



Oakley Vale Community Centre

A SHORT HISTORY

by Judy Caine – Secretary of Trustees - July 2023



Doors opened to the public on 8th July 2013 with an official opening by Cllr. Judy Caine the Mayor of Corby later that year on 21st September.



OUR COMMUNITY CENTRE EVOLVES ...

In 2010 a steering group of local residents started consulting with Corby Borough Council as to what our Community Centre should look like. The council presented plans from the tenders sent out and a design was chosen.

However, it was not plain sailing as the plan chosen was too expensive and on 22nd May 2012 Corby Borough Council's Development Control Committee received a revised proposal for our community centre.

The original proposal included changing rooms - the revised proposal removed these at the original build stage with the idea of adding them later using 106 money. Section 106 funding is paid by developers and is used on community infrastructure projects.



2012 ... Councillor Caine contemplating the site where the centre will be located. Busy Bees Nursery was already in operation (left) and you can see the bike tracks where local teenagers used to enjoy a large 'chill out space'.

SUMMER OF 2012

The builders arrive and start digging foundations ...



It all starts to look a bit messy and the hoardings alongside the work on Butland Road look rather bare and not very pretty for residents. The Oakley Vale Community Association came up with an idea to run a competition at Oakley Vale Primary School (then the only primary school on Oakley Vale).

They asked the pupils to produce colourful posters showing what they'd like to see at the centre. You can see these mounted to the left of the serving hatch in the foyer as well as the smaller version here.

Winning Entries of the poster competition to brighten the hoardings ...



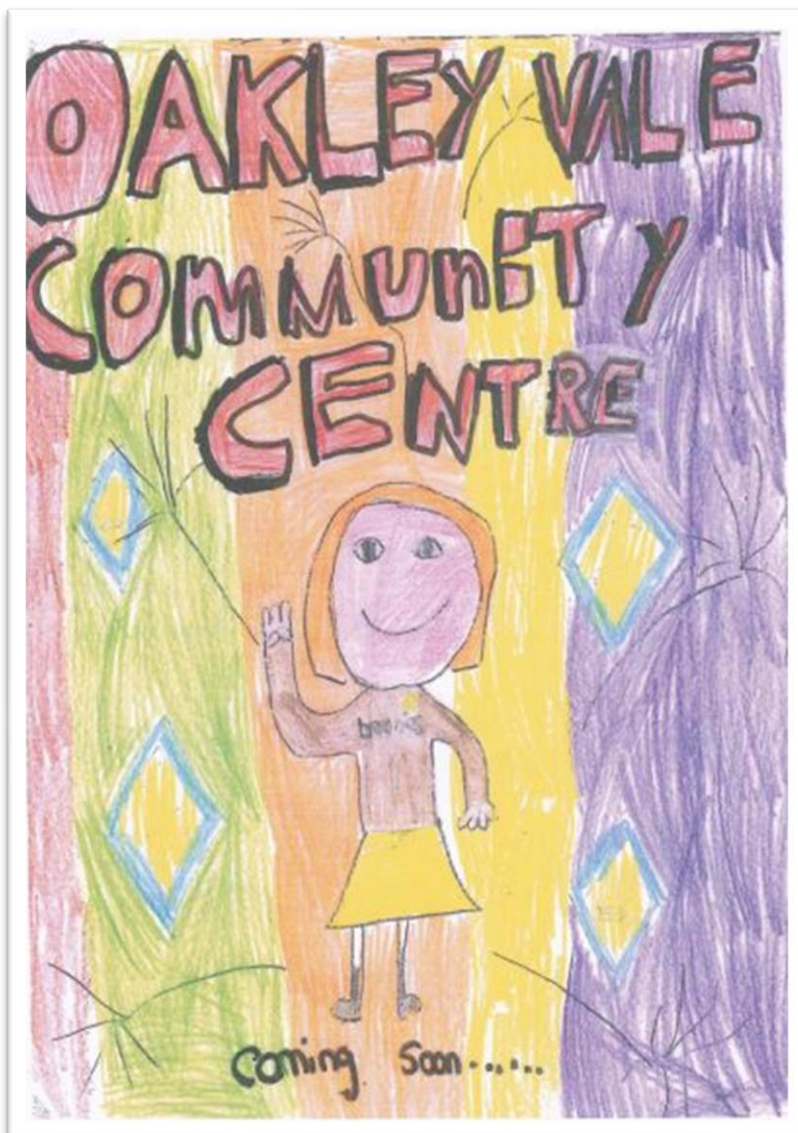
Holly Roberts (Foundation Yr. - Oakley Vale Primary School).



