

# Flitwick papers

April 2020



Flitwick Town Council  
The Rufus Centre  
Steppingley Road  
Flitwick  
Bedford  
MK45 1AH



*Photo of Manor Park Lake taken by Steve Hewitt*

 **01525 631900**

 **01525 631903**

 **info@flitwick.gov.uk**

 **www.flitwick.gov.uk**

 **/FlitwickTC**

 **@NewsFTC**

## What's Inside:

Good Neighbour Scheme

Step Free Access

Christmas Tree Project

Leonard Cheshire



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## Your Local Representatives

### Flitwick Town Councillors

Ward	Name	Contact
E	Keith Badham	630868
W	Ian Blazeby	634585
E	Ryan Coleman	Contact TC Office
W	Jeremy Dann	713751
W	Paul Dodds	Contact TC Office
W	Patricia Earles	Contact TC Office
E	Mike Halligan	Contact TC Office
E	Ann Lutley	712837
W	Gareth Mackey	712537
W	Martin Platt	713017
E	John Roberts	716360
E	Russ Shaw	Contact TC Office
W	Andy Snape	Contact TC Office
W	Dan Toinko	Contact TC Office
W	Phillip Thompson	720582
W	Maureen Williams	714714

Flitwick Town Council deal with; Allotments, burial ground, grants, environmental improvements, events and activities, play areas, Youth Hub, parks and open spaces, Flitwick Manor Park and The Rufus Centre.

### Central Bedfordshire Councillors

Neil Bunyan	0300 300 8512
Charles Gomm	0300 300 8522
Gareth Mackey	712537

Central Bedfordshire Council deal with; Environmental Services, Grants, Grass Cutting, Highways, Industrial Estates, Planning, Recreation and Leisure, Refuse Collections, Litter Clearance, Recycling, Amenity Areas, Education, Libraries, Archives, Social Services, Street Lighting, Trading Standards, Traffic Management and Youth Services.

Telephone 0300 300 8000

### Tuesday 17th March

Members were pleased to hear the Government announcement of additional funding for Network Rail to make Flitwick Train Station fully accessible. The Town Council were sure this would be welcome news for residents, in particular for wheelchair users, parents with buggies, the elderly and holiday makers due to travel to Luton or Gatwick Airports on the train line. This has been a topic that Members have been discussing in detail over many years and it is great to see progress finally being made. Central Beds Council Ward Members were awaiting timescales for the project and these would be communicated as soon as the information was known. FTC Members hoped that the plans for the proposed transport interchange scheme for the Station were not delayed.

Some items advertised on the agenda were deferred to a future meeting so that the Town Council could adequately discuss the coronavirus outbreak in detail and make decisions on FTC services for residents.

It was agreed to postpone the upcoming Annual Town Meeting, as well as community events and cancel the regular activities until the end of May. The situation would be reviewed mid-May, but it was expected for most events, such as the Little Mix Tribute and Community Awards to be rescheduled for later in the year. For the time-being there would be no Committee or Sub-Committee meetings taking place. The Members were keen to keep the Council in operation for necessary and statutory purposes for as long as the Government advice allowed and to support voluntary organisations who were doing their upmost to support those in need whilst the crisis was happening.

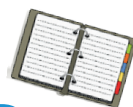
### Coronavirus (COVID 19) Pandemic

If you need help and don't know where to turn please give us a call and we will help direct you to the local organisations that can help you if we can't. You can contact us during office hours on 01525 631900, email [info@flitwick.gov.uk](mailto:info@flitwick.gov.uk) or send us a message via our Facebook page.

The Town Council is operating under the guidelines published by the Government and we will offer all the support we can to residents.

Please follow the latest Government guidelines on precautions and self-isolation and help keep everyone safe.

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)



### Town Council Diary

**Committee Meetings have been cancelled until further notice so we are only showing Full Town Council meetings in this issue.**

#### April

21st	Town Council	7.45pm
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#### May

19th	Town Council	7.45pm
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*(Please note this could be cancelled in due course but we will keep our residents up to date on changes via our website and social media pages)*

## Events Update

Regrettably we have had to change our event schedule and dates for our regular activities until the end of May. We apologise for the inconvenience this will cause but the safety of our staff and residents is paramount.

This means that the following activities will not be taking place until at least June:

Men's Club

Stitchers

Big Knit

Bingo

Forget Me Not Group

Over 60's Lunch

Tea Dance

Strictly Dance

Keep Fit

Painting Circle

Watercolour Painting Group

The Easter Egg Hunt and The Fun Dog Show have been cancelled and the Community Awards Evening and Little Mix Tribute have been postponed until later in the year.

