



OAKLANDS

ANNUAL REVIEW

2023-2024



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SHAPING FUTURES, TRANSFORMING LIVES

OUR VALUES

1 EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

Deliver outstanding results, sustainable careers and future leaders.

2 COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Develop your knowledge and skills to prepare you for life and work.

3 INCLUSION AND HAPPINESS

Celebrate the achievements and successes of all our communities.

4 INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Striving for the best in all we do.



It is with great pride that I introduce the Oaklands Annual Review, a reflection on the remarkable progress, achievements, and resilience demonstrated by our staff, students, and partners over the past year.

This year has been one of growth and transformation, from the continued success of our academic and skills-based programmes to the development of new facilities, we remain committed to delivering an exceptional learning environment.

Our partnerships with employers, local and regional government stakeholders, and the wider community continue to strengthen. By aligning with industry needs, we create meaningful opportunities for our learners to thrive while supporting businesses as a trusted partner and service provider.

As core strategic priorities embedded in everything we do, innovation, sustainability and the environment, equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as happiness and wellbeing, remain at the heart of our efforts. We have made significant progress in advancing these areas, with one of the most notable achievements being the development of a SMART digital campus. By integrating cutting-edge technology and addressing both the challenges and opportunities of AI, we are equipping students with the essential tools and skills to thrive in an increasingly digital world—one where portfolio careers and yet-to-be-created jobs will define the future workforce.

Our strategies also align closely with the new UK Government '5 Missions', and we are well placed to help realise these, including:

Kickstarting economic growth by delivering an innovative, employer-driven curriculum that addresses critical skills gaps in the labour market.

Making Britain a clean energy superpower through campus redevelopment that exceeds BREEAM Sustainable Building Certification standards and a curriculum that equips learners with expertise in new technologies, retrofitting, sustainability, and environmental responsibility.

Empowering communities and taking back our streets by providing young people and adults with not only vocational and academic skills but also the essential workplace and life skills necessary for success.

Breaking down barriers to opportunity by embedding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) across all our practices, ensuring that education remains accessible to all.

Building an NHS fit for the future through our extensive range of health sector courses, partnerships, and training initiatives that address workforce needs in healthcare.

We are particularly proud of the achievements that mark us as a leading educational institution, including rising student outcomes, strong performance in inspections, and the creation of innovative pathways that prepare our learners for the future, and our dedicated partnership work with local, regional, and national employers.

As we reflect on our successes and look ahead to the opportunities before us, I am incredibly proud to lead such a talented, passionate, and inclusive team. Together, we are transforming lives while meeting the demands of an ever evolving world.

Thank you to our students, staff, partners, governors and community for your ongoing support and commitment.



ANDREW SLADE
Principal and CEO

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & PROGRESS MADE

1 OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Deliver continuous outstanding teaching, learning, and assessment to all learners and employers.

We are extremely proud that in 2023-24 the College received a 'GOOD' rating from Ofsted, confirming that the continued and relentless focus on delivering good and better teaching, learning and assessment is having an impact.

Building aspiration in our students is key to their ongoing success and we are delighted that our 2023-24 success rates have improved to 87%, and our provision for learners with high-needs self-assessed as 'OUTSTANDING'.

We are delighted to praise the following areas that had significantly high student achievement:

PERFORMING ARTS	BUSINESS
94.4%	92.4%
ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION	EQUINE
93.2%	92.2%
ENGINEERING	CARPENTRY AND JOINERY
92.6%	91.2%
MUSIC	
92.6%	

In addition, value added improved significantly in the following areas and are now high:

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION	ANIMAL CARE	PLUMBING AND GAS
+1	+8	+7
MUSIC	ART, FASHION & DESIGN	ICT
+5	+5	+5



The quality of education at the College is good. Leaders and managers have crafted an ambitious curriculum that equips all students, including those with additional learning needs, with the essential knowledge, skills, and behaviours for future success in education and employment.

This curriculum reflects the College's commitment to meeting the needs of students, employers, and the community. Programmes are carefully aligned with the needs of local employers and the College's strategic priorities, creating clear pathways to employment and further educational opportunities.

The College's curriculum planning cycle takes explicit note of the skills landscape to ensure our curriculum is fit for purpose and future proofed. A comprehensive set of data sources is used in the planning process to assess workforce requirements.

These include LMI accessed via the Lightcast system and RCU Vector along with tangible local, regional, national, and international perspectives, emergent themes from the Hertfordshire and London Local Skills Improvement Plans, the Hertfordshire Skills Framework, Hertfordshire Futures priorities and a developing new Economic Strategy.

As our educational landscape undergoes rapid digital evolution, we have transformed from our traditional Learning Resource Centres into digital learning spaces signifying a proactive step towards harnessing the full potential of digital tools in education.

We are extremely proud of the integration of technology and innovation in the curriculum that has taken place throughout the year. This exemplifies our commitment to preparing students for an evolving world. By harnessing tools like virtual reality in our 'i-Platform', students can engage with interactive, real-world simulations that bring learning to life in subjects ranging from engineering to healthcare.

This inclusion of AI education equips students with the skills to leverage machine learning, data analysis, and automation, preparing them for cutting-edge industries. This forward-thinking approach not only enhances engagement and creativity but also positions students as pioneers in emerging fields, ensuring they are well-prepared to shape and succeed in a technology-driven future.

Emphasising inclusivity and adaptability, the updated curriculum supports diverse pathways, from vocational qualifications to higher education. Celebrating these advancements highlights the College's role in adopting creativity, resilience, and lifelong learning, empowering students to thrive in dynamic careers and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

2 BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS

Create mutually beneficial partnerships to deliver the highest quality educational offer to increase economic prosperity.

The work we do with our employer partners, and stakeholders is embedded into the DNA of Oaklands, resulting in the alignment to several of the College's strategic aims.

Our engagement with employers is extensive, our approach is collaborative, and we develop long lasting relationships with employers who share the same intent for supporting and developing talent.

