



OSBORNE

# Community Matters



## In this issue:

- pg.04 Magic Moments
- pg.07 Check-in to the Bug Hotel
- pg. 17 Creating Opportunities

# Welcome to Community Matters



We enjoy a thriving, friendly community at Osborne Property Services and this year has certainly been no exception!

As 2015 is closing in we have reminded ourselves of just some of the highlights that we have achieved with community organisations with the support of our partners and supply chain.

Spring saw the introduction of Rosie, our mascot. Larger than life, she has created some special and memorable moments within the community. We launched our work experience programme to promote career opportunities; the Nicky trainee Hemel Hempstead was saved from the scrap heap and found a new home in a playground of young adventurers and more. The list is long but every moment where we have made a difference accounts for the passion we have to give back to communities.

I feel genuinely honoured to be a part of supporting so many deserving organisations and thankful to a brilliant team that go and make it happen.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Graca Machado".

Graca Machado, Customer Experience Director

## What's in this issue...

- |    |                           |    |                          |
|----|---------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 03 | Festive Film Night        | 11 | Food Food, Glorious Food |
| 04 | Magic Moments             | 12 | Young Adventurers        |
| 05 | It's a Full House         | 13 | Apple Day                |
| 06 | Gardening Club            | 14 | Go Live                  |
| 07 | Check-in to the Bug Hotel | 15 | The Big Sleep Out        |
| 08 | Waste Not, Want Not       | 16 | Award Winners            |
| 09 | At the Ready              | 17 | Creating Opportunities   |
| 10 | Helping Hands             | 18 | The Big Wide World       |

So far.....

**£651,161**

added value  
provided through  
sponsorships,  
training and  
hours

**6,957**

staff hours  
devoted to  
community  
initiatives

**50**

community  
facilities  
improved

**33**

apprentices  
employed in  
trades and admin  
positions

**189**

community  
initiatives  
supported

**13,480**

people engaged  
through community  
events

## Festive Film Night



By invitation only, this very special ticket admitted users of the Driftway Sheltered Scheme to join us for a Festive Film night. For one night only, we transformed the communal lounge into a pop-up cinema.



The original version of *Miracle on 34th Street* was the film of choice, chosen by the residents and was shown on a big screen. As the lights dimmed, the Osborne usherettes were in the background busy preparing festive snacks including popcorn of course!



*'The Osborne girls did a wonderful job, very helpful and cheerful. Thank you Osborne'*

## The Christmas Party

We joined TACT in supporting Winchester City Council's Sheltered Scheme for a fun packed Christmas Party hosted at the Holiday Inn. Osborne supported the event in full festive costume and provided an afternoon full of activities.



With a warm welcome by our elf and snowman, over 70 residents took to their seats for their festive lunch. Opening the afternoon's entertainment was the Winnal Primary School Choir who got the Christmas Carol sing-along off to a harmonious start. Soon after, Hannah and Neal introduced the sensory quiz competing on touch and smell. The competition was tough as it went to tie break and it was the 'White Wings' team who the won the trophy. Joining the entertainment was a local ukulele band, followed by a raffle to which Osborne donated prizes.



The Christmas Party was a roaring success. One resident commented *'just like Christmas should be - thank you so much'*



# Magic Moments

Osborne worked with Joseph Clark School in Waltham Forest, to create a unique handcrafted story telling chair for pupils who are visually impaired, many with other complex needs. The concept started a few months back and has been in the making thanks to our dedicated carpenter, Alan.



Working with our supply chain partners Travis Perkins, who kindly donated some of the materials, we set about designing a chair that would enable the children to explore through touch. Accessible elements of the 'Magic Moments Chair' included some textured edges, neon paint, glitter sealant varnish and shaped carvings.

Magic Moments will be used at story time and for recognising great behaviour, but for now it's playing a leading role in the schools' nativity play.

We know this very special handcrafted chair is sure to share some very magic moments with the children of Joseph Clark School for many years to come.



# Crackers!



Winchester Young Carers (WYC) create a safe, secure and welcoming environment where children can lose themselves in an evening of games and activity. Osborne went along to join in with the Christmas festivities.



Armed with a bag full of glitter, glue and sparkles we shared some valuable time getting crafty with the children.



