



## FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

**DRAFT Minutes of the Flitwick Town Council meeting held on  
Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at the Rufus Centre at 7:45pm**

Present:

Cllr J Roberts (Chairman)  
Cllr A Snape  
Cllr T Parsons  
Cllr M Platt  
Cllr F Patterson  
Cllr R Wilsmore  
Cllr A Crawford  
Cllr L Hart  
Cllr I Blazeby  
Cllr L Bandy  
Cllr H Hodges  
Cllr D Toinko  
Cllr T Harald

Also present:

Cllr I Adams – Central Beds Council (CBC) Ward Member  
Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk & Chief Executive (TC)  
Stephanie Stanley – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO (DTC)  
Mathew Earles – Business & Facilities Manager (BFM) – via virtual access  
2 members of the public

### **5938. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was **resolved** to accept apologies for absence from Cllrs Earles and Thompson (unwell).

### **5939. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.
- (b) Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none.

### **5940. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor thanked the Public Realm Supervisor for providing a tour of the refurbished Tractor Store.

The Town Mayor thanked everyone who helped on Christmas Eve for the Community Fridge project.

The Town Mayor had hosted a Children's Puppet Theatre Show to raise funds for his charities. He thanked his wife for her help with organising the event.

The Town Mayor had attended CBC's Budget Briefing that evening which was due to be discussed later in the meeting.

**5941. Leader Update**

The Leader referred to the perceived lack of representation from Flitwick Town Council (FTC) regarding the planning appeal for the Steppingley Road field application. He was referring to residents' comments on social media. Cllr Snape commented that the Council understood the strength of feeling locally and why residents would want to see members of FTC present. He spoke about FTC's consultee role in the planning system.

Members discussed how the appeal was out of people's hands locally and this was now being coordinated by the Planning Inspectorate. Cllr Snape advised that FTC had commented on the planning application at length and given objections, however the reality was, that this site was in the local plan and CBC chose to not defend it. Professional advice had been sought, and FTC had been advised to not formally participate in the appeal as it was unlikely to be successful and there was a significant financial risk. This decision not to participate in the appeal did not reflect a lack of concern by any FTC member but Cllr Snape advised that the responsible decision has been taken not to be involved.

**5942. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS**

Cllr Adams reported the following:

- He had not seen the social media comments about the Steppingley Field planning application, but he would look at these.
- The enquiry for the application had begun that day and without CBC defending it, there were not many people there with him speaking.
- Cllr Adams was doing his best for the people of Flitwick and had shared objections and advice from Flitwick Local Action Group.
- He understood why there was not a big team present to defend the decision as there were big costs if the defence was to be deemed unreasonable.
- The Inspectorate had said to Cllr Adams that he would welcome someone coming from FTC or Steppingley Parish Council and he had confirmed that there would be no cost liability.
- The Appellant had already sealed the amount of costs and had given assurances that this would not be changed.
- Members were asked to advise Cllr Adams if they would be attending the enquiry on a future date and that he would let the Planning Inspector know.
- Cllr Adams had visited the site that day as part of the enquiry process and had showed areas of interest and concern. Members noted that the highways' part was being conducted the following day and that needed to be a severe impact for it to be considered.
- The enquiry would continue for three more days and was due to complete on 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Questions**

Cllr Hart asked where the enquiry was being held and she was informed it was taking place at Chicksands at 10am.

Cllr Hart asked what would be classified as a severe highways risk. Cllr Adams commented on the technical part of the highways section of the enquiry.

Cllr Adams left the meeting at 19:57.

**5943. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

A resident referred to the Steppingley Field application and wanted to reiterate some of Cllr Adams' comments. She added that residents did not want this development and asked what would constitute a severe planning concern for traffic. The resident went on to explain the impact this development would have on schools and the doctors surgery.

The Chairman responded that although FTC shared the residents' concerns, this was a planning process that everyone was bounded by.

**5944. INVITED SPEAKER**

No invited speaker.

**5945. MEMBERS QUESTIONS**

None.

**5946. MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF MEETINGS**

- a. For Members to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held, on **Tuesday 16th December 2025**, this meeting was held at the Rufus Centre.

It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at the Rufus Centre as a true record.

**5947. MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on **Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025**.

No items.

- b. Members to receive any updates from Officers. – no items.

**5948. OUTSIDE BODIES**

No items.

**5949. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a. **Annual Residents Survey**

Cllr Blazeby had drafted some open-ended questions for consideration which had been circulated as a starting point.

Cllr Toinko raised the following points:

- Qs 1 & 3 – he did not think these were useful questions because residents would not know the commercial information required to answer them. Cllr Toinko also commented that FTC could not do some of the things included in the question.