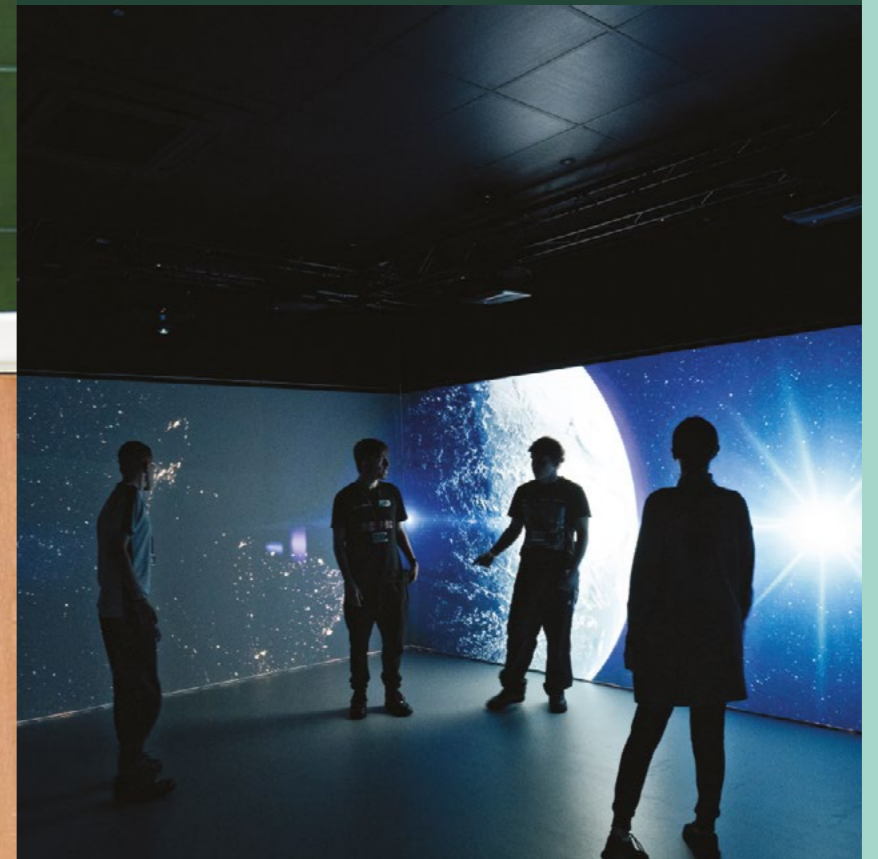


We have relationships with over 1,000 employers ranging from large corporate organisations such as Airbus, Sky and Fujitsu to smaller SME's which make up the large proportion of Hertfordshire businesses.

Employers engage with us to recruit, train, and develop their staff through both accredited and non-accredited training, and many engage with us to support their corporate and social responsibilities.

Activities include their participation in the employer-led #GETCAREERREADY strategy, the career framework which sets out the soft skills that are considered essential for working in their sector; work experience and industry placements; attendance at industry boards and industry insight and careers events.

Furthermore, Oaklands occupies a key position in the local and regional business community, hosting several employer networking events, awards events, and sponsorship of local employer events. Oaklands has established several strategic alliances with employers locally and nationally in 2023-24.



94% EMPLOYER SATISFACTION

Oaklands has established several strategic alliances with employers locally and nationally in 2023-24.

- **Strategic Partnerships:** Grew to 36, offering work-based learning, improving employability, and fostering innovation.
- **Regional Collaboration:** Bi-monthly skills boards with councils and local / national skills meetings; curriculum beginning to align with industry needs.
- **Income Growth:** £59,000 sponsorship secured, enhancing curriculum and events like the Festival of Achievement week.
- **Brand Strength:** Employer engagement increased from 250 to 2,234; satisfaction score rose to 94%.
- **Industry Advantage Scheme:** Launched a two-way agreement offering training and recruitment benefits to employers supporting placements and other initiatives.

3 SUSTAINABLE SMART CAMPUSES

Create our estate so that it is recognised as world class in terms of quality, sustainability, and the promotion and practice of evolving leading-edge technologies.

Exciting developments during this academic year included the Topping Out Ceremony for our new Construction Centre, opening in November 2024.

The ambitious project is a 3,000m² new build, making it the UK's newest teaching centre for all of the construction trades. The centre includes workshops for practical learning for the plumbing, electrical, retrofit and renewables installation trades, a Construction Lab, a VR learning suite and general teaching and IT classrooms.

The new building will significantly enhance the student experience and is aimed at improving the quality of training and skills that the college students have available to them.

Cutting-edge sustainability practices and performance have been at the heart of this new building, including the installation of air source heat pumps and solar PV panels.

The centre is also one of the first projects in the UK to use bricks made from fully recycled materials.



4 INCLUSIVE, THRIVING COMMUNITY

Create a caring, accessible, inclusive and thriving college community, committed to fairness, health and success.

A caring, accessible, inclusive, and thriving college community begins with a commitment to fostering an environment where every individual feels valued, supported, and respected. This starts with strong leadership that prioritises inclusivity and fairness in policies, practices, and decision-making.

The College has worked hard this year to provide accessible facilities and resources, including adaptive technologies and support services, ensuring that all students can fully participate in College life, regardless of ability or background.

Health and wellbeing initiatives, including mental health services, wellness workshops, and a focus on work-life balance for staff and students, create a foundation for success. Encouraging a culture of kindness, where diversity is celebrated through events, open dialogue, and cultural awareness programmes, nurturing mutual understanding and belonging.

5 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Deliver good or outstanding long term sustainable financial health, through growth, that enables reinvestment in our students, staff and estate to support our aspirational goals.