With the craft table set up, we worked with WYC dedicated volunteers and the young people to make Christmas Crackers of every shape, size and colour you can imagine. Neal was still wearing glitter the following day.



## It's a Full House

Centre in the Park is a day service for local elderly people who provide activities, relaxation, food and most importantly, company.



Wanting to add the Osborne sparkle to the party of 30 strong centre users, we arrived along with a very cheery Christmas Pudding!



Playing for prizes donated by Osborne, our very own distinguished bingo caller Neal, called eyes down for a line before moving onto a full house. The entertainment continued throughout the afternoon with the help of Andreia, Hannah and Lisa who had prepared numerous festive games and a range of prizes.



## Christmas Cheer



We are always happy to continue our relationship with Dacorum Mencap who provide a focal point for people with learning disabilities in and around the surrounding area.

The organisation who encourage independence for all, were keen for their users to have a means of emergency contact - should they need it whilst out and about. So as a gift from us to them, we provided our friends with a key ring where their emergency contact details could be stored.

The personalised key rings were given out at the end of what was a wonderful Christmas Party. It was wonderful to see Mecap party goers enjoying an evening with friends, great food, company and an abundance of moves and shakes on the dance floor.



## Gardening Club

Teaming up with Gardening Club of Walthamstow School for Girls, Osborne supported them with a garden spruce up.

The active Secondary School Gardening Club encourages the girls to grow their own produce for use in their school kitchen as well as their Home Economics lessons.



Six years after the veg beds were installed they were in need of some repair work. Our team were welcomed by a very enthusiastic team of students who were keen to get busy. After fitting the girls out with full PPE and a safety talk we set to work with saws and drills, replacing the rotten boards generously provided by our supply chain partner, Ace Boards.

The garden transformation, with fresh compost, allowed the girls to plant vegetables for them to enjoy in the school dinners for years to come.



## Kids Rule

Now in its seventh year, 'Takeover Day' gives young people the opportunity to be involved in decision making and have their voices heard. We supported Winchester City Council in the initiative which is part of the Children Commissioner's strategy.

Students aged 11 – 14 from the Henry Beaufort and Kings' secondary schools in Winchester, worked alongside members of the Council's housing management team and Osborne - experiencing the world of work. Visiting an empty home property, we were able to explain our role and our partnership with the Council, which ensures that each home is maintained to standard in preparation for the new tenant.

### Feedback from one student

*"I learnt there are many rules in Osborne to keep you safe. Everything is very structured and organised within the company in order to keep within their very tight deadlines. All work has to be completed to a very high standard. I also learnt that the Osborne logo was changed from blue to a pink colour. Mainly men are driving around with pink logos, which gets people talking and generates interest in the company. I enjoyed driving around and looking at the variety of properties that Osborne maintain. If I had £5000 I would build or improve more council houses."*



## Check-in to the Bug Hotel

Osborne teamed up for this exciting initiative with pupils of Hobbs Hill Wood School to construct a snug home for some new residents in Dacorum.



Bug Hotels are vital for all manner of 'wee beasties' to find shelter all year-round, and are particularly important during winter. Some bee, wasp, ladybug, butterfly and moth species hibernate over the winter and safe little homes where they can stay warm and dry until springtime are very appreciated.

Using some waste materials from our warehouse, along with items collected by the children, this Hotel was going five star - no question!

After our safety talk, the primary school children who often find written exercises challenging, got dressed into full PPE and were given the chance to have a go at drilling, sawing, constructing and filling the hotel. Encouraging little buggles to the school fields would also attract them to the neighbouring Community Orchard, a Dacorum Borough Council project.

This project has drawn children outside to study who has checked in to their new Bug Hotel.

'My favourite part was putting the roof on because we saw the worms wriggling around'



## Recycle, Reuse, Reduce

Trinity in Winchester are a charity addressing the effects of homelessness and vulnerability through specialist practical and emotional support, empowering positive change.

As firm supporters of Trinity, Osborne provide time running interview skills workshops through their Job Club for those wishing to enter employment.

As active fundraisers, we knew Trinity would make use of a quantity of envelopes that we were unable to use. Delivering them to Jenny at Trinity, she commented *'This is fantastic. Some will be used by the fundraising team to send thank you letters, fundraising event invites and applications for funding. Other envelopes will be used by our clients and project workers to send letters regarding housing applications and benefits. The Job Club participants will make use of them to send job/volunteering applications and CVs. The donation has significantly reduced our stationery costs, meaning we will be able to spend more money elsewhere in the charity.'*



## Waste Not, Want Not

The Repair Shed's mission is to use waste materials to make and mend, whilst at the same time giving local men over 50 the chance to be part of a social group where they are encouraged to talk together and learn new skills.