Updates will be posted on our website [www.flitwick.gov.uk](http://www.flitwick.gov.uk) and on our Facebook page and we will share more news in the May edition of Flitwick Papers.

Rest assured our Community Services Team are still planning and rescheduling some of our events for later on this year but obviously we have to follow the latest guidelines issued by the Government. If you have any queries please give us a call on 01525 631900 or email [info@flitwick.gov.uk](mailto:info@flitwick.gov.uk)



## Town Councillor Vacancy

Elections are due to take place on 13th May for the Town Councillor vacancy in East Ward. In light of the Coronavirus, CBC are looking to see if this date can be changed due to the exceptional circumstances. To do this they are in contact with the Government to see if the law can be changed. We will keep you updated on this on social media and in the next edition of Flitwick Papers. ([See advert for Town Councillor on Page 9](#))



### **Amphill & Flitwick Good Neighbours - Coronavirus Help**

*The amazing team of volunteers at Amphill & Flitwick Good Neighbours are ready to help. We thank them for their fantastic support for residents at this difficult time.*

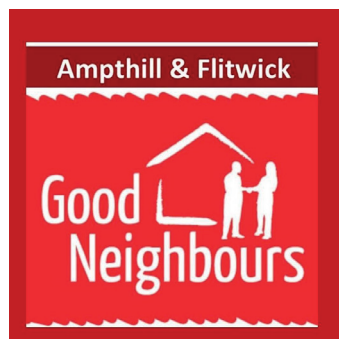
- Self Isolating?
- Got no Family or Friend support Network?
- We can get your shopping or prescriptions
- Offer befriending by telephone

Contact us for help by ringing 07833 314 903 or by emailing [amphillgn@gmail.com](mailto:amphillgn@gmail.com)

### **Would You Like To Volunteer?**

If you want to volunteer for us during this crisis, please contact us so we can meet this increased demand for our services.

[www.amphillgoodneighbours.info](http://www.amphillgoodneighbours.info)



## **Flitwick Surgery - Important Information For Patients**

Flitwick Surgery is working hard to keep patients and staff safe and to help slow the spread of COVID-19. To do this we need to drastically limit the number of people coming to the surgery. Patients should only attend the surgery if they have an appointment to see someone face-to-face.

All non-urgent appointments have been cancelled and all GP, minor illness nurse and pharmacist appointments will initially be by telephone. If clinicians then feel it is necessary to see patients face-to-face they will be booked in. This is in line with national guidance and to keep patients safe. For all other appointments patients will be phoned beforehand to check they are well enough to attend the surgery.

It is very important that those who have a new cough or a fever of 37.8 or above do not attend the surgery.

Patients requiring repeat prescriptions should do so via the surgery website, NHS app or through their pharmacy, paper requests at the Surgery and requests **in person** cannot be accepted.

If you have had a blood test you will be contacted if further action is needed, you can also view results online. Please do not attend the surgery to collect results.

Hospitals are currently cancelling non-urgent appointments and operations, please do not contact the Surgery about this – the hospital will contact you to make alternate arrangements.

The Surgery would like thank all of their patients for their support, understanding and cooperation at this time. The situation is changing rapidly and any changes to the above will be posted on the Surgery's website [www.flitwicksurgery.co.uk](http://www.flitwicksurgery.co.uk)

## Community Celebrates Lift Funding At Flitwick

Thameslink rail managers, community leaders and holiday destination Center Parcs have welcomed a Government announcement of additional money for Network Rail to make Flitwick station fully accessible.

Wheelchair users, parents with buggies, the elderly and holidaymakers with suitcases will all benefit from a share of an additional £50m of Access For All funding provided nationally to put in a new footbridge with lifts at the station, as announced in the recent budget.

Thameslink and Great Northern Managing Director Tom Moran said: "More than 1.6 million people use Flitwick station every year and lifts to the platforms will make an enormous difference to everyone who struggles because they use wheelchairs, have baby buggies, heavy luggage or find walking difficult.

"That is why we have been supporting the campaign to fund lifts and a new footbridge. This is great news, particularly given the 150th anniversary of Flitwick station that we are celebrating this year. We will now work with Network Rail and our community stakeholders to help develop a scheme."

Gavin Crook, Principal Programme Sponsor for Network Rail, said: "This is a vital project to improve accessibility at Flitwick station and we welcome the announcement that funding for this scheme has been secured. Network Rail will continue to work closely with stakeholders to deliver this scheme which will bring significant benefits for all passengers who use Flitwick station."

Arthur Taylor, chairman of Bedford Commuters' Association, said: "I am absolutely thrilled at this news. We have lobbied hard and been waiting for many years for this and were very disappointed when it did not make it through the last round of funding. This will be so much better for Flitwick passengers."

