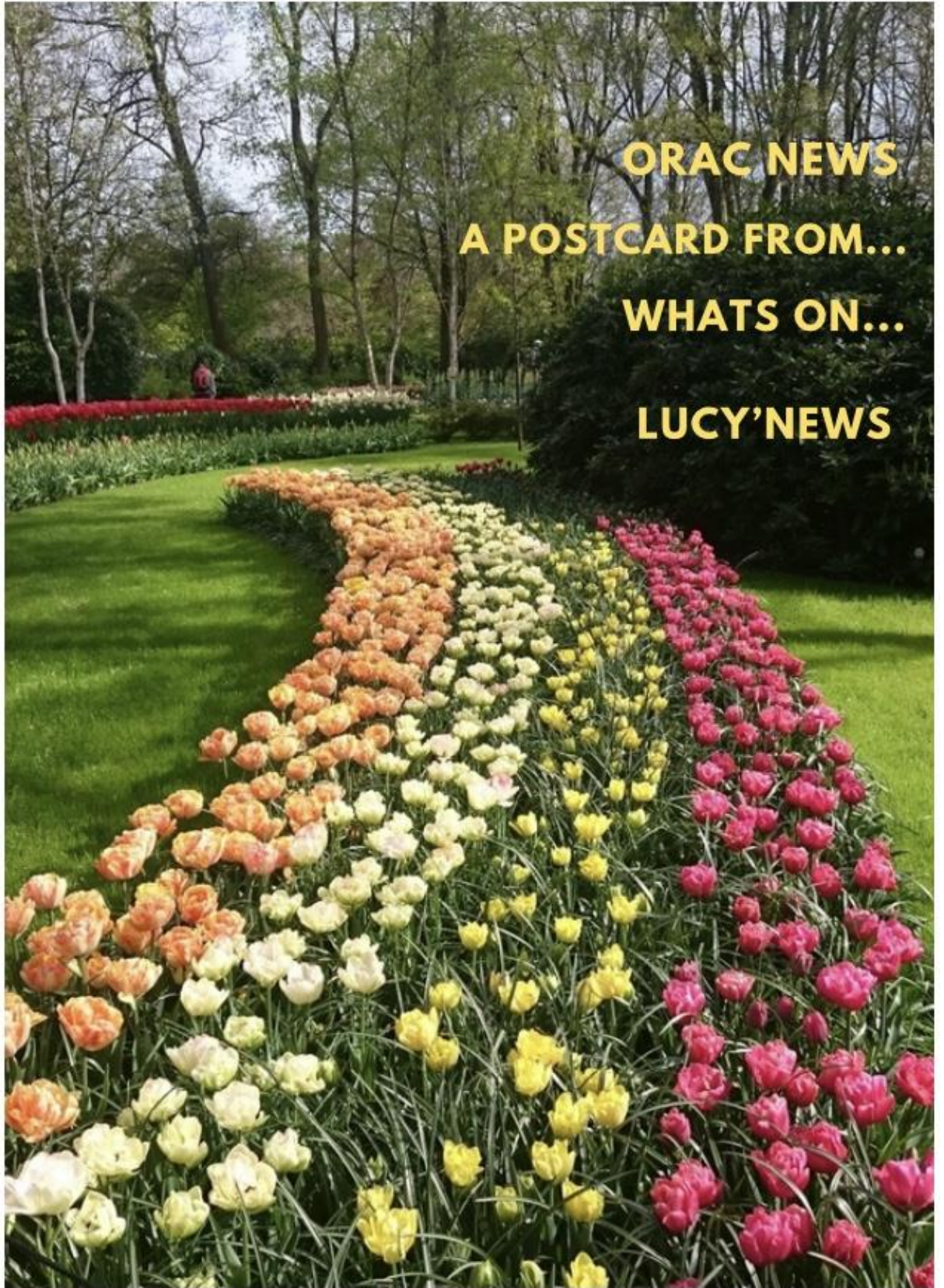


THE ORACLE

SPRING 2025
ISSUE 122

ORAC NEWS
A POSTCARD FROM...
WHATS ON...
LUCY'NEWS



**QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR THE VILLAGE OF
OCCOLD & SURROUNDING AREA**

Issue 122 of The Oracle was compiled and edited by:

Gill Chapman

Would you like to be part of the editorial team? No experience required, just basic IT skills and the ability to work to a deadline as part of a friendly, collaborative team.

Please get in touch via email: oracle@occold.com

The Oracle is a quarterly magazine published in March (Spring), June (Summer), September (Autumn) and December (Winter). Deadlines for each edition are usually around the 14th of the preceding month.

To Advertise in the Oracle please contact Gill at orac.treasurer@occold.com with your advert. Prices remain the same for another year:

4 issues	Full page	£54	1 issue	Full Page	£15
4 Issues	Half Page	£30	1 Issue	Half Page	£8
4 issues	¼ page	£15	1 issue	¼ page	£4

Revenue from advertising in The Oracle goes to ORAC, helping to fund the production of the magazine and the maintenance and development of the Village Hall, playing field, playground and village green. Our thanks go to **Occold Primary school** who are involved in printing the magazine.

All submissions for publication should be emailed to oracle@occold.com

Use these settings in Word:

Font: Calibri 14

Narrow margins

Paragraphs: no spacing

No headers or footers

Submit a word, small pdf or jpg file

Guidance is on the village website www.occold.onesuffolk.net

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition.

If you have an interesting hobby or have visited somewhere of interest and feel you could write an article for the magazine, your input would be much appreciated. Particular thanks to Angela Pearce for this edition's wonderful 'Postcard From...'

Village Hall Bookings: villagehall@occold.com or 01379 678198

Cover photo: Spring flowers at Keukenhof – Angela Pearce

ORAC News

We had a busy time at the hall during December and January. We held the annual ORAC Christmas meal with over 50 villagers attending. The Committee and other helpers cooked a 3 course meal for everyone, the hall was decorated and sparkled with lights and a good time was had by all. This meal is one of our main annual fundraising events so a big thank you to all who came and helped out.



The hall hosted a number of other private Christmas events and parties for individuals and groups, then in January we welcomed The Dove Players again for their annual pantomime - Treasure Island. Many villagers attended the performances and enjoyed the jokes, songs and ad-libs of a good traditional panto! - See their report further on.

During December we applied to Mid Suffolk District Council for a Capital Grant to support us with the repairs to the Zip Line. We have just heard that our application has been successful so we will be moving forward with this project as soon as possible. We have also been successful in obtaining a Pride in your Place Grant from them to support the maintenance of the village green and play-area.