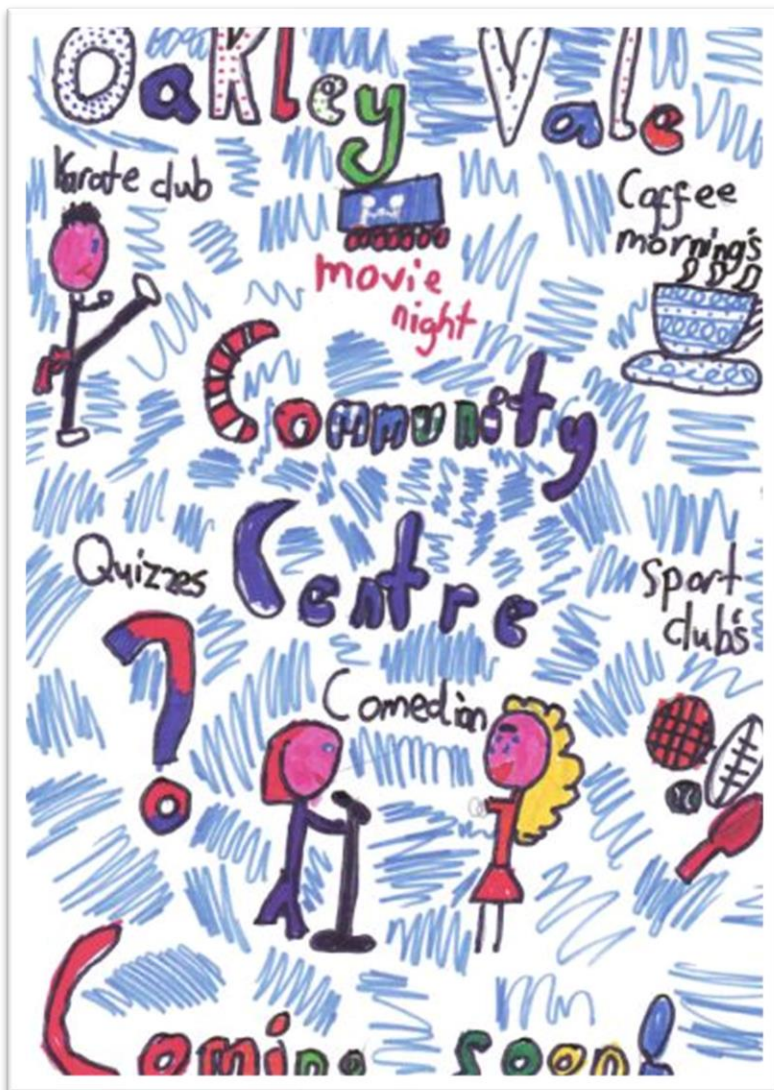
Violette Armstrong (Year 1 - Oakley Vale Primary School).



Rowan Napier (Year 2 - Oakley Vale Primary School).



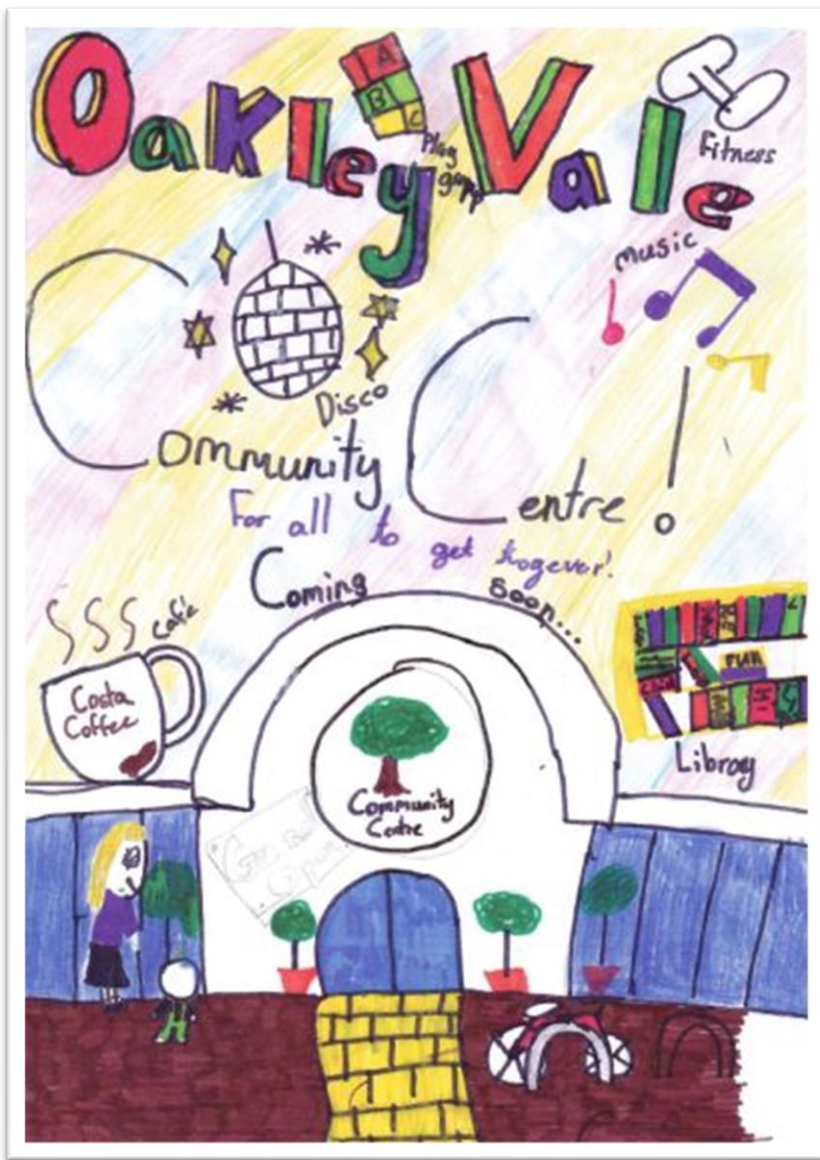
Aishya Plant (Year 3 - Oakley Vale Primary School).