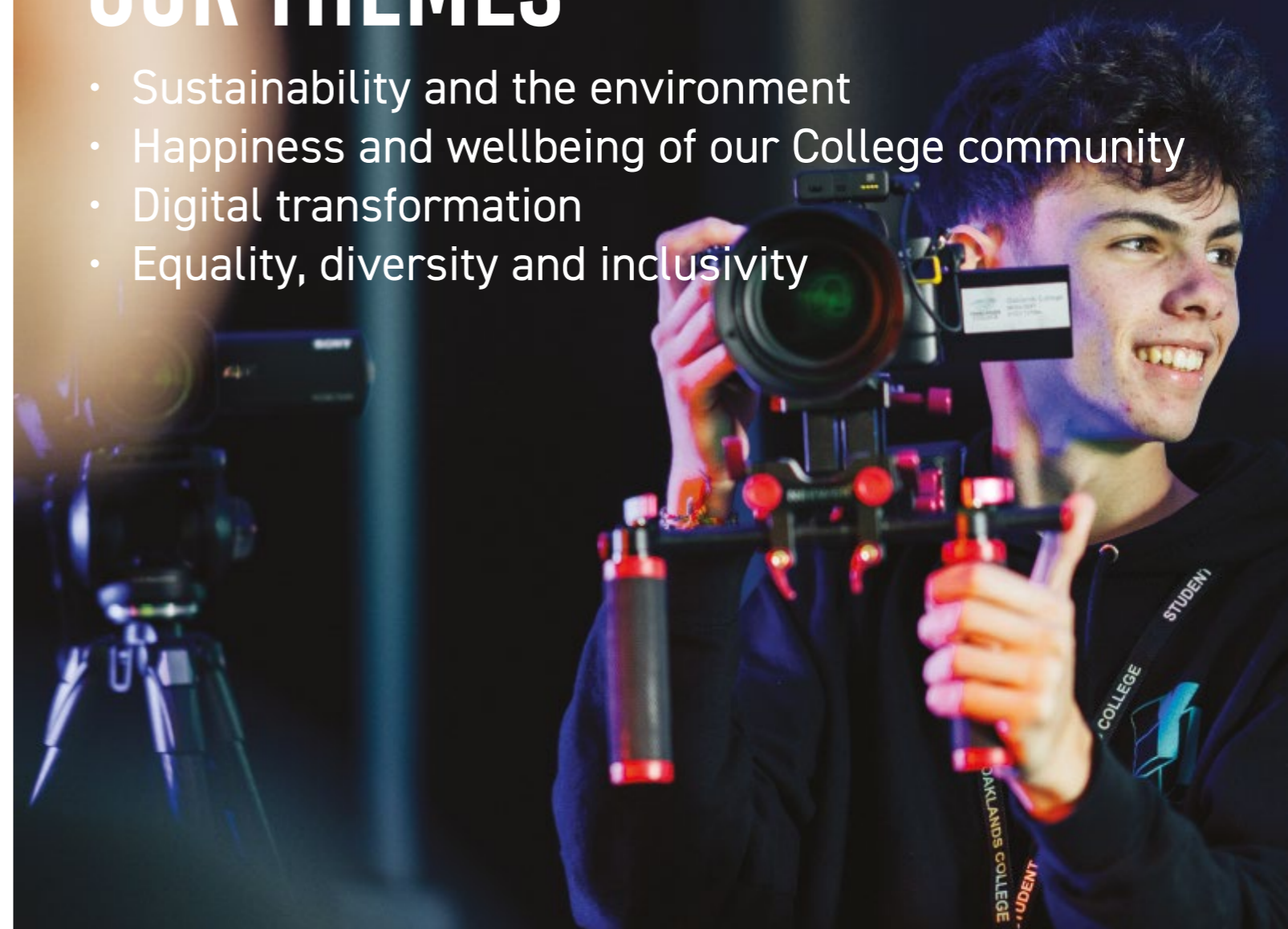
The College has had a strategic focus on responsible growth and effective resource management. By diversifying income streams such as the growth in commercial income and the increase in adult learning, optimising operational efficiencies, and developing innovative programmes aligned with market demands, the College has continued to contribute to its solid financial foundation.

This enables reinvestment in key areas that directly support aspirational goals, such as enhancing student learning experiences, providing competitive development opportunities for staff and modernising facilities to create an inspiring environment.

Growth driven by robust partnerships with industry and community stakeholders ensures alignment with regional needs, attracting more students and funding opportunities.

OUR THEMES

- Sustainability and the environment
- Happiness and wellbeing of our College community
- Digital transformation
- Equality, diversity and inclusivity





OFSTED UPDATE



Oaklands College has demonstrated significant progress over the past year, achieving a “Good” rating in its most recent Ofsted inspection in September 2023, a notable improvement from its previous “Requires Improvement” rating.

The College was commended for providing a diverse range of education and training programmes across its three campuses in St Albans, Welwyn Garden City, and Borehamwood. Inspectors said that learners benefit from high-quality resources such as an animal management unit, a public animal habitat, and modern vocational facilities, which provide industry-standard training environments.

This ensures learners are well prepared for employment, further education, or community integration. The introduction of T Level qualifications in engineering, childcare, and business management, as well as skills bootcamps in digital and construction, reflects the College’s commitment to aligning its curriculum with local and regional skills priorities.

Leadership and governance at the College have been strengthened since the last inspection, with senior leaders and governors playing an active role in aligning the curriculum with the needs of employers and the local community. Strategic partnerships with local businesses, universities, and stakeholders have been key in addressing skills shortages in high-demand areas such

as construction, healthcare, engineering, and sustainable technologies.

These partnerships, while still developing at the time of the inspection, are already informing course design and employability initiatives.

Learners at Oaklands College report high levels of satisfaction, citing supportive tutors, inclusive environments, and opportunities to develop both practical skills and academic knowledge. Teaching and learning are well-structured, with tutors—many of whom maintain active links with their industries—delivering practical, real-world training alongside theoretical instruction.

This approach enables learners to progress confidently to more complex skills, whether it be advanced techniques in carpentry, coaching in sports, or welfare management in animal care.

Tailored support for learners with high needs fosters independence, integration, and vocational readiness, while adult learners value programmes that help them return to education and secure employment.



Safeguarding remains a priority, with learners feeling safe and supported throughout their time at the College.

Although the College’s attendance and achievement in English and mathematics exceed national rates, the inspection highlighted opportunities for further improvement in these subjects, as well as in a few curriculum areas where employer engagement in delivery and assessment could be strengthened.

The College’s inclusive culture, focus on learner progression, and investment in staff development have resulted in a thriving community where most learners achieve their qualifications and move on to positive destinations, such as employment, university, or further study. The achievement for learners aged 16-18 is in the top quartile nationally.

Ofsted commented that Oaklands College is well-positioned to continue addressing local and regional skills needs while providing a high-quality educational experience for its learners. Its strong leadership, innovative programmes, and commitment to inclusivity and progression ensure it remains a valued partner to stakeholders and a vital contributor to the economic and social development of the region.



RESPONDING TO SKILLS NEEDS

OAKLANDS



At Oaklands College, we are proud to play a key role in meeting the skills demands of our local and regional communities. Our success is built on strong partnerships with over 2,200 employers, educational institutions, and stakeholders across Hertfordshire and beyond.

By working closely with Hertfordshire Futures and Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce, we contribute to significant projects focused on sustainable construction, retrofit technologies, and creative industries and align our offerings with the Hertfordshire Local Skills Improvement Plan. This engagement ensures that the College's programmes are directly informed by the current and future skills requirements of the local labour market, addressing gaps and supporting sustainable employment opportunities in the county.