February seems to be a quieter month but bookings are beginning to roll in for the next few months with The Friends of Occold School particularly organising a number of events – see their notice of events and Occold Football Club holding a Music Bingo night.

The Parish Council along with ORAC have organised some First aid training including use of the Defibrillator on Monday 31st March from 1.30pm – approx. 3pm. It is being run by Andy Davidson, a First Aid trainer who lives in the village. Everyone is welcome to this free course. It has been organised during the day in case parents from the school would also like to attend before collecting their children.

Minutes of meetings are available at occold.onesuffolk.net

ORAC Committee 2024:

Vacant	Chair	email: orac.chairman@occold.com
Gill Chapman	Treasurer	email: orac.treasurer@occold.com
Carol Peters	Secretary	email: orac.secretary@occold.com

Nigel Woodhouse, Dan Hull, Russell Grange, Gordon Erhorn, Johanna Matta

New members are welcome at any time. If you would like to be involved please contact anyone on the committee.

What's on in the Village Hall:

Coffee Mornings	1 st Monday of the month: 3 rd March, 7 th April, 5 th May, 2 nd June
<i>Soup Lunches</i>	<i>Last Friday in the month: 28th March, 25th April, 30th May</i>
Craft Club	3 rd Wednesday of the month: 19 th March, 16 th April, 21 st May
<i>Table Tennis</i>	<i>every Monday 6 – 7.30pm - New Players always welcome, no need to book. £3 per person</i>
Bellicise	every Thursday morning 10 - 11am
<i>Transformational Yoga</i>	<i>Friday mornings– see posters for dates and times.</i>
WI meetings	1 st Wednesday of the month – 5 th March, 2 nd April, 7 th May
<i>Orac meetings</i>	<i>7.30pm - please contact secretary if you wish to attend. Dates to be confirmed</i>
Parish Council meetings	1 st Monday of the month, 8pm. Please check dates with Clerk if you wish to attend
<i>First Aid/ Defib training</i>	<i>Monday 31st March 1.30 – 3pm</i>
Friends of Occold School	Easter Chocolate Bingo – Saturday 29 th March 5.30pm Jumble Sale – Saturday 26 th April
Occold Football Club	Music Bingo night Saturday 5 th April 7pm

Occold Village Hall is available to book for various events including parties, celebrations, sales etc

£10 per hour

Please check the booking calendar for availability at:

occold.onesuffolk.net/services/village-hall and complete the online booking form - or ring Di on 01379 678198

A Postcard from ... The Netherlands

My love affair with the Netherlands started a little over 10 years ago, when my youngest daughter Stephanie was invited to play Softball for a Dutch league team.

As a former GB Softball player who has recently been inducted into the British Softball Hall of Fame, her dedication to the sport, and spirit of adventure, has resulted in her moving to the Netherlands where she lives and works in the city of Utrecht.



Utrecht is the fourth largest city in the Netherlands and in my opinion one of the best, if not the best. The city boasts beautiful canals and parks, lively restaurants and cafes, fascinating museums, and remarkable historical buildings, the most imposing of which is the Dom Tower. Standing at 112.32 metres the Dom Tower is the iconic symbol of Utrecht and the tallest church spire in the Netherlands. For those who dare to climb its 465 steps to the top of the tower, a breath-taking panoramic view awaits. Speaking from personal experience, and as one of those intrepid dare devils, I can tell you that the views from the top were indeed breath-taking, as was the climb! 😊

As in so many Dutch cities and towns, the canals are a magnet for tourists and locals alike. On any given day people like to sit by the canal eating a leisurely lunch, or picnic whilst watching the various canal boats pass by. Utrecht canals are known for their “split level” formation. This allows people to sit at cafes and restaurants next to the water or walk by shops and homes above. The quaint little bridges that cross over the pretty canals are adorned with flowers and the odd bicycle of course. Utrechters take immense pride in their city and love to show tourists how beautiful their city is.

A fun and relaxing way to explore Utrecht is by bicycle. With its many, cycle paths it is a safe, and alternative way to explore the region.

Fun Fact. Statistically there are 22.8 million bicycles for a population of around 17 million people in the Netherlands.

On the theme of landscaped gardens, an absolute must whilst in the Netherlands is a trip to Lisse to see the stunningly beautiful, Keukenhof Tulip gardens. Open from March until May, it is the best day out, walking among over 7 million flower bulbs, planted by hand each year.

The name Keukenhof translates to “kitchen garden”. The park features over 1,600 varieties of flowers, including tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, lilies, roses, carnations, and Irises.

Although the main attraction is the outstandingly beautifully themed gardens, the park also features an iconic windmill, and has its very own maze for visitors to get lost in. Visitors can also take electronically powered boats to cruise the channels between the bulb fields, and of course visitors can rent bicycles to explore the surrounding areas. *See front cover for photo*



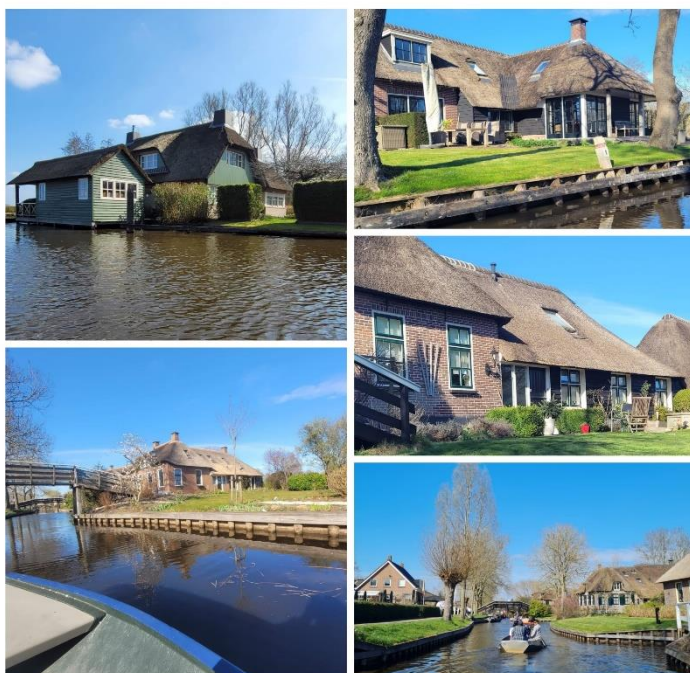
Just outside of Utrecht city centre is the Kasteel de Haar. The castle is 13km drive from Utrecht and well worth a visit. The castle reflects a mix of historical architectural styles, including Neo-Gothic and Renaissance elements. It features turrets, a drawbridge, moats, and beautiful landscaped gardens, complete with water features and fountains.