Abigail Harding (Year 4 - Oakley Vale Primary School).



Sadia Begum (Year 5 - Oakley Vale Primary School).



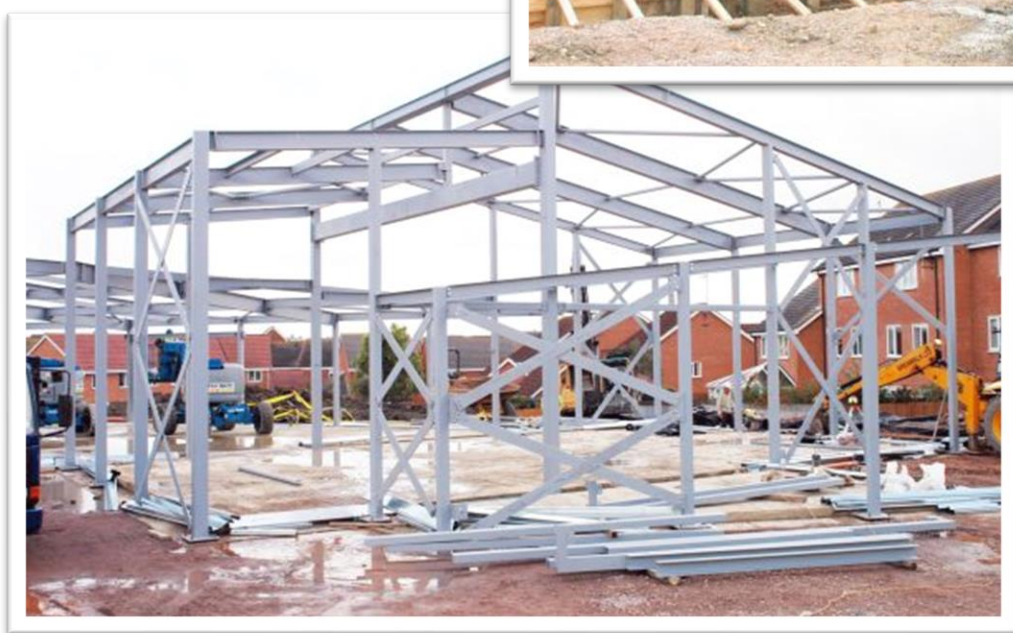
Abbey-Leigh Hopkins
(Year 6 Oakley Vale
Primary School).



The proud winners from reception through to year 6 from Oakley Vale Primary School with then Deputy Mayor of Corby, Cllr. Judy Caine and Trustee Hugh Fenton.

Work Begins ...

Behind these colourful posters a very large hole appears and was then filled in with concrete to form the foundations ...



