

Tuesday 30th April 2024



Flitwick Town Council

Welcome to the 2024 Flitwick Annual Assembly

Meet your Town Councillors



Cllr Ian Blazeby



Cllr Tina Connell



Cllr Clare Copleston



Cllr James Gleave



Cllr Toby Harald



Cllr Howard Hodges



Cllr Sue Livens



Cllr Tim Parsons



Cllr Fraser
Patterson



Cllr Martin Platt



Cllr John Roberts



Cllr Andy Snape



Cllr Clare
Thompson



Cllr Dan Toinko



Cllr Robert
Wilsmore

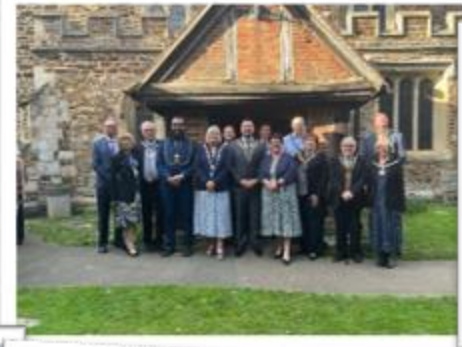


Vacancy



Vacancy

Civic Activities



Introducing the Flitwick Town Mayor's Charity CIO



We have set up the Flitwick Town Mayor's Charity CIO as a formal charity running alongside the Council.

- Governance is separate to the Council – trustees are the Town Clerk, Cllr Roberts (Chair), Cllr Snape (Treasurer), Cllr Thompson and the Town Clerk.
- Allows us to crowdfund from businesses and residents. Tax efficient giving for businesses and Gift Aid registered for private individuals.
- There are two fundraising missions: the Town Mayor's Chosen Charities and the Community Fund, which will fund projects and groups in Flitwick, including Flitwick Community Fridge.

Highlights from 2023/24

- Flitwick Community Fridge
- Proud Ampthill & Flitwick – Pride Picnic, LGBTQ+ History Month and Drag Night
- Flitwick Family Fun Day and Christmas Lights Switch On Event
- Rufus Centre – Lockyer refurbishment
- Planning Improvement Working Group
- 3 Station Road – £293,000 UK Community Ownership Fund grant success
- Planting 27,000 trees at the new Nature Park





The Council's work in the context of the 2024 Resident Survey





The 2024 Residents Survey

Linking the Survey to our 2021 – 2025 Strategy

219 responses in 2024
vs 447 in 2023








66% (+3% on LY) of you responded that you **trust Flitwick Town Council** either a great deal or a fair amount compared to the national average of 55%.

 A great deal	27
 A fair amount	118
 Not very much	59
 Not at all	15



46% (+8% on LY) of you felt that it was extremely easy or somewhat **easy to contact a Flitwick Town Councillor**.

 Extremely easy	39
 Somewhat easy	62
 Neutral	95
 Quite difficult	12
 Difficult	11



All Councillor email addresses and telephone numbers are published in Flitwick Papers and on the flitwick.gov.uk website.
Please get in touch. We'd love to hear from you!

About Flitwick and our Council



64% (+12% on LY) of you were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with **how Flitwick Town Council runs things** compared to the national average of 53%.

Very satisfied	26
Fairly satisfied	93
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	57
Fairly dissatisfied	35
Very dissatisfied	8



70% (+9% on LY) of you were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with **Flitwick as a place to live** compared to the national average of 74%.

Very satisfied	30
Fairly satisfied	123
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	36
Fairly dissatisfied	25
Very dissatisfied	5



41% (+3% on LY) either agreed strongly or tended to agree that Flitwick Town Council provides **value for money** compared to a 40% national average

Strongly agree	22
Tend to agree	75
Neither agree or disagree	64
Tend to disagree	43
Strongly disagree	15



59% (-2% on LY) of you felt that **Flitwick Town Council acts on the concerns of residents** either a great deal or a fair amount compared to 49% nationally.