We prioritise offering courses in high-demand sectors, including construction, engineering, and film and television, while also making significant investments in sports skills development. Our collaboration with schools inspires future learners, and our partnership with a local university creates clear pathways to higher-level learning. We are committed to expanding adult training and reintroducing apprenticeships to support career progression and economic growth.

Our leadership team is deeply connected to the regional skills landscape. We represent the College on several key boards locally and work closely with Hertfordshire based councils and national organisations to influence education policy.

Our Strategic Plan (2022-2027) reflects our ambition to be internationally recognised, nationally significant, and locally impactful. We are determined to equip learners with adaptable, future-ready skills that align with the Hertfordshire Skills Framework and local economic priorities.

We use comprehensive labour market data to shape a responsive and forward-thinking curriculum.

By working with industry experts via our Industry Boards, we ensure our courses meet current and future skills demands, including green technology and digital construction. We continually adapt our curriculum to prepare students with the technical expertise needed to thrive in competitive job markets.

Our partnerships with employers are a cornerstone of our success, with a 94% satisfaction rate.

We also collaborate with other colleges and actively engage with schools, reaching over 18,000 school-age children in 2023-24 through assemblies, careers fairs, and guidance sessions.

Through these initiatives, Oaklands College demonstrates a comprehensive and responsive approach to meeting Hertfordshire's local skills needs, fostering a skilled workforce equipped to contribute to the region's economic vitality.

RESPONDING TO SKILLS NEEDS

At Oaklands College, we remain committed to supporting learners on their journey to meaningful, sustainable careers.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND

Funded by the Department for Education, the Skills Development Fund (SDF) enabled a collaborative partnership with the other three Hertfordshire colleges to enhance our facilities, equipment, and curriculum to better align with local economic needs. This project prioritised capacity building, quality improvement, and strong employer engagement, ensuring we effectively address local skills priorities and foster a more coordinated and efficient training offer.

This project led to significant digital advancements. We expanded training capacity by developing new programmes and courses specifically tailored to address identified local skills shortages. We enhanced the quality of our training through comprehensive staff development initiatives. These initiatives encompassed training in areas such as: Level 3 Electric Vehicle Charging; Heat Pumps and Energy Efficiency Awareness; Renewable Energy Awareness; Level 3 Air Source Heat Pumps; WRAS Water Regulations; Electric Vehicle and Solar PV Awareness and EAL Installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Level 3.

A total of 32 staff members successfully completed professional certifications and training programmes. We strengthened employer links and gained a deeper understanding of local industry skill needs. Additionally, we made significant investments in training and equipment for sustainability and green technologies, including Solar PV training rigs, Air Source Heat Pump training rigs, an electric vehicle charging rig, and Virtual Reality (VR) equipment.

The SDF project played a key role in supporting a responsive approach to meeting the evolving needs of the local economy while ensuring long-term sustainability and growth.

LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT FUND

Building on the work undertaken in the Skills Development Fund (SDF) project, the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) aimed 'to support the collaborative work across the region, to invest in new facilities and courses that met local skill needs, and

promoted excellence in college leadership, governance, and teaching.' The LSIF project aligned with these objectives by fostering collaboration through partnerships with the Hertfordshire colleges to develop and deliver shared training programmes in emerging technologies. Oaklands College was involved in three initiatives.

DIGITAL AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

This project focused on developing in-demand digital skills, aligning with Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) priorities, including AI, VR, RFID, and other emerging technologies, alongside essential soft skills. Building upon the successful SDF projects, we expanded VR training, leveraged the Metacollege platform, and enhanced staff expertise. We increased VR access by creating accessible VR spaces for all learners and equipping Oaklands College with a dedicated digital interactive space, i-Collaborate. Additionally, the project introduced and explored the use of AI and AR and scoped a higher-level qualification in VR / AR development. Key activities included staff upskilling, Metacollege collaboration, and strategic equipment investments. This project equipped our students with the digital skills crucial for success in the evolving job market.

GREEN TECHNOLOGIES

This project aimed to develop opportunities for staff to gain skills in new technologies, enabling them to effectively train the future workforce. A key focus was on developing skills and promoting the adoption of green technologies and net-zero practices, upskilling the local workforce and developing a pipeline of skilled workers.

To achieve this, the LSIF project undertook several key initiatives, including developing understanding of future skills needs through thorough research and strategic planning. Oaklands College introduced Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs), creating a diverse range of relevant courses. We have provided Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in emerging skills for teaching staff including Retrofit and invested in essential training equipment and software to support the delivery of high-quality instruction. These investments included a Hybrid electric training rig, a Ground Source Heat Pump, a Ground Source Purging Rig, an Air-to-Air Heat Pump Training Rig, a Solar PV Off-Grid System Open Frame, an Underfloor Heating Rig, and a Rutland FM910-4 wind turbine.



HEALTH AND SCIENCE

We have made significant strides in our health project funding. We have used the funding to purchase a state-of-the-art, industry-specific simulation mannequin to enhance training in our new NHS standard fully equipped training ward. Partnerships have been made to support industry placement and the introduction of the Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ) is designed to upskill adult learners.

A new NHS standard health ward has been created to offer versatility and cater to various aspects of healthcare practice. It includes a reception area, a main clinical ward, a maternity suite equipped with baby cots, a nurses' station / diagnostic lab serving as a hub for hands-on activities and real-time diagnostics, a treatment room, an examination and consultation room, and a dedicated HE lecture space. This comprehensive layout provides a realistic and engaging learning environment for students.

Innovation and new technology have been one of the College's key initiatives. The i-Platform is a 360-degree immersive learning environment that leverages advanced technology to enhance student engagement and facilitate experiential learning. This innovative platform goes beyond traditional virtual reality setups by incorporating versatile content display and enhanced visualisation, creating a truly immersive and interactive experience. By utilising the i-Platform, students can engage in shared experiences, develop critical thinking skills, and gain a deeper understanding of complex concepts. The platform includes the necessary software, projectors, and wall screens to ensure seamless functionality and an optimal learning experience. Employers including Airbus and Balfour Beatty are working with us on the development of 360 training content for their workforce.

CURRICULUM GROWTH

The College's headline growth areas for 2023/24 were:



Changes in curriculum were put into place following curriculum planning and include expansion into T Levels in Business, Childcare and Engineering which meets government priorities.

A YEAR IN REVIEW 2023 - 2024

AUGUST

ST ALBANS FOOD FESTIVAL

Martin and two of our Catering & Hospitality students were at St Albans Food Festival giving incredible demonstrations on preparing pork for the perfect Sunday roast, preparing chicken for ballotines & escalopes and preparing joints of lamb for dishes at home.