Originally owned by the Van de Haar family, this medieval-style, 14th century castle, fell into disrepair over the years. So, in the late 19th century, the castle was rebuilt and extensively renovated by the Rothschild family. It is one of the largest and most luxurious castles in the country.



Another memorable place to visit is Giethoorn village, the most beautiful and fairytale village in the Netherlands. It's unique selling point is that the village has no roads. Giethoorn is a mostly car free village in the north-eastern Dutch province of Overijssel. It is known for its waterways,



footpaths, bicycle trails and centuries old, thatched roof cottages. Boats and bicycles can be hired to make the most of accessing all that Giethoorn has to offer. It is a charming little village, where you can gently meander along the waterways enjoying the uniqueness of what makes this village so special.

Parts of the village have hand dug canals and small islands where residents live in their fairy tale, thatched roofed cottages, surrounded by pretty country style gardens. These are connected to the mainland by 176 bridges, giving rise to Giethoorn's nickname of the "Venice of the Netherlands". Giethoorn villagers and visitors park their cars outside the village at special car parks.

Volendam is also worthy of a visit. Known as, “The pearl of the Zuiderzee” which translates to “Southern Sea.” It is the most famous fishing village in the Netherlands. Volendam offers a glimpse into the past, where locals can be seen wearing traditional Dutch costume. Colourful wooden houses surround a lively harbour, full of old Dutch ships. Once a favourite inspiration spot for artists such as Picasso and Renoir, the village now draws visitors for its cheese, seafood, and historic atmosphere.



Gouda, famous for its namesake cheese is an absolute must for all of you cheese lovers. Gouda holds a cheese market on Thursday mornings from April to September, except on public holidays. I visited Gouda on a Saturday, so I missed the traditional market vibe, where the massive wheels of cheese are delivered by horse and cart and then weighed before being arranged in neat stacks, and then sold in front of Gouda’s city hall. Instead, I made the most of sampling lots of different local cheeses, including Gouda, in one of the many cheese shops dotted around the city centre.

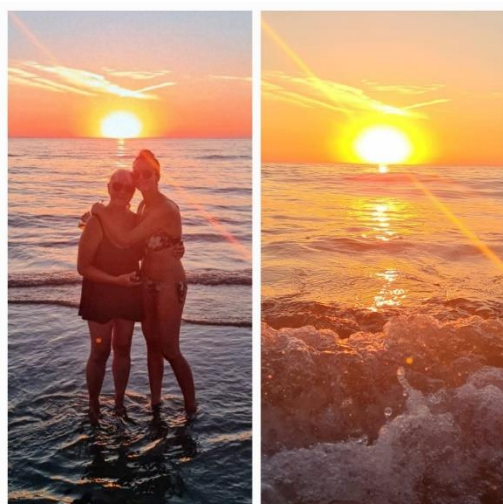
Less than an hour’s journey time from Utrecht is the city of Amsterdam. I have experienced travelling to the Netherlands by using both the Eurostar, which takes just under 4 hours journey time from St Pancras International to Amsterdam Centraal station, and by flying from Norwich airport to Schiphol, which takes a mere 35 minutes. Both modes of transport are equally enjoyable, but for me the excitement of seeing the ever-changing views from the windows of Eurostar, slightly has the edge.

Amsterdam itself is a beautiful city, full of interesting buildings, museums, and eateries, where many tourist boats commentate on the city’s history to tourists experiencing Amsterdam from the water. For me personally, I find the general hustle and bustle of this busy city, a little overwhelming, preferring the calm of Utrecht instead.

Interesting fact.

The Netherlands is considered to have two capitals cities: Amsterdam and The Hague. Amsterdam is the official capital of the Netherlands, and the economic backbone of the country, whilst The Hague is the administrative capital and the seat of the national legislation. The Hague is also where King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands lives at Huis ten Bosch Palace.

The Netherlands has many amazing things to do. One outstanding memory for me was celebrating Kings Day with my daughter and her friends. On this dedicated day, usually held at the end of April, the Netherlands turn into a vision in orange. Everyone wears orange as a symbol of unity and a sign of national pride. Kings Day is a day of great celebration, with an abundance of street parties, parades, open-air concerts, and even flea markets and fairs. The canals are full of boats with people playing music and singing. The atmosphere is very relaxed, but also exciting, a fun day celebrated by all!



No "Post card from" article would be complete without a day trip to the seaside.

My trip holds an exceptionally special moment that I shared with my daughter Stephanie.

After spending a wonderful, fun filled day on the beach, and enjoying the last of the warm rays from the setting sun, I saw my first ever sunset over the sea at Zandvoort beach. It was the most beautiful, magical moment, that I shall remember forever, and the fact that I shared it with my daughter made it all the more special.

It was indeed the most perfect end, to a perfect day!

Angela Pearce



FIRST AID TRAINING

**OCCOLD PARISH COUNCIL AND ORAC ARE PROVIDING A FREE
FIRST AID TRAINING SESSION THAT WILL FOCUS ON
RESUSCITATION AND THE USE OF THE DEFIBRILLATOR**

**AVAILABLE TO ALL LOCAL RESIDENTS AND PARENTS
NO BOOKING REQUIRED**

**JOIN US AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON
MONDAY 31ST MARCH 1.30 – 3PM**

TRAINING SESSION WILL BE LED BY ANDY DAVIDSON

REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

Andy Davidson

Mini First Aid Norfolk

Business | School | Community

T: 07701 331030

E: andy@minifirstaid.co.uk

W: norfolk.minifirstaid.co.uk

F: www.facebook.com/minifirstaidnorfolk

Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/MiniFirstAidNorfolk>





**CRYSTAL
CLEAN**

Specialist Cleaning Services

Carpet

Hard Floor

Upholstery

Mark Underwood

01379 678 806



07984 648 296

info@crystalclean.services

www.crystalclean.services

Advertise in this space

for 4 issues £15

1 issue £4

Full page:

4 issues £54

1 issue £15

Half Page

4 Issues £30

1 Issue £8

Contact Gill: oracle@occold.com

Suffolk Mobile Library Route 5

The mobile library visits Occold every 4 weeks on a Friday stopping in

The Street, 15.10 – 15.25

**Next visits are: 14th March,
11th April, 9th May**

We have a lift which can be used to help anyone with mobility difficulties access the bus.

For more information please visit our website: www.suffolklibraries.co.uk or call our customer service on 01473 351249.

It is free to get a library card.
You can reserve books online and collect from the mobile library.