Osborne had a few waste kitchen units that were slightly damaged, so we drove over to The Repair Shed where we knew they would be welcomed for future projects. We also had an old pallet which they soon reconstructed into a window box to house plants.

Seeing their huge assembled stock items, we invited The Repair Shed to set up their 'Pop Up Shop' at our Dacorum premises. The handcrafted display was incredible and included products from letter racks, to tables to garden troughs. Our staff had the opportunity to browse, buy or order bespoke items, as well as it being a great opportunity to meet the committed team who continue to build strong relationships across the community.



## Suite Smelling Herb Garden

Using an old bath and basin, Osborne created a herb garden for the Learning Disability Experience (LDX) Day Centre, enabling users to produce their own produce for their home cooking.

LDX who provide an array of opportunities for children and adults with learning disabilities, had an outside area which was redundant of purpose. Our team set to work by clearing the waste to make way before positioning and planting the bathroom suite with fresh herbs. Using paint supplied by Crown, we created a bright and vibrant fresh smelling herb garden which were used in their meals.

Whilst there, we noticed that the garden ramp was a little hazardous and with safety first top of our agenda, we worked with the centre to coat the ramp with a nonslip material, enabling users access to their garden come rain or shine.



## At the Ready



Osborne and the Dacorum Youth Tenant Involvement (YTI) team are always keen to work together on initiatives which benefit the local community, as well as teach young people new, valuable skills. Giving up a day of their holidays, the team worked with the YTI on an initiative to support one of the Borough's Sheltered Schemes.

The tenants at Crawley Drive having received a grant, were able to treat the scheme to a new set of garden furniture. To ensure the communal garden area was looking its best for the furniture, we worked collectively to give it a spruce up. Our supply chain partner, Advanced Decorating, kindly donated a shed to the scheme, which carpenters Robin and Rob erected. Helping them were two members of the YTI who were able to take away some valuable learning from the experience.

The remainder of the team were committed to weeding, planting and potting new flowers donated by Osborne and the Sunny Side Rural Trust, to brighten up the garden.

It was a truly rewarding day demonstrating inter generational relationships as well as improving facilities and encouraging tenants to keep active!



## Green Fingers

Osborne were keen to support the Dacorum Borough Council Supported Housing Gardening Competition again this year.

This competition encourages older tenants to stay fit and active by tending to their gardens in the hope of scooping a prize.

The 'Best Communal Garden' award went to Gilbert Burnett House and the Best Individual Garden award went to Mr and Mrs Catling of Buckwood Road - well done all! Maria went along to congratulate and present our prize donations to the well deserving winners.

We look forward to next year's competition.



## Helping Hands

It's almost a year ago since we worked with WellChild, the national charity working to ensure the best possible care and support for children and young people living with a long-term or complex health condition.

The Helping Hands Team from the charity, who are dedicated to home improvements for sick children, approached us again to see if we were able to support a garden make-over for a very lucky girl. Understanding how a few helping hands can make such a powerful impact to improving a families life, we got on board.



Sarah, 9 years of age, has severe visual impairment, cerebral palsy, epilepsy and limited speech. For mobility Sarah uses a wheelchair so easy access to the garden was an important part of the brief, as was using artificial grass to allow use all year round.

Our 17 strong team worked a rota over the two day garden transformation. Day one - there was a morning down pour but we didn't let this dampen our motivation. We started by clearing the garden of debris and levelling out all areas for a smooth surface. We also erected a special swing for Sarah, and embedded its posts into the ground. On the second day, we rolled out the green carpet grass to the main garden. We built a robust ramp that would accommodate the weight and grip of Sarah's wheelchair and finished it off by bedding a sensory herb garden, complete with a miniature Christmas tree.



Sarah's parents commented *'The children have driven us crazy for the garden, all day Sunday we sat freezing so they could play outside lol. They love it - thank you so much'*

## Food Food, Glorious Food

The Sunny Side Rural Trust, a charity and social enterprise offer people with learning disabilities on-going work experience in aspects of horticulture including planting, potting, digging, and site maintenance. The trainees spend one to five days a week in supported placements to achieve their set goals and objectives.



