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Canterbury Oast Trust Marks 40 Years of Empowering Lives with Ruby Jubilee Festival and Vision for the Future

Canterbury Oast Trust (COT), a pioneering charity supporting adults with learning disabilities and autism, is celebrating its 40th anniversary with a vibrant Ruby Jubilee Music Festival this September and unveiling bold plans for the future.

Founded in 1985 by a group of visionary parents, COT has grown into a thriving community offering supported living, residential care, life skills training, and meaningful work experiences in Kent. Its innovative site, the Rare Breeds Centre, remains a hub of learning and inclusion.

The **Ruby Jubilee Festival** will take place from **Friday 5th to Sunday 7th September 2025** at the Rare Breeds Centre near Ashford. This event has been made possible by the generous [sponsorship of families of supported people and local businesses](#) including *Adler Fairways, Chavereys, Kent Reliance, Korkers, and Serious Print Group*, honouring four decades of empowerment, community, and growth.

In addition, *Fostering Together* will be providing a fully equipped Changing Places toilet facility throughout the three-day festival, ensuring that individuals with complex needs can take part in the celebrations. They will also have an information stand located next to the facility, offering resources and guidance on becoming a foster parent for children with disabilities.

The planned celebrations are as follows:

- **Friday** will consist of a private, 1980s-themed celebration for supported individuals, families, staff, volunteers and their generous supporters.
- **Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th September**, from 12pm to 4pm: COT will partner with [Raver Tots](#) to present two days of family-friendly festival fun, filled with dancing, music, and non-stop entertainment.
- Known for its hugely popular family-friendly music events, Raver Tots will bring top DJs and upbeat dance tracks to a safe, inclusive, and exciting environment for children and their families.
- The weekend's line-up includes special guest performances from **Wideboys**, playing the best in Kisstory Classics, along with live performances from **Leanne Louise** and **Charlotte Devaney**, with more acts to be announced soon.

Canterbury Oast Trust

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🌐 COT: www.canterburyoasttrust.org.uk | Rare Breeds Centre: www.rarebreeds.org.uk



- Tickets for the Raver Tots event can be found at <https://rarebreedscentre.digitickets.co.uk/event-tickets/68216>

Looking Ahead: A Bold Vision for the Next Five Years

To mark this important milestone, COT is launching a fundraising campaign in support of its ambitious five-year strategy: “*Caring for our Tomorrow*” which includes:

- **Enhanced Accessibility:** Enhancing facilities at the Rare Breeds Centre to ensure greater accessibility and inclusivity for a wide range of disabilities.
- **Assistive Technology:** Investing in life-changing tools to support greater independence and communication.
- **Environmental Conservation:** Expanding nature-based learning and sustainability initiatives at Poulton Wood and the Rare Breeds Centre.
- **Unified Digital Presence:** Unifying COT with the Rare Breeds Centre online with a new, accessible website launched in July 2025 to strengthen online engagement and ease-of-use for website users with special needs. Approximately 13 million people in the UK have a disability which may prevent them from reading online content. With the introduction of [their new accessibility toolbar](#), Recite Me, on their website, those who struggle with decreased vision, learning difficulties, literacy, language/linguistic problems, attention disorders and physical disabilities can now engage with COT’s content in the best way for them.
- **Community Growth:** Continuing to expand accommodation options to meet growing demand and enhancing life skills programmes to help learners gain skills for employment.

“COT’s Ruby Jubilee is not just a celebration of the past, but a launchpad for the future,” said **Sarah Edwards**, CEO of Canterbury Oast Trust. “The charity remains committed to creating a more inclusive, accessible, and joyful world for the people it supports.”

COT invites individuals, businesses, and community groups to get involved through donations, sponsorships, and volunteering with the assistance of their supporter engagement team. Fundraising and sponsorship packs are available on the charity’s website.

To learn more, donate, or get involved, visit: www.canterburyoasttrust.org.uk.

Contact:

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Notes to Editors:

Canterbury Oast Trust is probably best known for its farm, the Rare Breeds Centre, which is open to the public and helps to fund the work of the charity. The farm is not only a visitor attraction, but also part of their life skills programme offering opportunities for supported people to gain skills such as animal care and horticulture, customer service and catering. Every visit to the farm helps to support the work of the charity and enrich the lives of the people they support.