Cllr James Jamieson, Leader of Central Bedfordshire Council, said: "The Council has worked very closely with Govia Thameslink and Network Rail to secure the necessary funds to deliver full step-free access at Flitwick Station. Flitwick is an important gateway into our area, and it is essential that everyone wishing to travel here is able to do so via a fully accessible station."

Ian Cook, founder of the campaign group Step Free Access, said: "We're incredibly pleased at the success of our community's campaign to have lifts and ramps installed at Flitwick station and look forward to being involved in the design stage to ensure that the needs of everyone with mobility problems are accommodated."

"Meanwhile we will not rest until we have a firm decision from the Government of the day and all parties involved, that all stations and all trains are fully step-free."

*Photo shows: Station Manager Bernie Lee, Step-Free Access campaigner Ian Cook (centre) and Bedford Commuters' Association Chairman Arthur Taylor.*



*(Article by Govia Thameslink Rail)*

The Forget Me Not Group had a wonderful afternoon at The Rufus Centre on 9th March flower arranging with Mid Beds Flower Club.

They made beautiful spring flower arrangements to take home. A big thank you to Mid Beds Flower Club and to all the volunteers who helped make the afternoon such a success. There are some very talented florists in the group!

Forget Me Not Group is a group to support carers and people with memory problems or dementia. Held once a month, everyone is welcome to join us.

Unfortunately we have had to cancel the meetings in April and May but we hope to be back on schedule in June.



## New Project For The Stitchers

### Would You Like To Help Us With Our Next Project?

Following on from the amazing success of the poppy project for Remembrance which resulted in hundreds of knitted and crocheted poppies on display at the War Memorial, we are now working towards a Community Christmas Tree to go on display in the town and we need your help.

The Christmas Tree will be made up of green squares measuring 6", 8", 10" and 12". These can be knitted, crocheted, felt or quilted fabric.

We need several hundred squares to create the tree. The height and dimensions will be dictated by the number of squares we receive so the more squares donated the more prominent the tree will be!

There are no patterns or parameters except for the sizes above and the base colour has to be a shade of green so you can be as creative as you want.

We want as many people in the community to get involved with the project.

**Contact Zoe Putwain for more information on 01525 631900 or email [zoeputwain@flitwick.gov.uk](mailto:zoeputwain@flitwick.gov.uk)**



## The Rufus Centre

March started off very busy with the Gauge 3 Railway AGM and exhibition and the Three Counties Fine Art and Antiques Show over two consecutive weekends.

We also hosted a number of children's birthday parties in the Lockyer Suite complete with bouncy castles and some fantastic fancy dress costumes.

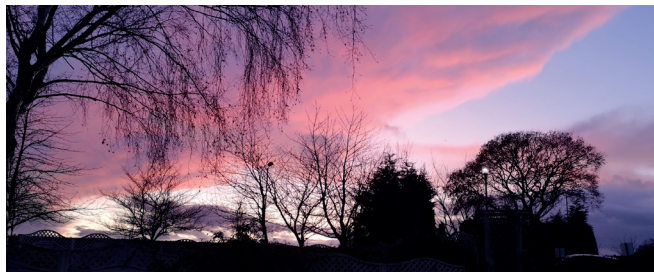
Unfortunately as time progressed we have had a lot of cancellations of conferences, meetings and exhibitions as a result of Coronavirus (COVID 19).

### Your Favourite Flitwick View

The good news is that work has been progressing on the new Rufus Centre Café and we are looking for your help in really making it personal to Flitwick.

We would love to feature your favourite views of Flitwick on the walls on the new café. If you have a photograph that you would like to share with visitors to The Rufus Centre please email them to [beverleyjones@flitwick.gov.uk](mailto:beverleyjones@flitwick.gov.uk). All those we use will receive a voucher for afternoon tea for two when the new café opens so you will be able to see your creative work on display.

Here's two of our favourite images so far. We can't wait to see yours.



***Send your favourite images  
of Flitwick to:  
[beverleyjones@flitwick.gov.uk](mailto:beverleyjones@flitwick.gov.uk)***



Tel: **01525 631905**

Email: [bookings@therufuscentre.co.uk](mailto:bookings@therufuscentre.co.uk)



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# The Rufus Centre



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**IF YOU CARE ABOUT  
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PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR  
LOCAL COMMUNITY, WE NEED YOU**

**Flitwick Town Council has a vacancy for a Town Councillor  
(East Ward) to be filled by election**

Completed nomination forms must be submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council,  
Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, SG17 5TQ between 1st-8th April

**The election will take place on 13th May 2020  
(Subject to change)**



Flitwick  
Town Council

**To request a nomination form or for more information  
contact: Stephanie Stanley on 01525 631900 or email  
[stephaniestanley@flitwick.gov.uk](mailto:stephaniestanley@flitwick.gov.uk)**

## The Big Beds Clean Up



The Big Beds Clean Up continues to make progress on cleaning up our environment. Despite the rain, we still managed to collect 25 bags of rubbish on our Flitwick Litter Pick on 15th March.