Orac Coffee Mornings

First Monday in the month 9.30 – 12.00

Next dates: 3rd March

7th April

5th May

2nd June

Come and enjoy home-made cakes, tea, coffee and good company



Come and play Table Tennis

Monday evenings 6 – 7.30pm

At the Village Hall

New members welcome

£3 per person

No booking required

Contact Gill on 01379 678446 for more information



Lucy's news – update from our local District Councillor

Solar farm news

You may have seen in the news that the company EcoPower Suffolk Ltd (part of Eenergy International), has announced plans for a 600 hectare solar farm in our area. The proposed project includes fields near Occold, Eye, Brome, Yaxley, Gislingham and Mellis.

Because of the project's size, the government will have the final say on whether the project goes ahead (not the District Council planning department.)

The company has set up a website with more information, including a map of the proposed project area, and a timeline: <https://ecopowersuffolk.com/our-proposals/>

According to the website, initial public consultation events will be held in March, with a second round of more formal consultations in the Autumn. Dates for these events should be listed on the website. You can contact the company by email, phone or freepost to be kept up-to-date.

There are a number of large solar projects coming forward in East Anglia. A key reason is that the national grid infrastructure is being upgraded in our area, with substations that can take connections from solar as well as offshore wind farms (including the substation at Yaxley). We also have a lot of flat land - and higher levels of sunshine compared with some parts of the country. These factors have encouraged power companies to look for suitable land near connection points into the grid.

The District Council's view is that we'd prefer planning rules to be changed to require solar on more roofs - so we'd need less on farmland. We also feel that the very best agricultural land should be avoided wherever possible. However, given the amount of renewable energy the country needs in the next few years, it's likely some of these large-scale projects will be needed as well.

Having solar panels in fields nearby will obviously be a big change if it goes ahead. It's important that the company does as much as possible to reduce the visual impact – through planting new hedges, for example. The project will also have to carry out ecological studies to understand the impact on local wildlife. (Studies of other solar farms have shown they can be better for wildlife compared to intensive agriculture – due to factors such as the planting of new hedgerows, and creation of meadow grasslands.) Some solar farms do also include areas of food production (such as grazing for sheep around the panels).

While we go through this consultation process, we will all have opportunities to feed back our questions and concerns. Please do let me know what you think – and do give your feedback to EcoPower solar.

See you soon,

Lucy (District Councillor for Eye Ward - Eye, Occold and Redlingfield)

For District Council issues, please contact me and I will try my best to help:

- email lucy.elkin@midsuffolk.gov.uk or phone 07928 512590
- For news and updates, find me on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CllrLucy

Useful numbers

- Citizens Advice – for advice on benefits, debts, heating bills and lots more, call 01449 676060 / 01449 676 280 – or pop in to see Citizen’s Advice in Eye Library on Friday mornings (no appointment needed)
 - *Report flooding in your property:* <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/report-a-flood-in-suffolk>
 - *Report other types of flooding:* <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/report-a-flood-in-suffolk>
- To report a power cut, call [105](https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/). You can also [search, track and report power cuts online: https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/](https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/)
- Damaged power lines – please stay away and call [105](https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/). If there is an immediate risk to safety, please also call [999](https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/)
- Fallen or overhanging trees – if there is an immediate danger, please call Suffolk Highways on [0345 606 6171](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/highwaysreporting). If not, you can report fallen trees or debris on the road at [highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/highwaysreporting)
 - For updates on the Orwell Bridge, please go to www.trafficengland.com or www.twitter.com/highwayseast
- [Report a blocked drain](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/highway-drainage/report-a-blocked-drain) to Suffolk County Council: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/highway-drainage/report-a-blocked-drain>
- If your water supply has been affected, please call Essex & Suffolk Water on [0345 782 0999](https://www.essexandsuffolkwater.co.uk/).
- If your property has been affected by sewage flooding or there is a sewerage issue, please [report to Anglian Water](https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/) or call their 24-hour emergency number: [03457 145 145](https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/)
 - Floodline Telephone: [0345 988 1188](https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/) or visit [GOV.UK flood alerts](https://www.gov.uk/flood-alerts) for more information
- Dangerous structures please contact customer services on [0300 1234 000](https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/) (Option 5) or out of hours call [0808 168 7794](https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/)

Optimal Heating

Father & Son Team
with over 30 years experience

Specialist Heating Engineers
Oil, Natural Gas & LPG Servicing and Repairs



Tel: 01728 628687
Mobile: 07806 660399



St Michael's Church Occold, Flower Guild

We have had a very enjoyable time over the last year. It included a lovely flower demonstration by Sheila Pipe from Callendar's Florists in Framlingham. Also Christine Howard entertained us with her 'Hospitality' evening.



We all worked very hard and achieved a very successful Flower Festival in August. Members had a very enjoyable Coffee morning at Kate's home. Also a Guild dinner at the pub in Occold. Delicious!!

Our next meeting is the AGM with Beyond the Wall on the 19th March. The next meetings will be held on 16th April and 14th May

Our Flower Festival this year will be on the 17th & 18th May. Titled -Special Days.

New members are always welcome. We meet at Occold Church, 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Any queries Judith Rivett- 873530. Here comes Spring!!



Join the...

Crafty Crafters

*Every third Wednesday in the month in
Occold Village Hall, 1 - 3 pm*

*Wednesday 19th March,
16th April, 21st May*

*Bring a craft activity to do or share or
just come to socialise and have a chat.*

*Tea, coffee & biscuits
available.*

£2.50 per person





Our group finished 2024 with a very enjoyable Christmas meal.

In January 2025 our member Julia Lindon gave us a thoroughly inspiring and interesting talk based on her and her husband Alex's cycling challenge - North Sea to the Alps. Their niece Sophie who lives in Switzerland was diagnosed with kidney cancer and successfully treated. Julia and Alex wanted to raise money for children with cancer in the UK. They were not experienced cyclists, but prepared well with local routes and advice from the cycling shop in Diss. Then they set off with all their luggage in just two panniers!

Their route was the Euro Velo 15 from Hook of Holland to Basel and the Alps. They cycled out of Occold in April 2024 and from Harwich they took the night ferry to Schoonhaven. Even though the weather was poor, particularly the strong wind, they enjoyed cycling beside the famous windmills in Holland. 'King's day' was very busy with people celebrating the 'bank holiday', so difficult to find facilities open! On day 3 they completed 100km and crossed into Germany at Arnhem. They enjoyed seeing storks on nesting platforms and medieval fortresses on the way to Dusseldorf. The route became more industrial, but the cycle route was traffic free all the way into the city. They continued through Cologne, with its famous cathedral, to Bonn, where they had a rest day. Bonn was the West German capital until the fall of the Berlin wall in 1990 and is famous as the birthplace of Beethoven.

