



Guildford Lions Club

Guildford's Best Kept Secret!

Friends' and Supporters' News

December 2024

President's News

Greetings from LA where I am based for a few days for the American Epilepsy Association annual Congress. Looking at the news from UK I almost feel guilty about the forecast here of 27C for a winter's day :-) Back in time for the Christmas Party!

November was a busy month! We started with another excellent Lions Fireworks event, fantastic organisation and everyone I talked to was very happy with their evening and of course the Lions were out in force along with many others making sure the event went well, was run safely and most importantly we didn't all get wet this year! Thanks to Eric, Mike and everyone involved!

A very Happy Christmas to Lions, our Friends and families.

Community & Welfare News

Donations this month include -

- £7,500 to Oakleaf, mental illness charity working with local residents (see below).
- £200 for window blinds for vulnerable resident in ground floor flat, via SCC Support Worker.
- £350 support for autistic 15 year old to allow her mum a few hours respite a week, via SCC Targeted Youth Worker.
- £725 to Guildford & Godalming foodbanks.
- £500 contribution to Lions Clubs International Disaster Fund.

Sponsored Sleep Out for Guildford Action

About 50 people slept out for this initiative including the Mayor, Sallie Barker, who had to be woken before they started to clear up! The event was heavily supported by Guildford College with their CEO and Ops Director as well as about 20 others sleeping out. One of our members joined them, he reported that most people managed to get a few hours sleep and it remained dry and not too cold.

The event looks to have raised a much needed £9k that will contribute to maintaining their essential services. Problems with grants and reduced donations are affecting them.



An Update and Thank You from Oakleaf www.oakleaf-enterprise.org

As we approach the end of the year I write to update you on Oakleaf's work as well as to thank you and all the members of the Guildford Lions for your ongoing support! In these darker months Oakleaf is working hard to ensure help is available to all our clients. As you know while Christmas is often seen as a time of joy and connection for many of our clients it can be especially difficult. Hence, we're so grateful for your longstanding support which has helped keep Oakleaf's doors open. Thank you. Looking back at the last reporting year there are a number of achievements I want to share with you:

- We delivered over 2,000 counselling sessions to 200 people, with 86% of clients reporting significant improvements in their mental wellbeing.
- Our employment project saw 105 clients gain a certificate or qualification.

- 4,887 attendances in our wide-range wellbeing activities.
- Over 2,000 individuals accessed the Guildford Safe Haven, receiving critical crisis assistance.

In total Oakleaf supported 758 registered clients, providing crucial services that help people rebuild their lives and achieve their goals. As we look ahead to 2025, we face several ongoing challenges - continued rising costs, increasing demand for our services, and the consequences of reduced funding availability in the charity sector. It is a difficult environment to operate in, however our 27-year mission to support local people with their mental health is no less resolute. We're so grateful for your ongoing support."

Fundraising News

Fireworks update

This year's Firework Fiesta raised nearly £30,000 a great result and a tribute to everybody who gave their time to help. Whilst the financials weren't as strong as the previous year we were faced with considerable cost increases, in large part a need to protect the ground surface of Stoke Park. In addition, being half term many families were away and Halloween as well as Guildford Flames provided competition.

Survival Football

Very well done Graham for another very successful competition. Congratulations to Chester Girling for winning. A break now and hopefully we'll reconvene after Christmas. Please reply to this email if you would like to know more about, or to join the challenge.

Santa Sleigh Collections

Our Santa Sleigh will tour Merrow, Burpham and Bellfields on Monday 16th to Thursday 19th December. We have posted on social media and our website which roads we will be covering each evening and the approximate timings. This has proved to be very popular with local families over the last two years.

Supermarket Collections and Gift Card Donations

Our Christmas collection dates for are - Waitrose, Guildford - Friday 13th and Saturday 14th December
Sainsbury's, Burpham - Friday 20th December and Tesco - Saturday 21st December

We will continue our practise of using money from these collections (and a top up from club funds) to purchase and distribute 300 gift cards at £20 each to families and people in need in Guildford, as identified by GBC and School Liaison Officers.

Classic Car Display, Sunday 13th April

Heritage IMA, who sponsored the event this year, has decided to withdraw their support, so we need a new sponsor. Registration via the Club's website is open and we have 25+ entries thus far. We are looking at the possibility of a colouring or design competition for youngsters.



Lockwood Studios

A few of us visited the studios for a tour last month. It's an amazing space with a very impressive vision to create a vibrant community hub that supports creativity and wellbeing.

Upcoming tours are available on = Friday 13th December at either: 5pm, 5.30pm, 6pm or 6.30pm,
Sunday 12th January at either: 2pm, 2.30pm, 3pm or 3.30pm or
Monday 13th January at either: 5pm, 5.30pm, 6pm or 6.30pm.

If you are interested please reply to this email.

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Website: <https://guildfordlions.com>