- Q2 – he asked if supplementary information could be included here about rides for younger children at the Family Fun Day. Cllr Toinko believed that the fair should be free and to include activities for younger children. He hoped that the Soft Play would be available again in the Village Hall to keep children out of the sun.
- Q4 – Cllr Toinko thought this question was confusing and asked if this was volunteer led. He mentioned that residents might come up with ideas that the Council had not thought about.
- Q5 – Cllr Toinko thought the section about trialling new events needed to be reworded/reconsidered since some of the examples were low cost and resident-led, whereas larger events (e.g. Christmas Lights Switch On and the Festival of Lights) were incomparable in terms of cost. Cllr Toinko added that he thought there should be a direct question specifically about the Festival of Lights to state the precept cost.

Cllr Snape was in favour of having the open-ended questions with targeted examples. The Chairman commented that residents' responses gave the Council a steer on things.

Cllr Hart thanked Cllr Blazeby for drafting the questions and commented that she liked the questions circulated.

In terms of timeframes for releasing the survey, Members still had time to contribute to the open-ended questions and it was agreed for anyone with ideas, to send these to the Town Clerk. The item would be considered again at the February meeting.

Members had an extended discussion about the benchmark questions that were in line with the Local Government Association's survey, in particular residents' perception of safety in the day verses safety at night time.

Cllr Hart suggested including a general question to give people an option to expand on any of the answers given.

b. **[CB/25/03904/RD](#) – Footbridge for Flitwick Railway Station, rear of The Swan, 1 Dunstable Road, Flitwick, MK45 1HP**

Members were asked to consider a response to the planning application.

Comments from the Planning Improvement Working Group were as follows:

*'The Planning Improvement Working Group welcomes the proposed works at Flitwick Railway Station designed to enhance accessibility, including the provision of step-free access to the Station facilities for all travellers. We recommend that Flitwick Town Council support the application, and notify CBC accordingly.'*

Cllr Hodges was reluctant to include anything in the response that would slow this proposal down.

Cllr Wilsmore commented that there was the potential for the steps to be in the wrong place.

It was **resolved** to support the PIWG's recommendation to support the application discussed (CB/25/03904/RD).

c. **Proposed Budget 2026-27**

Members were asked to consider the proposed budget for 2026-27 and agree on the Precept.

Cllr Parsons, Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee summarised that a few changes were made since the December Council meeting, and Members of the F&GP Committee were comfortable with the Council's financial position. He advised that due to expenditure relating to the 3 Station Road project, this had affected the reserves position and these were currently slightly below the expected level. Members noted that there was a capital receipt coming. The consensus within the F&GP Committee was to increase the precept in line with inflation at 3%.

Cllr Parsons thanked the Officers for their work in preparing the budget papers. This work had helped members of the F&GP Committee easily scrutinise the figures presented.

Cllr Toinko commented that the new budget line for Community Activities to hold a Festival of Lights event was not something that the members had decided to do. He proposed an amendment to the proposed budget to remove budget line 4541/313 and re-purpose this funding to the costs attributed to the Family Fun Day for 2026. A vote took place but this proposal was not carried.

It was **resolved** to approve the circulated Flitwick Town Council Budget for 2026-27 at £1,094,044 with a 3% Precept rise.

*Action: DTC*

d. **Central Bedfordshire Council Budget 2026-2027**

Members were asked to consider a response to the Central Bedfordshire Council budget.

The Chairman had attended CBC's Budget Briefing that day and reported that £40m of cuts to CBC's revenue budget were to come over the next three years. A significant outcome was that Town Councils were going to be expected to take on more functions that were currently run by CBC. However, there had been no financial decisions on this at the briefing.

Cllr Toinko had researched the budget and noticed a line about CBC planning to save money by reducing routine maintenance of their sites. He commented that the £30k saving was a mistake as every visitor would notice this. Cllr Toinko commented that if the sites were in Flitwick, this could lead to a similar dialogue that the Town Council had about maintaining the space outside the station.

Cllr Snape, Leader of the Council, had met with CBC Cllrs Mackey, Adams and Baker recently and he agreed with CBC's position that due to the funding changes in the Government, it meant that principle authorities needed to look hard at their provisions. Cllr Snape saw this as an opportunity for Town Councils. Cllr Snape agreed that small changes that added to disrepair was not constructive.

Cllr Snape did not think there was much to respond to as a Town Council. He commented that there was the potential to explore what the changed meant for Town Councils and that CBC should not just be about core services. Cllr Snape said that CBC had a responsibility to play in this respect and that he would like to be involved in this conversation going forward.

Cllr Hodges asked about the reasons why this was the situation for the Central Beds area. The Chairman advised that there was a perception that the Labour Government were helping labour authorities as well as the areas where Reform could do well in the elections. He added that Central Beds was classed as a prosperous area.