A great deal	25
A fair amount	105
Not very much	79
Not at all	10

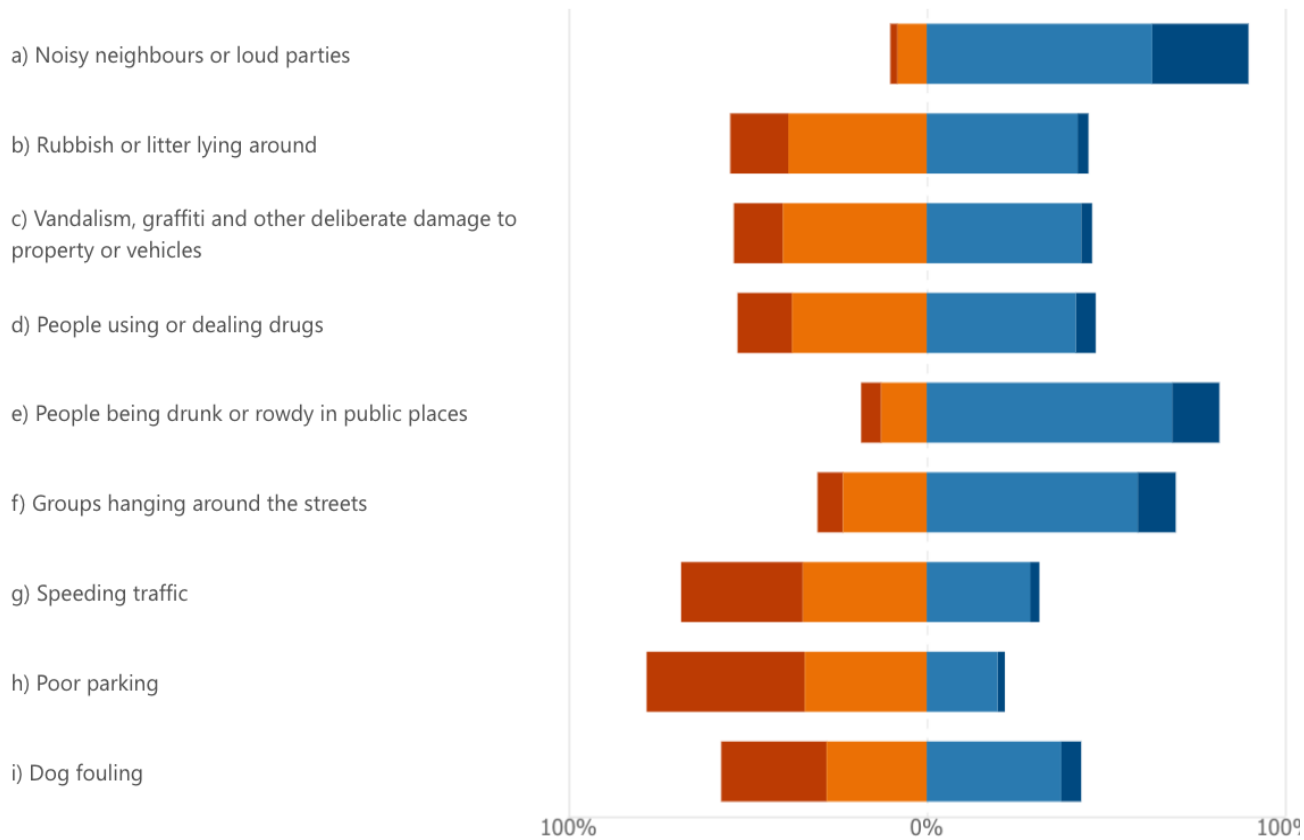


Your concerns are our concerns...



We asked you how much of a problem you thought each of the following issues are:

■ A very big problem ■ A fairly big problem ■ Not a very big problem ■ Not a problem at all