We have been organising litter picks all over Bedfordshire and had a talk at the new Ampthill Climate Change Group last month. The cause has made amazing progress these last few months, with a huge increase in support from both the local community and Council.

We will continue to grow into the summer, organising further litter picks and talks within the community.

You can follow our Facebook page for the latest news:

**@BigBedsCleanUp**

*George Karaiskou,*

*The Big Beds Clean Up*



## The Christmas Light Switch On Is Back!

We know many of you were disappointed when there was no Christmas Lights Switch On event last year, but let's not dwell on the past and let's look to the future instead!

Thanks to our Christmas Lights Working Group, we're bringing The Flitwick Christmas Lights Switch on back this year and we're hoping to make 2020 the best year yet!

We have set up a new Facebook page **@flitwickchristmaslights**. Please like, follow and share this page to stay up to date with all the Christmas light information, including community and fundraising events throughout the year!

Let's help bring the Christmas Light Switch On back to the community of Flitwick!

*Article sent in by the Flitwick Christmas Lights Working Group*

## Scouts Expedition Challenge

One of the highlights for the Scouts this month has been their expedition challenge. Starting from the Group HQ they hiked to Milton Bryan where they camped overnight and the following day hiked via Toddington back to Flitwick. All were taken out of their comfort zone.

**For further information about Flitwick Scout Group, please visit [www.flitwickscoutgroup.org.uk](http://www.flitwickscoutgroup.org.uk)**





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## What Do They Do?

Leonard Cheshire's Agate House is home to 36 adults with physical disabilities in Ampthill. We provide nursing care and personalised support for each of our residents so that they can live as independently as possible. The home is committed to enhancing the quality of life for our residents, and providing a safe, happy environment where they can thrive.

**Leonard  
Cheshire**



Do you have a bit of time you could spare? Are you looking for somewhere you can volunteer and make a difference? We're a friendly and sociable bunch at Agate House and we're always looking for volunteers to join us, particularly in the following areas:

### **Drivers**

Do you enjoy driving? Are you keen to make a real difference to someone's life? We're looking for friendly volunteers to support our residents to go along to church groups, clubs, theatre trips and hospital appointments.

### **Gardeners**

Do you have green fingers and time to spare? With Spring around the corner, we're looking for volunteers to help maintain our gardens and flowerpots for our residents to enjoy as the weather warms up.

### **Befriender**

Could you come and chat and provide some company to a resident who has few or no visitors? We can match you to someone with similar interests, or you can help with our regular group activities like crosswords and word games.

### **Administration Assistant**

Are you friendly with a professional manner? We are looking for reliable volunteers to provide administrative support in our busy office. No direct contact with clients, personal support work or care tasks are involved.

### **IT Support**

Are you good with computers? Could you show someone how to use Skype, Facebook or Google? We're looking for people who can come along for 1 – 2 hours a week and support our residents to feel confident about getting online.

### **Calling All Local Artists!**

We're also looking for either an individual or group of artists to paint a mural on our Physiotherapy room wall. All paint and equipment will be provided. This is a fantastic opportunity to use your artistic skills and make a huge contribution to your local community.

*If you would like to learn more about volunteering at Agate House please telephone us on 01525 403247 or email [agate@leonardcheshire.org](mailto:agate@leonardcheshire.org). We would love to hear from you!*

*(Photos top: volunteer Richard with resident Chris; bottom: volunteer Jessica with resident Rich)*







Rebecca L Faret  
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*If you are organising an event or have some news you would like to share with the local community please get in touch.*

*Flitwick Papers is published monthly and delivered to every household in the town.*



/FlitwickTC



@NewsFTC

# Get In Touch

You can call us on  
01525 631900 or  
email:  
info@flitwick.gov.uk



Our events and regular activities  
are not running during March,  
April and May. Full details can be  
found on page 4

**Look inside for details of help that is at hand on  
page 3 and page 5**

**All of these activities will be up  
running again soon so watch this space.....**

Stitchers

Bingo



Dance Fitness

Big Knit

Tea Dance

Men's Club

Forget Me Not Group

Tea Dance

Over 60's Lunch Club

Strictly Dance

Watercolor Group

Painting Circle

*We've been advised Church Services for Easter are cancelled but please  
check websites and social media nearer Easter to check if any there are  
any special plans to celebrate*

