakley.html](http://www.bhbcircuit.org.uk/churches/oakley.html)

## LOCAL INFORMATION

### Oakley Community Association

Secretary - Eve Askew, [www.ocadoakley.org.uk](http://www.ocadoakley.org.uk),

[OCAoakley@live.co.uk](mailto:OCAoakley@live.co.uk)

### Councillors & Politicians

#### Member of Parliament, Basingstoke

Luke Murphy - [luke.murphy.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:luke.murphy.mp@parliament.uk) 01256587093

Belvedere House, Basing View, RG21 4HG

#### Parish Councillors:

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

**Parish Clerk :** Nicola Beere, Oakley & Deane Parish Council, Newfound Sports Pavilion RG23 7HH

[clerk@oakleydeane-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oakleydeane-pc.gov.uk) or 07983 500372

**Assistant Clerk:** Kelly Green

[assistantclerk@oakleydeane-pc.gov.uk](mailto:assistantclerk@oakleydeane-pc.gov.uk)

#### Borough Councillors:

Paul Gaskell [Cllr.Paul.Gaskell@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Paul.Gaskell@basingstoke.gov.uk) 07812 894479

Hannah Golding 07305 123671

[cllr.hannah.golding@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.hannah.golding@basingstoke.gov.uk)

Julian Jones [Cllr.Julian.Jones@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Julian.Jones@basingstoke.gov.uk) 0794 6475700

**County Councillor:** Juliet Henderson

[juliet.henderson@hants.gov.uk](mailto:juliet.henderson@hants.gov.uk) 862413

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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**  
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St Lawrence (Wootton)  
All Saints (Deane)

Website: <https://www.stleonards-church.co.uk/>

**Church Office:** St Leonard's Centre,  
Rectory Rd, Oakley  
Tel 782724 9:00 am -1:00 pm weekdays  
[office@oww.church](mailto:office@oww.church)  
Revd Ben Kautzer [ben@oww.church](mailto: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.bhbcircuit.org.uk/churches/oakley.html>

Hill Road adjacent to the village pond in East Oakley  
Revd Claire Simpson  
[revclaire72@btinternet.com](mailto:revclaire72@btinternet.com)  
Tel: 01256 323103

**Roman Catholic**  
St Joseph's and  
St Bede's

**Website:**  
[www.stjosephsbasingstoke.org.uk](http://www.stjosephsbasingstoke.org.uk)  
171a St Michael's Rd, Basingstoke, RG22 6TY  
Fr Paul Leonard,  
Parish Office -Tel: 323595  
[office@stjosephsbasingstoke.org.uk](mailto:office@stjosephsbasingstoke.org.uk)

**Community Church**

**Websites:**  
[www.lifespringcommunitychurch.org](http://www.lifespringcommunitychurch.org)  
or [www.hopebasingstoke.org](http://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 (07810316413 )

## 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](mailto:oakley@bwds.org.uk)

**Oakley Girlguiding**

Caroline Lloyd

[c451lloyd@outlook.com](mailto:c451lloyd@outlook.com)

## VILLAGE HALLS

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

Booking Secretary 07788 423252 or email: [booking@oakleygreenhut.co.uk](mailto:booking@oakleygreenhut.co.uk)

Website: [www.oakleygreenhut.co.uk](http://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](mailto:john@oakleylink.org.uk) Last amended: 14/3/2026

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