Keen to support such a valuable service, Osborne attended their food event, which aimed, not only to showcase the fantastic local produce of the area, but also to invite the local community to their food garden where they grow their own vegetables.. At the event we looked after the 'Kids Corner' where our face painter created works of art ranging from flowers to creatures. Children also enjoyed badge making, crafts and dancing!



We were joined by Lucy Hansard for the event. Osborne met Lucy at the Kings Langley School Art Exhibition, which we were invited to earlier in the year. Noticing how keen she was to pursue a career in photography and seeing some of the great work she had created ,we asked Lucy if she would like to join us for the event to get snap happy. This gave Lucy a day's experience working for a business and charity at a public event with Osborne and Sunny Side gaining some great shots of the day.

## Tweet Tweet

Pupils of Woodside Primary School in Walthamstow, received a construction workshop delivered by our Osborne team. A selected group teamed up with us to build bird boxes.

After being equipped with PPE and having received a safety briefing, the eager pupils got busy constructing the flat pack boxes. Mencap in Greenwich, have their own wood workshop where the templates for the boxes are created.. Riverside workshop provides a service to enable adults with learning disabilities to gain valuable carpentry skills and employment. Using reclaimed wood, the Mencap team cut the wood to size and flat pack the bird boxes for an educational build in schools.



The children of Woodside Primary thoroughly enjoyed the hands-on build and were proud to take their products home.

## Young Adventurers

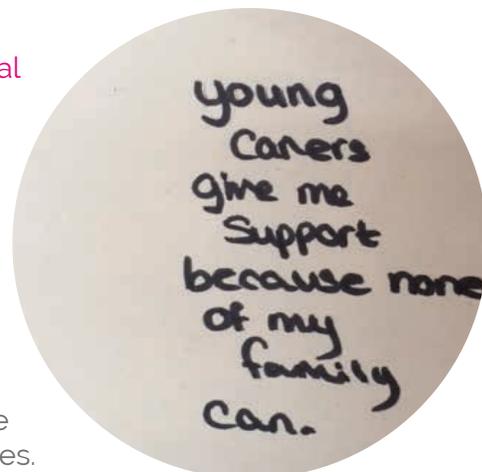
The East Sussex Young Carers join organisers Imago, for an annual two day festival where children all from similar backgrounds are encouraged to try out new and adventurous experiences in a safe and secure environment. We went along to volunteer and to join in the fun



Arriving at Bowles residential development, were 60 young carers, some of whom have never spent any time away from home or their responsibilities.

With a full programme of outdoor activities including zip wire, abseiling, skinning, kayaking, wood craft and archery there was plenty to keep them busy.

Many of the activities promoted team work, building trust with positive encouragement and communication. Our team of Osborne volunteers felt privileged and inspired to see individuals grow with self confidence and new friendships blossom.



*'We cannot thank you guys enough for giving up your time to support us with the East Sussex Young Carers Festival. Each of you had such a positive nature that this really helped the Young Carers feel at ease and make the most of the experience. You were always on hand to be helpful and without you guys I do not think the festival would have run so smoothly.'*

**Kelly-Anne Donaldson, Head of Young Carers Service**

*'I was really touched by how amazing all the kids are, and it was really hard for me at times hearing their stories about their day to day life and what they have to go through.'*

*I think it is amazing that Osborne are able to help organisations like this and others as it shows people that they are not alone and that people/companies do care*

*Thank you all so much for allowing me the opportunity to support the Young Carers Fest.'*

**Paul Grant, Osborne Property Services**





## Apple Day

Osborne was very pleased to support World Mental Health Day, 'Apple Day' held at Vestry House Museum in Walthamstow with the aim was to raise awareness of what can be done to ensure that people with mental health problems can live with dignity.

The free event attracted around 300 local residents and offered an array of apple activities and more for all the family, including apple bobbing, apple juice making to yoga sessions. As part of the long term vision of the project to recognise mental health, there was also a poppy making workshop (the flower representing mental health), where residents could create their own individual poppy. Next year Walthamstow will celebrate mental health using the poppies made in the form of an art exhibition. Our Waltham Forest team, with a needle and thread, created a sea of poppies set to be exhibited in the display.