JANUARY

INSPIRING CAREERS: THAMES VALLEY POLICE VISIT

We had the pleasure of Thames Valley Police visit our Animal care and Equine students to give us a talk on the Mounted section and the amazing work they carry out for the safety of Milton Keynes and surrounding areas.

It was great to see how they train the horses for high profile events such as; Royal Ascot, Queen Elizabeth's funeral and large football matches. The passion they expressed and knowledge they have is brilliant. We hope this might inspire some of our students to think about a career in such a rewarding sector.



SEPTEMBER

LEVEL 2 & 3 FASHION STUDENTS

Level 2 and 3 Fashion students have been hard at work in collaboration with The Hospice of St Francis, gaining experience as visual merchandisers for the day. The students upcycled old handbags that the shop couldn't sell, giving them more life whilst playing their part in creating a sustainable world in the process.

OCTOBER



THE STEVE CASTLE ARENA

Steve Castle, Head Coach of the Football Academy, has had a new 3G pitch named after him in a football complex in Plymouth. This is because Plymouth Argyle F.C. have ranked Steve as one of the top players to ever play for the club!



NOVEMBER

NEW ARRIVALS

We were delighted to welcome two new calves Elsie & Isla. Both Calves are settling in really well and are slowly learning to take food from the farm staff's hands.

DECEMBER

HE GRADUATION

A joyous occasion as we celebrated the Higher Education Graduation ceremony at our Welwyn Garden City campus. We were honoured by the presence of Councillor Pankit Shah, the Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council. Congratulations to all the graduates on reaching this significant milestone, and a heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to making this celebration memorable.

FEBRUARY

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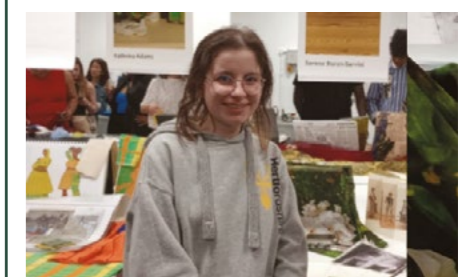
MARCH



LAMBING WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS

We gave a heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us and contributed to the event's incredible success. With up to 11,000 attendees, the energy and enthusiasm were palpable. We extended our gratitude to every single person at Oaklands College for their unwavering commitment and hard work.

APRIL



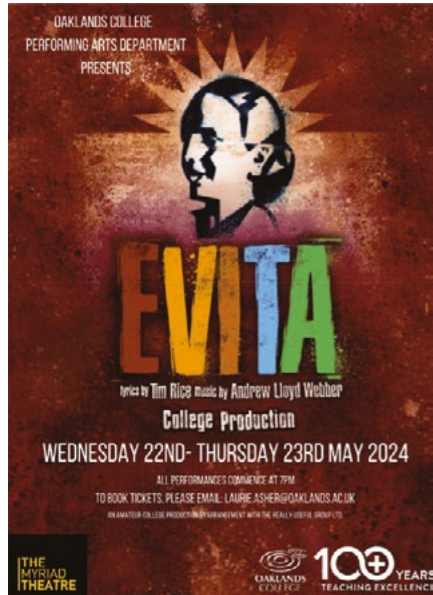
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: SERENA BORON-SERVINI

Oaklands College alumna Serena Boron-Servini showcased her final collection at the University of Hertfordshire's Festival of Achievement, as part of her degree course.

Starting as a Level 2 Art and Design student, Serena progressed to Level 3 Fashion at Oaklands College, consistently exceeding expectations through her hard work and determination.

Serena's journey exemplifies how the skills and knowledge gained at Oaklands can propel students into successful careers in fashion.

A YEAR IN REVIEW 2023 - 2024 CONTINUED



MAY

EVITA

Our performing arts students presented Evita at the Myriad Theatre in Welwyn Garden City to the delight of audiences. Staff and students were invited to watch their amazing skills on the stage.



JUNE

BRICKWORK BRILLIANCE: OAKLANDS TRIUMPHS AT SKILLBUILD COMPETITION

Level 2 Brickwork students Harry Tebbutt and Jack Fetherstone showcased their exceptional talents at the South East England heat of the SkillBuild competition, a prestigious event affiliated with WorldSkills.

Competing fiercely at Lewisham College against 100+ skilled contenders from the region, Harry clinched third place while Jack secured a commendable fifth in the brickwork category.

Their stellar performances not only reflect their dedication and skill but also underscore the excellence of training provided at Oaklands.

JUNE



CELEBRATING CAITLIN RYAN: A RISING STAR ON AND OFF THE COURT

We were thrilled to shine a spotlight on one of our own, Caitlin Ryan, captain of the Oaklands College Wolves Academy. Caitlin recently made history by clinching the Basketball England 2023 National Statistician of the Year award, becoming the youngest recipient at just 16 years old. Despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, Caitlin's dedication remained unwavering. She continued to excel, training under London official Abi Osunsami and earning the distinction of being the country's youngest certified official three years ago.

Caitlin's contributions to the game extend beyond the court. Her meticulous tracking of game statistics for top-tier matches, including the WBBL play-off final at the O2 Arena, has earned her widespread recognition. At Oaklands College, Caitlin has flourished both as a player and an official, thanks to our supportive environment that encourages growth and development. Join us in congratulating Caitlin on this remarkable achievement. Her passion, dedication, and commitment serve as an inspiration to us all.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: OAKLANDS COLLEGE'S STANDOUT PERFORMANCE AT HERTS SHOW

Oaklands College made a resounding impact at the Herts County Show, with Jodie Randall, Helen Southwell, and Briony Stokes showcasing their exceptional talent in livestock showing. Securing third place in both classes was just the beginning of our triumph.

Their prowess didn't go unnoticed, as they were recruited by two professional show teams.

This collaboration propelled Northumbria Southdowns to claim the prestigious title of Overall Supreme Champion on Saturday.

On Sunday, our team continued to dominate, winning all our classes and securing the coveted title of Supreme Reserve Champion. It was a weekend of exceptional teamwork and triumph.

JULY

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS BY OUR T-LEVEL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS

Amelia at Skanska

Amelia has been a real asset to Skanska during her three-week block placement. She has played a crucial role in assisting with the planning and delivery of assessment centres for incoming graduates and apprentices. Through this experience, Amelia has gained insights into various roles at Skanska, including Civil Engineering, Environmental Advisors, and Quantity Surveyors. Her tasks have ranged from assessing candidate CVs to attending HR meetings and supporting the planning of a large company event. Skanska is looking forward to welcoming Amelia back next academic year to continue her placement.