Parking continues to be the area of most concern again!
3rd Year running

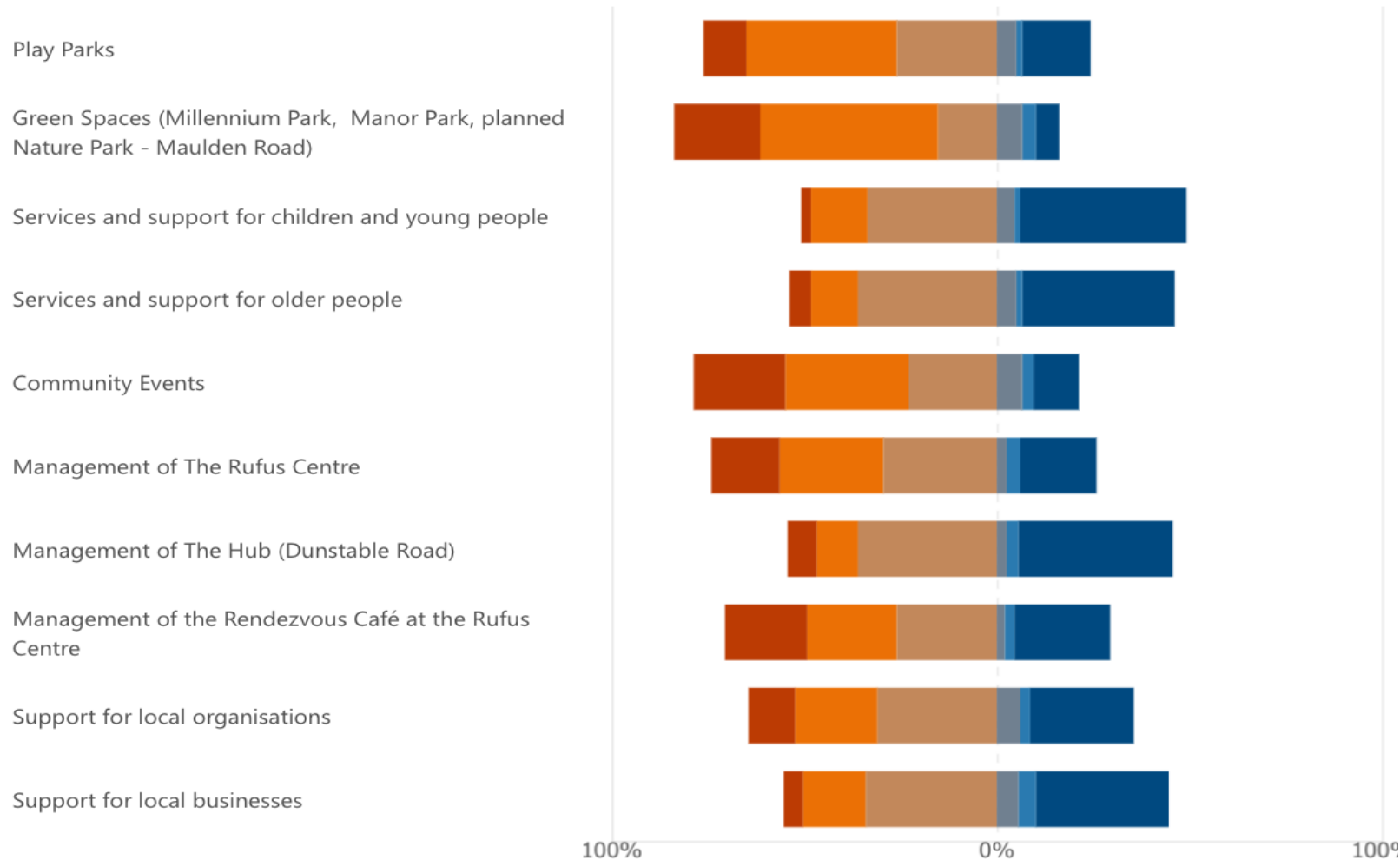


Overall satisfaction with our services



We asked you how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with the services Flitwick Town Council provides

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Fairly satisfied
 ■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 ■ Fairly dissatisfied
 ■ Very dissatisfied
 ■ Don't know