## All Hands on Deck

The Collett School is a special needs school attended by children from all over Hertfordshire and the neighbouring counties. Their mission is to support students to grow in confidence and independence as much as possible, allowing them to be part of society and contribute to their community. Hearing that they were in need of some extra hands to transform areas of the school, we visited to see how we could help.

Osborne and our supply chain partner, Bell Group, were keen to help with the remaining decorating jobs. Bell transformed a hallway and kitchen area with a fresh lick of paint as well as redecorating an office making it bright and welcoming.

Extending their classroom space, the school had a few amazing tree house and log cabins erected earlier in the year. During our tour of the grounds, we noticed some exposed cabling, under the cabin, posing a potential risk to the children. To make safe, Robour carpenter boxed in the electrics with recycled wood and dug into the ground so the wires were not on show.



## Go Live



Hannah Bailey, Community Investment Co-ordinator, was invited to spend a morning with Matt Hatton at Radio Dacorum; a community station. They discussed our recent projects in and around the area and how we continue to help and support the local community. Through our visit we were keen to find out more about the station, who go to great lengths encouraging local people to be involved with them.

During the show, Hannah talked about the great working relationships Osborne has developed with the local community, including organisations such as AgeUK and Mencap as well as ongoing community projects run by Dacorum Borough Council. We were also able to include our partnership approach with 'Youth Connexions' and 'The Youth Tenant Involvement Team' and had the chance to play songs such as

'Happy' by Pharrell Williams and 'Help the People' by Birdy, which were all chosen by people who work within these organisations.

## Enterprise Challenge

Osborne supported the Eastbourne Education Business Partnership Junior Enterprise Challenge. Pupils from several local schools were brought together to face a business challenge.

The teams were tasked with planning an event to celebrate 30 years of the Eastbourne Business Partnership. Pupils had a choice of themed parties to promote, with dedicated job roles in each team including Manager, Marketing and Finance, Co-ordinator. The team were then asked to create a promotions board and a 30 second radio advertisement in support of their celebratory event.

Pupils were quick to assign to their new job roles and took on the responsibility with great enthusiasm. Richard from Osborne sat on the judging panel and presented awards, recognising children for their team work, planning, ideas and presentation skills.

This initiative is great for encouraging children to build relationships, share concepts and to realise potential.



## The Big Sleep Out



Our hardened Osborne team, braved the Big Sleep Out to raise money for the 'Dacorum Emergency Night Shelter' (DENS).

DENS is the charity seeking solutions to the problems of single homeless people and poverty in Dacorum. They provide a number of integrated services that give people the chance to build a better future.

On a cold December night, Andreaia, Hannah, Alan, Andrew and Neal spent a night sleeping out under the stars and were joined by friends of the Tenant Involvement Team.

To sleep out for one night is no comparison to those who never have a roof over their head, but our team were there to raise awareness as well as money by joining the organised event.

The cold, snoring of colleagues and lack of a 13.5 tog duvet meant that our team got very little sleep but their determination to see the night through was well worth it. Money raised will go along way in helping one of DENS many services as they continue to tackle homelessness and poverty.

A huge thank you to everyone that sponsored the team.



## Safety Talk

Osborne delivered an interactive safety talk on the 'dangers of building sites' to 250 pupils of Goose Green Primary school to highlight the potential dangers.

As part of the primary school assembly, we showed a short film of children venturing onto a building site and the 'near misses' they encountered followed by a discussion. The interactive question and answer session created fun with some pupils getting the chance to try on our safety gear. Before closing the safety assembly, our team set pupils the challenge of designing their very own safety poster, reinforcing their learning outcomes. We'll be back in the New Year with Rosie to judge the posters.



## Award Winners



Confident of our commitment and dedication to our communities, we placed an award submission for the Builder and Engineer Awards, under the category of Best Corporate Social Value organisation.

Having been short listed Graca and Neal attended the awards ceremony and were thrilled to see Rosie make it onto the big screen, shortly followed by the fantastic news that Osborne had won.

The work of the team in supporting its communities was recognised as some of the best in the country and this win is testament to the hours and time spent with such organisations.