MOLLY'S EXCEPTIONAL PRESENTATION

Another shining example is Molly, who recently delivered a business presentation that was nothing short of brilliant. Despite her initial

nervousness, Molly impressed everyone with her preparation and delivery. Her dedication and effort were evident, leaving a lasting impression on her colleagues.

STUDENT REFLECTIONS ON WORK PLACEMENTS

Our students have also shared their own experiences, reflecting on the valuable knowledge and skills they have gained. One student, who completed a placement at Skanska, described their experience as incredibly enriching. They highlighted the importance of project management, teamwork, effective communication, problem-solving on-site and contributing to real projects. This placement not only enhanced their technical skills but also provided valuable insights into the industry, setting a strong foundation for their future career aspirations. We are delighted to share some inspiring feedback about our T-Level Management and Administration students who are currently excelling in their work placements.

STUDENT DATA



STUDENT GENDER

- Male 46.06%
- Female 53.94%



STUDENT DISABILITY

- With 25.42%
- Without 74.58%

STUDENT ETHNICITY

- African: 4.29%
- Any other Asian background: 2.35%
- Any other Black / African / Caribbean background: 2.18%
- Any other ethnic group: 2.60%
- Any Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background: 2.19%
- Any Other White background: 9.84%
- Arab: 1.01%
- Bangladeshi: 1.27%
- Caribbean: 1.11%
- Chinese: 0.64%
- English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British: 59.04%
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller: 0.12%
- Indian: 1.57%
- Irish: 0.70%
- Not provided: 5.91%
- Pakistani: 1.51%
- White and Asian: 1.47%
- White and Black African: 0.73%
- White and Black Caribbean: 1.47%

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

16-19 STUDY PROGRAMMES

3,225

HIGHER EDUCATION

284

ADULT SKILLS FUND & ADVLL

2,986

NON FUNDED

1,514

APPRENTICESHIPS

261

TOTAL

8,366





STUDENT SUCCESS

Students Secure Prestigious TUI Apprenticeships.

Three exceptional Oaklands students triumphed over fierce competition from more than 600 applicants across the UK to earn coveted spots on one of the nation's most prestigious apprenticeship programmes in 2024.

Heath Richmond, 19, and Alexander Mason, 18, secured places on TUI's sought-after aircraft engineering apprenticeship, while Jamie Orfeur, 18, was accepted onto the company's newly launched aircraft engineer workshop apprenticeship scheme.

Both apprenticeships, spanning four years, will be based at the TUI hangar at Luton Airport. Heath and Alexander's programme will equip them with comprehensive aircraft maintenance skills, culminating in their qualification as Civil Aviation Authority-certified A Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineers. Jamie's workshop apprenticeship

will provide him with highly specialised training in aircraft airframe workshops, ensuring TUI remains at the forefront of modern aviation technology.

Upon completion, Jamie will be a certified workshop aircraft engineer, proficient in maintaining cutting-edge airliners like the Boeing 787 Dreamliner.

The trio have spent the past two years diligently studying for their Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Engineering. Their outstanding academic performance and technical skills have now opened the doors to an exciting career in the aviation industry.



Electrical Installation Student Recognised in '30 Under 30' Awards

Former Electrical Installation student, Mazin, was recently honoured at the prestigious 30 Under 30 Awards 2023 by the Luceco Group. This recognition celebrates his exceptional dedication and contributions to the electrical industry.

The 30 Under 30 Awards highlight the achievements of young professionals who have demonstrated outstanding skill, innovation, and commitment within their fields. Mazin's inclusion in this elite group underscores his passion and expertise in electrical installation, setting a benchmark for future learners at Oaklands.

His success serves as an inspiration to current students and reflects the high standards of education and training provided by Oaklands. We are proud of Mazin's accomplishments and look forward to seeing his continued success in the electrical industry.

Former Horticulture Student Wins Sports Turf and Greenkeeping Category of the Land-Based and Environment Learner of the Year Awards

Former Oaklands College Horticulture student, Matthew Tofts, has achieved national recognition by winning the Further Education (FE) Learner of the Year award in the Sports Turf and Greenkeeping category 2024 at the prestigious Land-Based and Environment Learner of the Year Awards.

Organised by Lantra, the awards celebrate excellence across various land-based sectors, including agriculture, animal care, and horticulture.

Matthew's achievement is a testament to his exceptional dedication and talent. Having completed his Level 3 Diploma in Work-based Horticulture ahead of schedule, his strong background in landscaping provided him with invaluable insights into the skills required for greenkeeping.

Recognising his outstanding performance, Oaklands nominated Matthew for the award, leading to his selection as a national finalist and, ultimately, the category winner.

Matthew's success reflects not only his personal excellence but also the commitment of Oaklands to nurturing the next generation of land-based professionals.

OUR STAFF

Staff Wellbeing is a strategic priority at Oaklands as indicated in our commitment to the Value of Inclusion and Happiness, which is strengthened in our thinking and practice by the Theme of Happiness and Wellbeing.



Explicitly, our thinking has been shaped by our commitment to the Association of Colleges Mental Health Charter, as evidenced in our Mental Health Strategy. The mental health of staff has been prioritised through training of Mental Health Peer Supporters by MIND in Mid Herts.

There are currently 27 Mental Health Peer Supporters available to support staff, and a robust supervision network for the Mental Health Peer Support team is in place which has helped to enhance a culture of trust at Oaklands, reassuring staff that the College values their mental health. The College is continuing to improve and enhance its support.

Practically, the schedule includes a monthly focus on wellbeing through 'Wellbeing Wednesdays' which in the past year has enabled an informal space for staff to meet and chat, with free tea, coffee and biscuits provided. We have encouraged staff to go out on 'wellbeing walks' and provided a map of suggested routes.

We encourage staff to attend and support the students in Oaklands Wolves games. We set up regular Menopause Webinars with a consultant and connected an internal group together, providing a wealth of resource and support.

Our Staff Development Days, scheduled into the annual College calendar, provide numerous opportunities for wellbeing activities using a wide variety of approaches such as external talks, relaxation, games, shared departmental expertise such as provision of an Oaklands 'Repair Shop'. Staff can also access free soup every day as required. Information about our Employee Assistance Programme through Telus Health is provided to all staff.

Wellbeing in the workplace is maintained through the on-the-job daily support staff receive from line managers. Oaklands managers are encouraged to coach staff and enable them to access CPD opportunities which include internal and external training, much of which is freely available and accessible online.