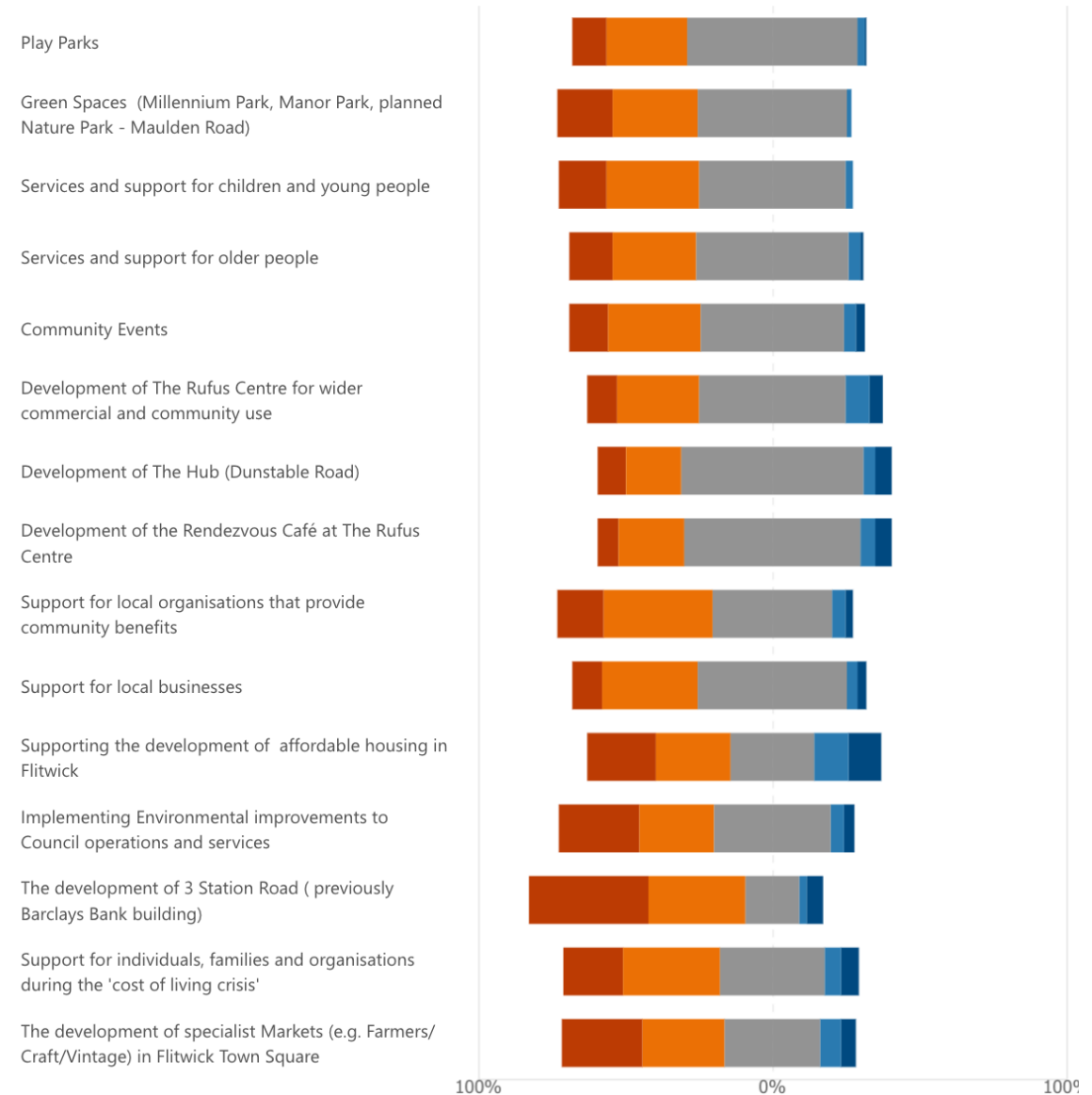


Your top investment priorities...

Including some new areas:

- **3 Station Road development (74%/40%)**
- **Run specialist Markets (56%/27%)**
- Cost of living support (53%)
- **Environmental improvements (52%/27%)**
- Local organisations support (52%)
- **Development of Affordable Housing (48%/23%)**
- Support for child & youth services (48%)

■ Provide far more resources
 ■ Provide more resources
 ■ Neither more or less
 ■ Provide less resources



Improving our communication



63% (+4% on LY) of you felt that FTC kept you well informed or fairly-well informed compared to 54% nationally.

Very well informed	28
Fairly well informed	110
Not very well informed	68
Not well informed at all	13



- Flitwick Papers delivered quarterly to each of the 6,000 households in the town
- Modern website
- Social Media
 - Over 1000 posts per year on X/Twitter, Facebook and Instagram
 - Separate pages for The Hub and Flitwick Community Fridge
- Noticeboards
- ‘Chat to a Councillor’ sessions delivered throughout the year
- Significant engagement between councillors and residents via social media.



Feeling safe outside, especially after dark



Only **65% (+11% on LY)** of you felt either very safe or fairly-safe when outside in Flitwick after dark compared to 70% nationwide.

Very safe	36
Fairly safe	107
Neither safe nor unsafe	37
Fairly unsafe	28
Very unsafe	11



That compares to **87% (Level on LY)** feeling either very safe or fairly-safe during the day compared to **92%** nationwide.