Neal Allison, Community Investment Manager commented *"For us it is passion not pounds that makes all the difference and we are very much hands on. We are all incredibly proud of the work we do with our community partners."*

Highlights in Osborne's Corporate Social Responsibility work in the past year include: training and sponsorship worth £651,000 provided to communities; 6,957 staff hours donated to community initiatives; and 189 community events supported.



## Shaping our Service

As understanding what is important to our residents is a key element that enables us to shape and improve our service, we invited a group of residents to join us with Dacorum Borough Council.

After a warm welcome, we explained how valuable their honest and open views were to us. Customer Journey Mapping is a tool that looks at every touch point that a customer has with a company and at each interaction, how the customer feels.

The session brought stimulating discussion, providing us with some detailed insight into what we can do to provide better outcomes.

We will schedule more workshops as part of our continuous improvement plan to ensure that we provide a brilliant service.



# Creating Opportunities

Earlier in the year Osborne launched a work experience programme in partnership with Youth Connexions, an exciting initiative where we will be actively involved in promoting local job opportunities.

Jack and Will were our first recruits and with their feedback we have been able to adapt certain elements of the programme to ensure that students gain the best possible experience. Here is a snap shot of how they got on with Osborne.



Jack joined the team first on a trade placement for a week. After spending his first day with our electrician, Ian, he discovered he had an interest in electrics and was keen to take this further. Recognising this, the team decided it would be a great experience for Jack to spend the rest of the week with all of our electricians to give him a variety of jobs to go along to. It was extremely successful and Jack really impressed us with his enthusiasm and attitude throughout the week.

Will joined Osborne two weeks later to take part in an office placement. The week allowed him to spend time in different departments including Customer Solutions, Empty Homes and Planned Works. Will was also a credit to his school with his attitude and skill for the work he was given. He even spent a day with our Community Investment team delivering a Senses Quiz to elderly tenants.

We are very excited about developing the programme and welcoming more work experience placements in 2016.



Will got in touch after his placement to say



*"I would like to say a very big thank you to all involved throughout the work experience week. It was a very beneficial introduction into the workplace and the work environment and provided a very strong insight into what it would be like to work in an office. I enjoyed the variety throughout the week as it gave me the chance to explore the company's work practises within my area and the benefits that customers receive from the company working locally. I would definitely recommend this opportunity to those who are thinking about an office career which both cares about and gives back to the community."*

## The Big Wide World

Supporting the Young Enterprise educational initiative called 'Our World', we worked with pupils from Fletching CE Primary School in Lewes, West Sussex.

Our World takes pupils on an inspiring journey across the globe with the people, businesses and countries that work together to drive our global economy.



The children were split into business trading teams and tasked to create a product based on the materials available in the shop manned by Osborne. The young entrepreneurs, with a controlled budget, were shocked at the costs of items but did a great job with some inspiring enthusiasm for the world of business.

### Fletching School commented

*"I think the introduction of business thinking strategies at this age is very useful. The students responded well to the varied activities and there was good pace from the leader".*



## An Apple a Day

This October was time for part two of Dacorum Borough Council's Community Orchard at Northend. Local residents were invited to the site to help plant the fruit trees and enjoy an afternoon of activities, including storytelling, apple pressing and live acoustic music.

Our Osborne team, including Rosie, arrived early to help our friends at Dacorum set up and await the green fingered visitors. We donated a digital camera, smoothie maker and chocolates as prizes for a free raffle and sponsored a face painter for the day.

Orchards are so beneficial for a local area. Not only do they create beautiful landscapes and provide a source of food but they also reconnect people with the countryside, are valuable habitats for wildlife, can provide local training and resource for local schools and bring the surrounding community together to develop and sustain the area.

Neal Allison, Osborne's Community Investment Manager, said *'It was personally rewarding to see so many families helping to plant fruit trees and get involved in their community orchard, promoting healthier eating and improving the local environment. The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, the next best time is now!'*



## Contact

**Neal Allison**  
Community Investment Manager

Neal.Allison@osborne.co.uk



**Hannah Bailey**  
Community Investment Co-ordinator

Hannah.Bailey@osborne.co.uk



### Osborne Property Services

Fonteyn House  
47-49 London Road  
Reigate  
RH2 9PY

[www.osborne.co.uk](http://www.osborne.co.uk)

Follow us on Twitter @OsborneNews

0800 0258 008



Hamzah  
Joseph Clarke School  
Waltham Forest