Cycling through the Rhine gorge was beautiful with its vineyards, castles and Romanesque cathedrals, such as the one at Worms. As they cycled into France the weather was terrible and Julia visited the EU parliament in Strasbourg covered in mud! The next day however, the sky was blue: Julia displayed some lovely photos of Strasbourg in the sunshine. The weather continued to improve as they entered Switzerland. In Basel it was possible to cross three country borders: Germany, France and Switzerland. By the time they reached the Alps it was hot and they had raised a marvellous £3,000.

In February, a local author Natalie Meg Evans described her journey from a childhood passion for writing to her success as a published author 30 years later. Her mum encouraged her early promise, but sadly, her father was killed in a road accident in 1967: this trauma is reflected in many of Natalie's novels as the heroines experience intense drama. However, there is always an uplifting ending.

Natalie was thwarted by agents and a particularly harsh critique, but didn't give up. She moved to Suffolk 17 years ago and entered writing competitions, winning the Harry Bowling prize for unpublished writers in 2014. She now has 11 published novels, with more to come. Sadly, Natalie's mum didn't live to witness her success; but in her effects, Natalie found a little book she had written, aged 4, about a robin.

Our next meeting on 5th March is a games night and social. On 2nd April we welcome Dave Steward, who will give some historical insight into our village with his talk 'Master Mason Hawes of Occold'. On May 7th we will discuss the new WI Resolution, thinking about how we can play a part in promoting a worthy cause.

We usually meet every month on the first Wednesday of the month in Occold Village Hall at 7.30pm. If you would like more information about our activities please contact Sara Hampson (President) on 01379 678868, or just come along to a meeting. We look forward to welcoming you.

Occold Book Club



In December we had our Christmas outing where we had a friendly discussion about the debut novel of one of our members, Nicola Knight - *The Night before Christmas*.

We do not meet in January but read our own choices over the Christmas break, having a 'show and tell' in our February meeting on the 4th Feb. This is always an interesting evening as we read a wide variety of fiction alongside the club books. Books included:

Three Sisters – Heather Morris (true story of the Meller sisters);

Freedom – Angela Merkel;

If This is a Man – Primo Levi:

What I Ate in One Year – Stanley Tucci:

Precipice – Robert Harris (author of the film *Conclave*);

A Woman of Substance – Barbara Taylor Bradford;

Phil Rickman's Merrily Watkins series;

The Nightingale – Kristin Hannah;

Books from the Ruth Galloway series by Elly Griffiths;

Before the Swallows come back – Fiona Curnow;

A Secret Garden Affair – Erica James;

Historical novels by Claire Marchant:

Somebody else's shoes – Jojo Moyes

Plus number of others.

All are welcome, meeting at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month at The Beaky. Our next meeting will be on 4th March where we will be discussing the classic 'To Kill a Mockingbird' by Harper Lee

Occold Football club presents...



Join us for a fun evening of bingo with songs! No music knowledge needed. Prizes to be won.

5TH APRIL 2025

EYES DOWN 7PM

Occold Village Hall
£10 entry

BOOK NOW

 Occoldfc@gmail.com  07990514980

Stoke Ash Gardening Club

Monday 24th March – A talk by Don Andrews on Dahlias & Begonias

Monday 28th April – A talk by Ray Martinon Propagating Roses

Monday 19th May – proposed outing to RHS Hyde Hall Gardens - tbc

Meetings held at Stoke Ash Village Hall from 7.30pm

For more information contact Caroline on 01379678871

MID SUFFOLK

Refuse and Recycling Collection Schedule 2025



December 2024 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	January 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	February 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	March 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
April 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	May 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	June 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	July 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
August 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	September 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	October 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	November 2025 Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

- REFUSE** (general rubbish) collection week
- RECYCLING** collection week
- Refer to the MID SUFFOLK Christmas and New Year Waste Collection Schedule 2024-25
- Collections following a bank holiday will be one day later than normal for the rest of the week

Please put your bin out by 6.30am

Check for delays and report a missed collection

Online: www.midsuffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 0300 1234 000 (option 4)

Scan for more information



It's Christmas Time When Panto Comes to Town!

Dove Players arrived back in Occold on Friday 10th January, returning with their second panto staged at the Village Hall, Treasure Island, aaaarrggghhhh!. Unfortunately, I was in bed with a vicious bug for the weekend so my drunken pirate, Billy Fishbones, never made it to the stage. But by all accounts, Isobel and Nicola did a fabulous job of stepping in at the very last moment (were probably better than I'd have been 😊). Of course, the show had to go on!

Having had the experience of last year's show, the run up to this year was more familiar and easier to navigate. Gill and team were super helpful and responsive as ever, Di always flexible with extra rehearsal dates, Russell made sure the lighting boom was up in plenty of time and the school very kindly allowed us to use their staging again. Many thanks to all. With a bit of extra staging from Harleston Players, we added an extra level to the front corners of the stage and the HMS Pianola emerged from the depths thanks to the imagination of our set and props genius Jo Owen and her team.

We again got great audiences will full houses for the Saturday performances and 80% full on the Friday. Audience feedback was great, and everyone seemed to have a great time. A feature of Dove Players pantos is the live music from a 5-piece band led by Mario Olmedo with Simon, Fred, Joe and George. It's a bit of a squeeze to fit them in but so worth it for the atmosphere they bring. We are also incredibly lucky to have the support of a whole team on production. Jo organises all the set and props, Harrison Klass and friends organised all the tech with Abbie White in charge of lighting. Pinky Palmer organises the raffles, Debbie Shanahan the sponsorship and there were lots of volunteers too numerous to mention for the front of house and the bar.

Watching a show, you might not realise just how much goes into getting to the stage. With youngsters taking part (which is at the very heart of why we do it) you require a full set of Child Protection policies, a Body of Persons Licence, trained and licensed chaperones and all the information to keep them safe. Work starts around June on refining the script, information evening, auditions, casting and rehearsals from September. Will Charsley (aka John Slither) keeps us all in line on the finances and Charlotte D'Souza chairs our committee. Nicola Diggins, as Director, has the vision for what the show should look like and, loving her music, arranges all the songs. She expertly guided us through setting and rehearsing the show, often with many of the cast missing at any one rehearsal. I think she's played every part at some point, sometimes 2 at once! All around a huge amount of work.

So, we've managed to amass a great team to share the burden of producing these shows and all with good humour and good intent. But with any show there always needs to be that someone with their finger on every button of the show, who knows who's doing what, picking up things that are dropped, the hub of it all. That's our Producer Isobel Demangeat

who's a bit of a force of nature juggling everything the production needs to succeed. She wouldn't want to be singled out, but there I've done it anyway!