Very safe	113
Fairly safe	82
Neither safe nor unsafe	15
Fairly unsafe	9
Very unsafe	0



- Flitwick is the 383rd safest small town in the UK, and the 2,596th most dangerous location out of all towns, cities, and villages. The overall crime rate in Flitwick in 2023 was 70 crimes per 1,000 people, 3.2% higher than the Bedfordshire rate of 68 per 1,000 daytime population.
- **CCTV in the Town Centre** at the Town Square and Skate Park has moved trouble hotspots elsewhere.
- **Prioritisation discussions with Bedfordshire Police remain challenging and are politicised.**
- CBC has a significant backlog of **broken streetlights**

Improving key Green Spaces in Flitwick



Over **77% (+3% on LY)** of the survey respondents had used at least one of the green spaces in the Town in the last year. With nearly **38%** using a Play Park.



- The heritage gate restoration project at Manor Park was completed.
- We planted 27,000 trees at the Nature Park, and work is now being done on the planning application.
- Reduced mowing and wildflower areas are continuing, although the CBC grass cutting schedule and specification remains a major challenge.
- Tiny Forest planted at Hinksley Road

Developing the Rufus Centre as a thriving business and community hub



The Residents Survey showed that over **62% (+2% LY)** of respondents had visited the Rufus Centre in the last year. Over **44% (+7% LY)** were very or fairly satisfied with how FTC run the Centre (20% 'don't know' and 29% 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied').



- Continued investment in the building - £65k invested in the Lockyer Suite, including modern AV, lighting, sound, floor refurbishment and improved acoustics.
- Continued with serviced office refurbishment as tenants have left.
- Increased rental space by reducing FTC office.
- We are currently at 100% occupancy.
- Introduced a new ticketing system 'Ticketsolve' to improve sales and reduce admin costs.
- Continuing to host many community groups and community events.

Café Society... at the Rendezvous Café & Bar



The 'Rendezvous Café & Bar' opened in November 2020, proving increasingly popular with residents. **49% (+3% LY)** of respondents to our survey have used the café.

- The aim of the café is to provide a community hub and to raise a surplus that can be invested into other projects.
- 2023/24 has been busier than ever, building customers via word of mouth.
- Installation of digital signage and planned changes to increase seating capacity.
- Satisfaction has increased to **44% (+10%)**
- 5-star Food Hygiene Standards retained



3 Station Road – Commercial & Community Space



- Flitwick Town Council (FTC) has been awarded a £293,000 grant following a successful application to the UK Government's Community Ownership Fund.
- We have confirmed plans to fully renovate and transform the building, providing space for a casual dining restaurant in the two-storey section and a single-storey retail unit.
- The building will be fully accessible, and modern glazing will replace the old façade. More investment will also be made in the Town Square to enable outdoor dining.
- The Council will work with Post Office Ltd. to explore how best to secure a post office counter in the retail unit.



Supporting Local Organisations



The survey showed that over **52% (-7% on LY)** of respondents felt that we should provide more resources for local organisations. We will continue to identify areas where we can achieve your wishes.

- Peppercorn rents for land to host buildings for the Scouts, Guides, Sea Cadets and Royal British Legion equivalent to £7k per year commercial value.
- New leases have been signed with the Scouts and FGA.
- The Scouts have been provided with additional land to expand their building.
- Offering free or greatly subsidised use of rooms at the Rufus Centre or The Hub.
- Share: Flitwick & Ampthill has now moved to The Rufus Centre, rent free.



Focusing on Youth Provision



The Hub, houses our youth activities and remains the Council's most hidden asset with only **10.5% (+5% on LY)** of survey respondents having visited.



- We continue to believe it's essential to support young people of all ages, particularly if they don't want to be a member of the 'badged' organisations.
- Dan Gaze Support Services now has a two-year contract to deliver a range of weekly clubs reaching approximately 80-100 young people every week.
- Two more Skate Jam Competitions delivered working with Rollback World, and we've continued to offer activities, including basketball, football and DJ workshops!

Cost-of-living Support – a continuing focus for FTC



- Cost-of-living support has remained at the top of the Council's priority list, with significant resources and effort dedicated to supporting residents.
- Flitwick Community Fridge has brought us into contact with many people who need our help. We have fantastic volunteers running the service and have exciting plans to expand the offer.
- Support from local businesses has continued, with Tesco Flitwick now on board.
- The Community Hub (formerly our Warm Hub) has met every Wednesday throughout autumn and winter, and its offer was expanded to include a hot evening meal.
- Free Community Movie Days continue each school holiday with a revised family-focused offer based on demand.
- We know there is an increasing need, so this will be a continued focus for the Council.



Resolutions & Questions Open Forum