

# 1055C SENTINEL



**Special  
Edition**  
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**Wokingham Lions  
celebrate 50 years'  
service to their  
community**

# Celebrating 50 years of service to the community

On Friday 7 June, Wokingham Lions held a celebration in Wokingham Town Hall to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of their Charter on 23 May 1974. Lion President, Lyn Baily welcomed the Deputy Mayor of Wokingham Borough, Councillor Carol Jewell, Wokingham Town Mayor, Councillor Rob Comber and Wokingham Town Deputy Mayor, Councillor Louise Timlin.

Wokingham Lions work closely with both the Borough and Town Councils to put on events and support those in need in the community and Lion Lyn thanked them for working in partnership with Wokingham Lions.



Councillor Rob Comber and President Lion Lyn Baily cut the cake

To start the proceedings, Lions Ian Grange and Mervyn Clark had put together a video, which Lion Mervyn narrated. It covered the founding of Lions Clubs in 1917 in the USA, their emergence in the UK after World War II and, of course, Wokingham Club over the last 50 years.

*To watch this video visit [tnyurl.com/wk150](http://tnyurl.com/wk150).*

As well as many current and former members of Wokingham Club in attendance, there were Lions from other Clubs in the District including Immediate Past District Governor, Lion Dave Ebsworth. Lion Dave reflected on how life had changed in the last 50 years. In 1974 ABBA won the Eurovision Song Contest, the average annual wage was £2,205 and the average house cost £9,139, a litre of petrol was 16p, a loaf of bread 14p, and flares and flower-patterned shirts were the height of fashion!





Lion Dave was then delighted to present two Lions with long service chevrons. **Lion Mervyn Clark** (left) for 40 years as a Lion and Charter member **Lion Kenny Brant** (right) with his 50 year award.



Wokingham Lions Club currently has 39 members who have over 450 years of service between them. These range from five members with more than 30 years service, to fifteen members with less than five years.

The Patron of Lions Clubs in Great Britain is HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh and Wokingham Lions Club has the honour of her being an Honorary Member of their Club. Lion Patrick Hamblin of the Reading Lions Club is the liaison between the Clubs and our Patron and presented a letter from Her Royal Highness in which she congratulates Wokingham Lions on their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and thanks them for all they have done and will continue to do for their community.

Also attending were representatives from many of the charities that Wokingham Lions have worked with over the years. Representatives of four of these charities were invited to speak and outline how Wokingham Lions had been instrumental in helping them achieve success.

### **Claire Revie – Share Wokingham**

Share Wokingham was founded in 2020 and Claire explained that Wokingham Lions had been generous with both funds and time. What had been expected to be a short-term project now has 15 sites, plus a service providing pre-loved furniture and white goods to those in need and Wokingham Lions help has been invaluable.

### **Samantha Rosier – Camp Mohawk**

Samantha said Camp Mohawk had been fortunate to work alongside Lions. They had been the recipients of funds from Wokingham May Fayre 2023, which had assisted them in expanding their facilities. Wokingham Lions are now helping them with their Enchanted Forest Ball in October, money from which will go towards accessible changing rooms and showers at their centre near Warfield.

### **Simon & Barbara Young – Ollie Young Foundation**

Simon (Ollie's father) and Barbara (Ollie's grandmother) talked emotionally about losing Ollie to a brain tumour 12 years ago. The Foundation set up in his name has now raised over £750,000 for research into childhood brain tumours. Wokingham Lions have helped raise their

in the community and each year at the OYF fun day, Wokingham Lions run a stall for their benefit. OYF also help Wokingham Lions set-up and take-down the twice yearly 'Wokingham Walk', which of course leads to a thank you donation to the foundation.

### **Emma Cantrell – First Days Children's Charity**

Emma talked about the practical as well as financial help Wokingham Lions can give. She explained how Wokingham Lions have washed, ironed and where required repaired many items of school uniform, so that they are as good as new. At short notice Lions also helped put together a Winter Wonderland for Santa at The Winter Carnival. Emma also talked about having mad ideas, talking them through with members of her team and then thinking 'I'm going to ask a Lion'; their advice and help has been so supportive. To sum up Emma said 'I can't believe there are only 39 of you, it seems like 300 you do so much!'

Wokingham Lion Patrick Allen told everyone about the inception of the May Fayre in 1996 and particularly about Lion Gerry Aggett, who was the main driving force behind it. Gerry had joined Wokingham Lions in 1992 and wanted an event that enabled local charities to promote their causes and raise funds for themselves, something the May Fayre still does today. Sadly, Gerry died in 2003 aged 70, but Wokingham Lions Club set up an award in his name, to be presented to someone that Wokingham Lions Club felt had gone above and beyond, helping those in need in our local community. Wokingham Lions Club were delighted to present The Gerry Aggett Award 2024 to Gerald De La Pascua, for his tireless work with Share Wokingham's recycled furniture and white goods project. The Award came with a cheque for £1,000 towards the continuing work of Share Wokingham.

In their 50<sup>th</sup> year, Wokingham Lions are giving 50 Golden Awards of £500 each to local charities and community causes who are planning a new project or service in 2024 that needs funding, or a new piece of equipment to enhance or expand what they do. Two charities present at the event were surprised with a Golden Award each.

**Me2 Club** will use their Golden Award to train new volunteers to



accompany and support children with additional needs and disabilities to access leisure activities.

**The Link Visiting Scheme** will use the Golden Award to translate their literature into other languages such as Urdu, Hindi and Cantonese.

Wokingham Lions have now awarded 24 Golden Awards and those recipients present were given Presentation Cheques to mark the awards they had already received.