So, another year done and we hope to be back again next year; oh yes we do! If anyone wants to get involved, on stage or off, please get in touch. Facebook is probably the best way to contact us.

Dave Griffiths



*The
problem*



*The
solution*

Hard Water

Stubborn limescale and scum is the residue left behind by using hard water, which is prevalent across all of East Anglia



Clarity Water

We install water softeners, drinking water systems and boiling water taps. We also deliver water softener salt and undertake all repairs and maintenance

THE GABLES, EYE ROAD, BROME, EYE, SUFFOLK, IP23 8AL

- Established 1981 -

01379 871020 | info@clarity-water.co.uk

www.clarity-water.co.uk

OCCOLD PARISH COUNCIL

The current list of Councillors and their responsibilities is:

Cllr Colin Cripps - Chair and Planning

Cllr Kevin Chittock - Vice Chair/Personnel/Planning

Cllr Stephen Hubner - Planning

Cllr Andrew Duggett - Personnel/SID

Cllr Heidi Stone - Personnel/Neighbourhood Plan lead

Cllr Tim Weller

Cllr Angela Hall

Cllr Roy St Pier

Clerk & Financial Officer: David Rayner

For more information please contact parishclerk@occold-pc.gov.uk

OCCOLD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING GROUP UPDATE

Whilst work continues on the draft Neighbourhood Plan for Occold, the recent updates to the National Planning Policy Framework published in December 2024 will now need to be considered before the draft is completed.

Changes to the NPPF include mandatory higher housing targets for Councils, an increased emphasis on affordable housing, a de-emphasis on local design codes, and mandatory net zero targets. This is alongside a number of other measures all aimed at accelerating house building across England.

Mid Suffolk also recently decided to not prepare a Part 2 Local Plan as expected, but to prepare a totally new Local Plan. As such, they are encouraging the allocation of sites within Neighbourhood Plans currently being prepared. Although housing requirements are presently unknown and the impact of these changes will remain unclear for some time.

The Working Group had previously taken the decision not to allocate sites within the plan based on survey results and community opinions. However, as we are still at the drafting stage, we will now need to meet in early March and review this decision, in light of the above.

Please do keep an eye out for any leaflets through doors thereafter as we may well need to engage the community further on this topic. It feels like it's even more important than ever to get this plan finished!

Heidi Stone

FRIENDS OF
OCCOLD PRIMARY
COMING SOON

Easter Chocolate Bingo - 29th March

Occold Village Hall

Doors open 5:30 eyes down 5:45pm

Adults £5 kids £3

BUY MAP

Occold Easter Trail

Easter holidays 5th - 21st April

Buy maps from 21st March

Search for all the posters on the trail
around the village and earn your prize!

Each map £2 entry

Soup Lunch

Occold village hall

Friday 25th April

12 - 1pm

**BAG 2
SCHOOL**
01/05/25

JUMBLE SALE

Occold village hall

Sat 26th April

Drop off your good condition
clothes/toys/homeware
donations at the hall from

12pm Friday 25/04

More details to follow

TUCK SHOP

Every Friday in the village hall
car park. Treats from 50p

PRELOVED UNIFORM

Good condition logo uniform

available to browse every other Friday
outside the village hall (next one 28/02)

Donate your outgrown uniform at the
school office

CAN RECYCLING

@The Egg Shed on Church Ln

Crush the can and drop in the box
(drinks cans only please!)

Can drop-off
box now
outside
school!

CONTACT US

friends@occoldprimary.org.uk

OR FIND US ON FACEBOOK:

@ Families of Occold Primary School
(Group for parents/guardians only)

@ Friends of Occold Primary School
(Page you can send messages to)



Soup Lunch

Occold Village Hall (Last Friday of every Month)

12 - 1pm

Homemade Soup & Roll £5



All Welcome

Tea, Coffee & Cake also available

28th March- Jubilee Baptists,

25th April - Friends of Occold School,

30th May - ORAC

The Barn Owl.

Barn Owl where are you tonight?
You're so graceful when in flight,
So beautiful and serene you are,
A sighting if only from afar.

Hovering over fields most nights,
Wise old you soaring heights,
Another nights hunting o'er the land,
You bird of prey, you are so grand.



Judith Rivett. February 2025.

A reminder that dogs are not allowed on the village field.

ORAC is concerned that despite notices clearly stating that dogs are not allowed on the playing field some people are still exercising their dogs in this area.

The field is a children's play area, a facility used daily by pupils from the village school, a place where families like to sit on the grass and relax, particularly in the summer and an area where children regularly play ball games etc.

Unfortunately dog faeces are being found regularly. They are toxic and unpleasant.

ORAC urges all dog owners to adhere to this rule so the playing field is a clean and safe area for everyone to enjoy. Please clean up after your dog wherever you exercise it. There are dog poo bins at various locations around the village.



Repairs, Servicing & MOTs to all Makes of Cars & Light Commercial Vehicles

(Including Hybrid & Electrical Vehicles)

Tyres, Exhausts & Batteries @ Competitive Prices

Diagnostics to all Management Systems

Air Con Servicing and Repairs

24Hour Accident Recovery & Breakdown Service

Free Local Collection and Delivery

Courtesy Cars Available

All Work Guaranteed



**INSTITUTE OF THE
MOTOR INDUSTRY**

Camp Green, Kenton Road, Debenham, Suffolk IP14 6LA

Telephone: 01728 860597. Email: michael@debenhamgarage.co.uk



Tim Bloomfield



Painter and Decorator

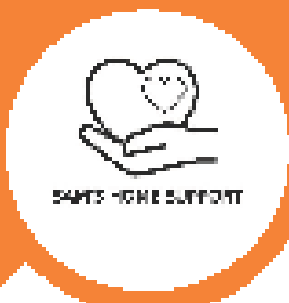
2 Ash Tree Close

Occold, Eye

IP23 7LD

01379 678638

Mobile 07708644135



SAM'S HOME SUPPORT

retain independence and live well

Do you or a family member need a bit of extra support with your day-to-day life? Have things become tricky to manage by yourself?



I can support with:

- **cooking, cleaning, laundry** *and much more!*
- **shopping, attending appointments**
- **companionship**
- **socialising, hobbies**
- **finances, paperwork**

I'm fully insured, first aid and food hygiene trained and DBS.