A review of Training Needs Analysis by department has commenced, and results from this will inform bespoke training that will further help staff to feel valued with opportunities to learn and develop. The College is proactive in recognising and supporting the wellbeing of its staff and students and this will continue to be a priority in the coming year.

STAFF AWARDS

Our staff awards were presented by Chair of Oaklands Corporation, Peter Thompson



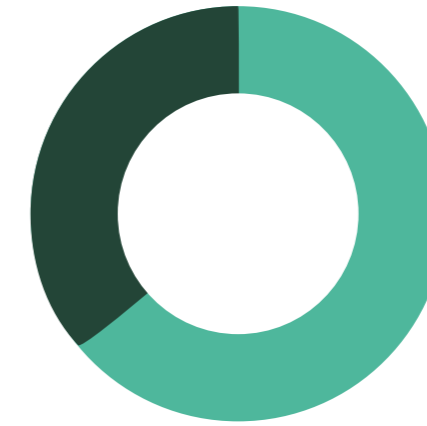


STAFF



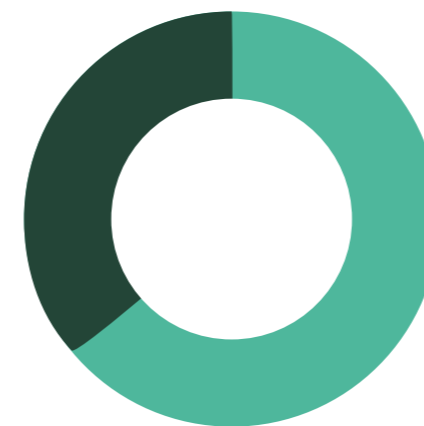
STAFF ROLES

Management	6.84%
Teaching	29.42%
Support	63.74%



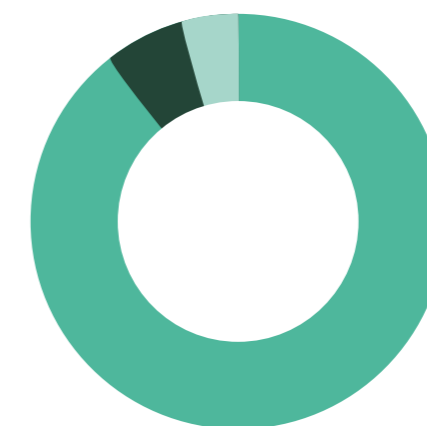
HOURS

Full time	37.06%
Part time	62.94%



GENDER

Male	35.5%
Female	64.46%



DISABILITY

Yes	6.74%
No	83.14%
Not known	10.12%

ETHNIC GROUP

ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH

6.61%

BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH

5.06%

MIXED

2.20%

NOT STATED

5.19%

OTHER ETHNICS GROUP

3.50%

WHITE

77.4%

The amount invested into staff CPD amounts to approximately: £84k in 2023 to 2024. Alongside payment to external suppliers for training, College staff were also able to benefit from a wide range of internal CPD opportunities including Teacher Training and other qualification routes, as well as personal development. Staff Development Days also provided staff with a variety of learning opportunities from external providers.

ACADEMIES



The 2023-2024 academic year has been a transformative period for Oaklands College's Sports Academies, marked by significant growth, enhanced performance, and strategic investments that align with our vision to become a national leader in sports education.

STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The academies saw a 14% increase in student enrolment, reaching 678 student-athletes across 12 academies, including basketball, rugby, hockey, football, cycling, athletics, and more. We introduced new pathways, including programmes for karate and cheerleading, with plans underway to add cricket and more combat sports for the next academic year.

Our student-athletes achieved exceptional results in their respective sports. Key highlights include:

- **Academic Integration:** Student-athletes excel across a diverse range of curriculum areas while managing their athletic commitments. Guided by the College's ethos of prioritising the student first and the athlete second, they benefit from tailored support to achieve their full potential.
- **Achievements:** Our athletes continue to compete at national and international levels, represent national teams, and secure professional and semi-professional contracts, such as Saracen's rugby. Current student and alumni athletes are heading for the Olympics and Paralympics in Paris in August 2024.
- **Hockey:** Winning their first national title as they won the AoC National Championships at the first attempt.
- **Cycling:** Athletes competed successfully at regional and national levels, solidifying our reputation as a hub for elite training.
- **Football:** Academy teams excelled in their leagues with us securing our first national title in 8 years.
- **Representative Honours:** A Student-athletes were selected for regional and national squads, further elevating the reputation of our academies.



JADEN DEAN:



National Bronze Medallist in 110m hurdles and qualified for the World Junior Championships to which he was in the top 3. He was ranked 15th in the World last year and is aspiring to be in the European U23s team this year.

JACK DAVIS:

One of our breakout players from the men's elite basketball team graduated in 2024 from Oaklands College. Whilst playing for our first team he also represented Wales, internationally at Under 18 and Under 19 age groups. Jack has said that 'Oaklands will forever be close to my heart.'

Jack's parents also hailed his academic and officiating whilst at Oaklands College stating "the basketball programme helped facilitate his refereeing and coaching development and inspired Jack to be the best version of himself. Jack has gone on to pass all his exams and assignments first try."



PERFORMANCE SUPPORT AND ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT

A dedicated Sports Performance Team provides wraparound support, including strength and conditioning coaching, physiotherapy, and wellbeing services. This holistic approach ensures that athletes are equipped to perform at their best while maintaining a focus on long-term development.

ACCREDITATION AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Oaklands College continues to achieve national recognition for its commitment to elite athlete development:

- TASS Accreditation: As a Talented Athlete Support Scheme-accredited institution, Oaklands offers flexibility and academic support tailored to student-athletes.
- Diploma in Sporting Excellence (DiSE): Delivered in partnership with Basketball England and British Cycling, DiSE enhances the development of elite athletes.
- NGB Links: Strong connections with governing bodies, including British Athletics, RFU, Hertfordshire FA, English Karate Federation, British Basketball and British Cycling, ensure students receive training aligned with the highest standards.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

To address long-standing timetabling challenges, we are implementing a new scheduling structure that ensures students can fully participate in both academic and sporting commitments.

This initiative has directly supported student retention and academy growth. Looking ahead, the academies are poised to expand further, with a target of 1,000 student-athletes by 2027 and the establishment of 15 academies.