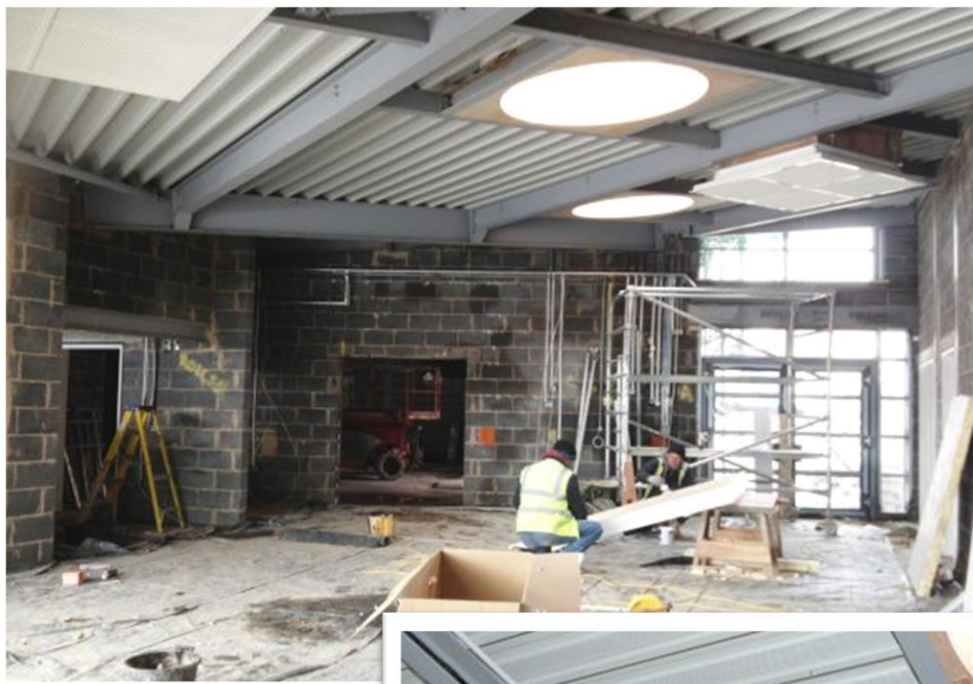
Finally, a frame appeared and seemed to get higher every day ... despite the weather.

Autumn became increasingly wet and a roof was desperately needed.



Roof on and things start to get a bit drier ...





Spring 2013 its
really starting to
take shape,
inside and out ...



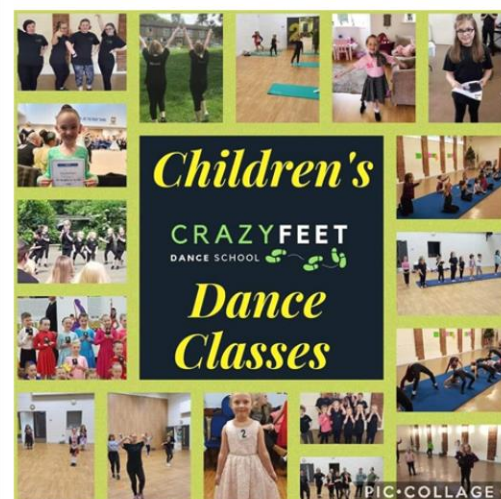
Nearly there ...

Time to order the furniture in time for our first customer in July.



On 8th July Crazy Feet dance group became our first customers (they are still with us ten years later).

On 24th July 2013 our then MP Andy Sawford joined the Oakley Vale Community Centre for the first Open Meeting in our very own community centre.



(All photos of construction, Carols Round the Tree and OVCA first meeting courtesy of Paul Balmer, FRSA – chair of Oakley Vale Community Association 2023).

A Christmas tradition begins in 2018 ...

Carols Around The Tree started in 2018 images here from 2019 and 2022.

**Oakley Vale Primary
School Choir.**



**Above Father Anthony of Hope Church leads
Indoor community carol singing whilst
below local elves prepare some warming
refreshments.**



**Tree donated by Great
Oakley Farms.**

Some Highlights from 2013 - 2023 ...



Trustee Paul Balmer with centre manager Annette Amato and trustee Hugh Fenton at the opening of the Fields in Trust behind the centre.

Community sharing food and drink at one of our many community events.



Our Community Library - books for adults and children to borrow and return free of charge. All donations from the community.



Community Lunch followed by singing with Graham Charles once a month on a Sunday.

Graham generously donated the keyboard and came to play for us.



One of our many Table Sales in the main hall

Community Celebration -
In 2023 there were 18 different Languages spoken on Oakley Vale representing a very culturally diverse community



Community Coffee Mornings - every Wednesday

Oakley Rangers Music Youth Club ...

Free music lessons in exchange for community service - litter picking, planting trees, shrubs and bulbs and performing to raise money for local charities. Below they are helping the community celebrate the Coronation of Charles III - 6th May 2023.



One of our many family fun days ...



**Carnival Queens
Enjoy show from
Frank Marvel and
dancer.**

**Mayor presents the 'Brennie
Guitar' to most deserving Oakley
Ranger.**



**Lots of fun for all the
family including a local
archery display.**

Corby Sculpture Park on Oakley Vale ...

In 2015 local residents under the guidance of Paul Balmer (chair of the community association) applied for and received a grant from the Arts Council - via Made with Many - to create the Corby Sculpture Park on Oakley Vale by 2023 there were 5 sculptures.



July 2017 - Cllr. Matt Keane, Mayor of Corby unveils the first sculpture - 'A Kinda Whoosh' with sculpture Richard Janes.



2nd of first three sculptures
'Curly Leaf'

3rd of first three sculptures
'Set a while 'n' rest'



The community followed a trail of leaves to view the first 3 sculptures ending up at the community centre for cake, refreshments and musical entertainment to celebrate the opening of the sculpture park.