Contact me for an informal chat on:

 **07975 687344**

 **samdavidson.home@outlook.com**

Church Farm
Suffolk Free Range Eggs



Self serve vending machine
offering our fresh
free range eggs
and other local produce.
Open 24/7



LAI BY OUR HENS AT
CHURCH FARM,
OCCOLD

Flake, Fruit and Nut Cake

Serves 12. Cooking time about 2 hours

3 Cadbury Flakes
7 ½ oz butter
7 ½ oz Caster Sugar
9 oz S.R.Flour
1 ozCocoa powder
4 Eggs
5 oz hazelnuts. Roughly chopped
7 oz Cadburys Bourneville. Chocolate chopped
7 ½ ozs raisins and Cocoa powder or icing sugar for dusting

Method

Grease and line a 8 inch round cake tin.
Cut flakes into 3/4 inch pieces
Cream together butter and sugar
Add flour, cocoa powder and eggs to the bowl and beat until smooth
Reserve half of pieces of flake and 2 ozs of hazelnuts and plain chocolate.
Fold remainder into cake mixture with the raisins.
Turn into prepared tin and scatter with the reserved chocolate and nuts.
Bake in oven 150 degrees C for about 2 hours or until a skewer inserted in centre comes out clean.
Leave to cool in tin. Serve lightly dusted with coco powder or icing sugar.

Norwegian Creams

6tsp apricot jam
2 eggs
1 egg yolk
1 oz caster sugar
½ pint single cream
¼ pint Milk
1/3 tsp vanilla essence
2 oz plain chocolate grated
3 fl oz whipping cream, whipped to soft peaks

Method

Heat oven to 180
Spread 1tsp jam in bottom of 6 ramekins 5 to 6 fl ozs capacity
Whisk eggs, egg yolk and sugar.
Heat single cream, milk and vanilla together.
Pour onto eggs.
Mix well then strain into dishes
Cover dishes with foil place in roasting tin half filled with boiling water
Cook in oven for 40 mins.
Remove from oven leave until cold
Reserve a little chocolate for decoration. Sprinkle the rest over creams.
Pipe or spoon whipped cream on top of chocolate.
Decorate with reserved chocolate. Chill until required.

Enjoy, Elly

COUNTRYSIDE, CONSERVATION & TREE SERVICES

Peter Kerry



01359 230100
07792 995483



peterkerry2018@gmail.com



SPECIALISTS IN

Tree surgery

Hedge management

Patios/Paving

Resin bound driveways

Fencing

£5,000,000 public liability
insurance



SCAN ME



SCAN ME



For anything not listed above please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss

**PLEASE CONTACT US FOR A FREE, NO OBLIGATION
QUOTE**



At the heart of learning in our community

Occold Primary School News

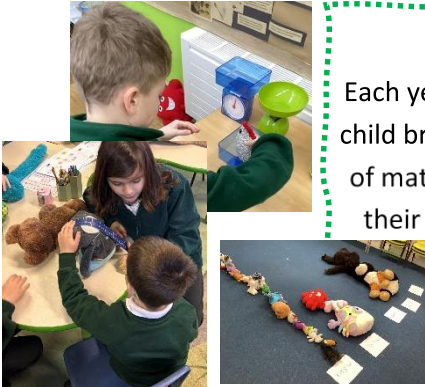
office@occoldprimary.org.uk

Facebook: Occold Primary School

Take a look at some of the exciting things going on in our school...

We participated in NSPCC Number Day!

Each year, we take part in Number Day and raise money for NSPCC. This year, each child brought a teddy into school. Throughout the morning, we completed a variety of mathematical activities involving our teddies. For example, we were measuring their length, finding out their mass and sorting them into groups based on their appearance.



Occold's Choir sang at London's O2 Arena!

12 children from our school were fortunate enough to sing at London's O2 Arena. They participated in 'Young Voices 2025', the world's largest children's choir concert. They had the most incredible evening!



Key Stage Two visited The Houses of Parliament!

Children from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 travelled to London to visit the Houses of Parliament. We had a tour of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. We then participated in a workshop and met Baroness Barker. Whilst in London, we took the opportunity to walk along Embankment and Southbank, as well as Horse Guards Parade and St James' Park.

3 Days of Design & Technology!

One of our favourite moments this half term was our 3 Days of Design & Technology. We have been developing our woodwork skills: sawing, drilling, measuring, hammering and much more! We loved creating our own wooden robots using scrap materials kindly donated to us by parents and friends of the school.



From Life Guard to Beat Bobby

Having left school in 1967 aged 16 several jobs followed the latter being a life guard where I got to know the local bobby. By the late 1970s I was ready to apply for the Metropolitan Police where I remained for 27 years until age limit. I was based in East London and the East End in a variety of rolls although wherever you are stationed in the Met high numbers of police are often required in other areas of our capital for all sorts of reasons.

I was fortunate to be in The Mall for the wedding of Prince (now King) Charles and Princess Diana. A 2am parade was required, then off by coach to a feeding centre near Buckingham Palace. Following breakfast we were issued with snacks for later that included a type of pork pie affectionately known as a 'tortoise'. The idea was that each officer in lines along The Mall would supervise a small section of the crowd so we could get to know them and spot anyone that could be a danger to the 'Royals'. We engaged in pleasant conversation and issued out 'Adopt a Cop' stickers to the crowds so it was a two way thing which appealed to some of the youngsters. We had just been supplied with the early type of 'Met Vest' which was stab proof and worn under a shirt. In number ones wearing a tunic over all this in high temperatures was somewhat uncomfortable although the day in general went well and our serial finally returned to my home station at 8pm, 18 hours later.

Other long days included Trooping the Colour, Notting Hill Carnivals and the New Year celebrations at Trafalgar Square. Football duty was a regular posting, mainly at West Ham United together with Arsenal, Millwall, Tottenham and occasionally Wembley Stadium. The 1980s were a testing time for the Met that included riots, demonstrations, embassy sieges together with the Hyde Park and Harrods bombings.

Discipline was strict in the early days. Many of the long term sergeants were ex military or had completed National Service. If you were late for early turn (6am) more than once you find yourself actually early for late turn (2pm).

For around eight years my main role was designated 'Home Beat Officer'. From the police viewpoint boroughs were divided up into smaller sections and patrolling was generally by pedal cycle or walking. The idea behind the role was that every person would know the name of their beat bobby and that they could appear at any time. In case of circumstances where more than one officer was required to deal with a situation you would link up with a colleague on an adjoining beat. The same person would cover your beat if you were required elsewhere although efforts were made to keep you within your designated area.

I used my own pedal cycle which had to be inspected by a sergeant before I was permitted to use it on duty. For the privilege I was paid an additional 19pence a day. Needless to say the rules were changed, the police decided to provide their own cycles and that was the end of the extra payment.