Key priorities include finalising the cricket partnership with Hertfordshire Cricket and the English Cricket Board and launching additional performance pathways in Combat sports to meet demand.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES OVERVIEW



RESIDENTIAL

The College has excellent residential accommodation for its elite athletes. The team prioritises occupancy rates and operational efficiency while maintaining high standards of safety and welfare support. In 2024 we introduced a partnership for home stay to support more students to obtain residential accommodation within the local community.

OASIS HAIR AND BEAUTY

Our fantastic Oasis Hair and Beauty serves a dual purpose, providing students with vital hands-on training while simultaneously generating income from public bookings.

This year, the salon expanded its service offering to include IPL treatments, which attracted a broader client base. This diversification drove repeat bookings and increased overall salon revenue. The enhanced commercial offering also supports student employability.

FARM

The historic Oaklands Farm is a multifunctional commercial operation that supports education and revenue generation. In addition to its role as a student learning environment, the farm generates income through livestock sales, produce sales, and event-based experiences.

This year's Lambing Weekend achieved record attendance, translating into higher ticket sales, increased onsite spending, and enhanced brand visibility. The event's financial success highlights the commercial potential of leveraging the farm as both an educational and revenue-generating asset.



EQUESTRIAN CENTRE

The Equestrian Centre generates income through livery, equestrian events, and private bookings and is home to the East of England horse vaulting club.

This year, capacity expansion enabled the Centre to host more regional equestrian events, leading to a notable increase in event-based revenue. Collaborations with industry bodies increased external bookings. Additionally, student involvement in operations have added significantly to the student experience.

SPORTS ZONE



The Sports Zone is a community-accessible facility offering paid bookings for sports pitches, courts, and fitness areas.

This year, improvements to booking systems and targeted marketing initiatives led to an increase in community usage and external team bookings. Local sports leagues and wellness initiatives drove record bookings, generating a steady revenue stream and increasing campus footfall.

COMMERCIAL HIRES

Oaklands College's facilities are utilised for corporate training, community events, and private functions, with strategic hires maximising the use of available space. High-profile clients this year included Google's Digital Garage and Stagecoach Performing Arts School.

EVENTS

Flagship community events like Lambing Weekend, OakFest, and Oaktober Fest have become staples in the College's commercial calendar. These events generate revenue through ticket sales, vendor fees, and on-site purchases.



This year, upselling opportunities at these events contributed to the College's revenue growth. In addition, these flagship events increased brand visibility and showcased the commercial services available at Oaklands, supporting long-term financial objectives.

The College's facilities also hosted a range of diverse external events that engaged the local community and supported charitable causes. Key events included the Young Carers Event, Foodies Festival, Herts Young Homeless Sleepout, Mind in Mid Herts Mental Elf Run, Smallford Station and St Alban Way Heritage Society AGM, Park Run, and the Jive Swing Festival.

These events leveraged Oaklands' commercial spaces, generating revenue through booking fees, sponsorships, and on-site expenditure.

Notable highlights included the Foodies Festival, which provided an opportunity for local food producers to connect with a regional audience, and the Jive Swing Festival, which boosted campus footfall and on-site sales.

ZOO AND HABITAT

The Habitat Centre, known as Oaklands Zoo, operates as both a learning facility and a commercial visitor attraction. Educational tours, open days, and paid school visits provide significant revenue streams while offering students hands-on learning opportunities.

A new interactive visitor experience was launched this year, leading to increased visitor numbers and revenue growth. The Zoo's role in community engagement has also been leveraged to drive group bookings and sponsored activities.

SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship continues to play a vital role in supporting Oaklands College's commercial activities. This year, the College strengthened its sponsorship model, securing partnerships with local and national brands to support events like OakFest, Oaktober Fest, and the Sports Academies.

Corporate sponsorships provide financial backing that reduces operational costs and enhances event quality. Sponsors also benefit from increased brand visibility, while the College enjoys cost savings and an enhanced profile for its key events.

OAKLANDS WOLVES ACADEMIES

The Oaklands Sports Academies offer elite sports training supported by strategic partnerships with major organisations like Saracens Rugby Club and British Basketball and supports people of all ages to access sports. Our basketball academy spans ages 6+ to professional level athletes.

FILM HIRE ACTIVITIES

Oaklands College has established itself as a premier location for film and television productions. The College's unique facilities—including workshops, classrooms, and residential areas—offer authentic settings that appeal to production companies.

This year, the campus served as a filming location for high-profile productions, including ITV's "Code of Silence" and a Wind and Foster production for Barnardo's. Location fees for these productions generated substantial revenue. Additionally, being featured in films and television content has increased brand visibility, which is expected to drive further interest from production companies. A recent example of this is Steve Maqueen film Small Axe filmed August 2023.

To capitalise on this momentum, the College is investing in infrastructure upgrades and targeted marketing, aiming to secure higher-value production contracts and position itself as a premier filming location for the creative industries.



OUR ESTATE

The Oaklands College estate is large and complex, covering 3 separate campuses at St Albans, Welwyn Garden City, Borehamwood and an arable farm.

Covering 462 acres, it is a diverse and mixed estate comprising rural and town centre sites. The building stock is equally diverse, ranging from a century old manor house to the latest addition of the College's new Construction Centre, opening in late 2024.

Students on the St Albans campus benefit from extensive outdoor space making the campus an open, welcoming and spacious place to study. While students on the Welwyn Garden City campus have benefitted from significant investment in the latest immersive VR driven teaching spaces.

With such a diverse range of buildings and infrastructure the Estate is complex to manage and maintain. However, the College has and continues to invest in new buildings and infrastructure placing student need and wellbeing at the centre of this decision making and design.



SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

Sustainability and the environment are core to College thinking and an important value. All of the new buildings incorporate the latest sustainability thinking and go beyond the basic 'must do', utilising sustainable standards and materials. The new Construction centre is being developed to be beyond BREEAM standards.

Whenever possible, sustainability is retrofitted into the existing building stock in order to improve the environment and reduce our buildings overall impact on the environment.

The College cannot undertake this journey on its own and is working with external partners on some potential solution to lighting, solar power and overall energy consumption reduction.

We are continuing to develop our retrofit and sustainability curriculum to meet local skills needs and upskill the next generation of construction professionals in these key areas.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

A large part of the older mixed estate and infrastructure need significant levels of investment in order to bring parts of the estate back into serviceable condition.

This remains a financial challenge, however, this year the College has benefited from FECTF condition funding to be able to do this, but further and significant investment is needed.



LEARN.GROW.LIVE

OAKLANDS

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