Once allocated a beat I was expected to check street indexes so I was aware of every face that was of interest. When you pass such properties on a daily basis it doesn't take long to establish who is visiting and vehicles being used. Regular disqualified drivers for instance have a habit of parking in another nearby street or the other side of an adjoining alley.

My beat contained two senior schools so it was important to establish working relations with the staff. This was useful for resolving truancy or pupils getting into the wrong company. Neighbourhood Watch Schemes were initially launched in the 1980s and in the Met it was part of my role to set them up.

Being approachable was useful even with those generally having no love of police. Those avoiding arrest would often respond to contact from the Home Beat Officer rather than be subjected to a 3am call mob handed disturbing the entire family and surroundings. Taking home a troublesome youth involved in minor disorder or substance abuse was often more beneficial than calling out parents to the police station. Supervising the removal of graffiti by those responsible was a lesson learnt.

Regular contact with shop keepers was a must. Strolling round a supermarket in full uniform would often flush out some intent on theft. It only took a look and out they went.

Eventually it was time to train a colleague to take over my beat and move on to other aspects of policing. The 1990s were here.

S. John Davis



Arthur C Clarke, the famous science-fiction author, once wrote that by 2090 the human race will have discovered the secret of immortality. It was a bold prophecy. Are we closer to this elusive discovery with just 65 years to go? Going back the same period takes us to 1960. Back then no one knew of the internet, smart phones or self-driving cars! Surely, we can't dismiss Mr Clarke's claim. After all, isn't anything possible?

Perhaps you've heard of cryogenics? There are those willing to spend \$150,000 to have their bodies frozen until science eventually catches up to revive them in due course. The mere existence of cryogenics gives credence to Clarke's claim but most of us probably don't have that sort of expendable income to hand to have our bodies frozen. If we did, we would be putting a lot of money on science delivering the goods. As things stand, It's something of a gamble. On the face of it, the statistics are grim; with one out of one, still dying. However, God teaches us that the soul lives on after death.

Which brings us to Easter.....

Easter Day this year falls late on April 20th (the latest it can be is April 25th). Jesus Christ rose from the grave on the third day, the first Easter Sunday and in doing so, achieved the defeat of death. As the Apostle Paul puts it, "...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures...he was buried...he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...(1 Corinthians 15 v 4)." Paul goes on to list individuals who witnessed Christ after his resurrection, but also includes a gathering of more than 500 people!

The evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is compelling. The eye-witness accounts, empty tomb, the attempted cover-up by the authorities (see Matthew 28), the change in his disciples; these are all found in the New Testament. Not to mention the 2,000 years of church history.

I don't know if Arthur C. Clarke believed in the resurrection of Jesus. I don't know if he realised the secret to immortality is unlocked by the key of faith in Christ.

On Sunday 20th April, 2025 we will again celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Why not join us at Jubilee Baptist Church from 10.45. It will be a celebration of the defeat of death; new life, eternal life.

Occold Village Hall is available to book for various events including parties, celebrations, sales etc

£10 per hour

Please check the booking calendar for availability at:

occold.onesuffolk.net/services/village-hall and complete the online booking form - or ring Di on 01379 678198



**JUBILEE
BAPTIST
CHURCH**

**Here are some of the
events we usually
run, we'd love to
have you come
along:**

Our website:
www.jubileebaptistchurch.co.uk is
currently being updated

Please call Rob (01449 774609) Greg
01379 678198) or Andrew (01379
678160) for more details

Weekly Sunday Service

10:45 AM / Village Hall or Chapel Hall

Youth Club

Alternate Fridays / Chapel Hall

Years 10 - 13 : 07:30 PM to 9.30 PM

Sunday Service also available via Whatsapp

Weekly Prayer Meetings online via Zoom

Need help with your PC or Laptop?



Friendly advice & lessons

Repairs & upgrades

PC – Laptop – Tablet – TV Windows – Web – Email
New PC – Slow PC Broadband - Home network – WiFi
Anti-virus – Safety – Backup Cameras – Printers
Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint expert

At your Home or Business

No fix, no fee

Phone Chris on 0757 069 5279

Email: info@ubestree.co.uk

Web: www.ubestree.co.uk



Telephone 01379 678833

**Come and enjoy a full Sunday Roast lunch – available Sundays
til 3pm, booking advisable**

Next event:

Roy Orbison Tribute Act – Sunday 11th May from 2..30pm



For Sale

Are you interested in
military aircraft?

This large collection
of books, DVDs and
magazines is available
to purchase.

To view please call
01379 678871



PAUL DURRANT & SON LTD

Carpentry Services

Many aspects of carpentry - Kitchen fitting

Fitted wardrobes - Storage solutions

Window & door replacements - Timber framed sheds/home
offices

Office: 01379 678485

Email: pauldurrantandsonbuilders@gmail.com

or

johndurrant75@gmail.com

For advice call John: 07894551485

News from St Michael and All Angels

We have lots planned for 2025, but first we would like to issue a few “thank yous”:

To those who attended the Carol Service, particularly the children who placed figures in the crib

To those who provided the mince pies and mulled wine, and those who stayed to consume nearly all that was available (!)

To those who made soup and cakes, and those who came along in January to buy both at lunchtime

It is probable that by the time you read this we will have held our second event of the year, being the wine and cheese evening on 28 February. Fingers crossed this went well and the weather had improved a bit from the chilly, grey days of the start of the year.

We definitely hope for good weather on the weekend of 17/18 May which will be the date this year for the Flower Festival. There will be the usual additional items, with books and plants for sale, tea, coffee and cakes, and a barbecue, and no doubt more. Watch notice boards and social media for more details but please do make a note in your diaries and come along if you can.

The Book Sale is now postponed until September (first or second weekend). Again, more details will follow but if you have any books or jigsaws that you wish to donate we are happy to receive them whenever convenient. Please either leave in the church, near the tower end, or deliver to The Beeches (pink house by the bus stops).

We would love to see you at any and all events. They take place to raise funds to keep the church open and maintained (at least as best we can with limited resources). Running costs do exceed £1,200 per month and fund raising events are very important to help cover these.

Stephen Hubner (01379 678360) and Gill Richardson (01728 627916)
Churchwardens

EYE & DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE Charity No 1156968

Do you have difficulty arranging transport?

Eye Volunteer Centre have a team of Volunteer Drivers to take you, wait and then bring you home. There is a charge of 45p per mile, ie Ipswich hospital from Eye costs £23 return approx..

If you require our assistance please telephone Gill at Eye Volunteer Centre

Telephone No: 01379 871200



FunZone Inflatables & Party Rentals
Covering Suffolk, Norfolk & Essex

Party Packages
Bouncy Castles
Soft Play
Face Painting
& more!

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Tel: 07586259482