Cllr Hart believed that maintaining the spaces in Central Beds was an important factor to consider and suggested proposing CBC owned sites such as Flitwick Woods. Cllr Hart proposed to approach CBC and ask them to consider the cost benefit of recuing

environmental services given that the area was known for its outstanding natural sites. Cllr Toinko agreed that the sites were productive for encouraging good health and residents enjoyed them.

It was **resolved** to respond to the CBC budget consultation by asking for more clarity around the proposed reduction of maintenance of green spaces, and if any of the 43 sites were in Flitwick.

*Action: TC*

e. **Stocksfield Room**

The Chairman advised that the DTC had been asked to clarify whether the members who were also Community Fridge Volunteers were permitted to vote on this item. The Chairman explained that the Beds Association of Town & Parish Councils (BATPC) had considered this and advised that it was up to individual members, but they did not see that this was a situation where non-pecuniary interests needed to be declared given that it was a Council project. The Chairman commented that as part of the conversations with BATPC, it had been suggested to review the Council's Code of Conduct to give more clarity on dispensations and bring it in line with the Local Government Association's model version.

*Action: TC/DTC*

Cllr Blazeby provided some background and context for how dispensations would be useful to allow members the freedom to contribute their experience and assist the Council in making decisions. Cllr Blazeby commented that more details were required about this.

Cllr Toinko asked about the limits on whether members were volunteers or Trustees of the Town Mayor's Charity. The DTC commented that this was not relevant as no limitations were placed on the Trustees or volunteers, and that if members believed they could remain open minded in discussions, and did not want to declare an interest, then they could take part in the debate and vote.

Cllr Snape advised that he did not have an interest to declare. He pointed out that this was a Council project and that volunteers/Trustees did not benefit from it, but it was about supporting residents. Cllr Snape had assisted the Officers in preparing this report to add detail to the paper for a meaningful discussion. He added that he had hoped to reach more of an agreement with officers.

Cllr Snape advised the following:

- The paper highlighted the challenges with space, health and safety and how this was impacting residents using the service.
- The fridge project was utilising the Stocksfield space on a trial basis until the end of February and this paper was asking the Council for approval to use the room on a permanent basis.
- The proposal would not be expensive or cause a big impact on the Rufus Centre's traded service.
- The fridge operations could not continue in its current format to support the level of users.

Cllr Patterson was in favour of supporting the change as he could see the community benefit but asked a question about the loss of meeting room space to rent it out. He asked about the Stocksfield Room being rented by corporate clients as part of a Lockyer Suite booking and for information about the current usage. The TC advised that the Stocksfield Room did get used for events, parties etc. but it mostly was occupied by non-profit organisations and charities, both of which were happy to be relocated elsewhere.

Cllr Snape referred to the Business Improvement & Development Board's updated policy about community groups and access to rooms. He commented that no events had stopped due to the current trial of the fridge project using the Stocksfield Room. Members noted that some groups who previously used the room had been relocated to the Hub or other Rufus Centre rooms. This was manageable but Cllr Snape recognised there was an opportunity cost.

Cllr Blazeby advised the following:

- He was fully in favour of the fridge project and commented on ensuring that it operated safely and giving users the service and dignity that it deserved.
- He questioned the reason for permanently allocating the room.
- He stated that the members should be provided with costs.
- He questioned the access to the fridge for users being through the café at peak times and did not think this was appropriate. This should be done externally.
- The main door was not currently accessible from outside.
- The newer double fire doors needed to be visible on the plan presented.
- The paper did not address questions about safe access or egress other than it was dangerous (he agreed that the Council needed to make this safe and investigate ramp options due to a trip hazard).
- He wanted more detail about the opportunity costs of losing the Stocksfield.
- He wanted a clearer understanding of what changes were needed in the Stocksfield to make it work, including any cupboards, changes to the alarm system etc. He felt this information was required before a decision was made, especially for permanent usage.
- He stated that in principle, it was the right route to go down but a true understanding of the costs were required.

Cllr Snape advised that the officers do have costs but these were not included in the report. Cllr Blazeby commented that proposals for projects would not be considered without the costs and questioned why a decision was needed at this meeting.

Cllr Bandy commented that the use of the Stocksfield for the fridge project needed to happen because users of the service and volunteers were struggling. She added that the volunteers were trying to help Flitwick. Cllr Blazeby reiterated his points about needing the costs.

Cllr Wilsmore commented that he did not have an idea about the internal layout of the rooms and members agreed that it would be useful for those who were unfamiliar with the space, to have a walk round. Cllr Wilsmore believed that the proposal needed to be thought out further.

Cllr Patterson asked if there was a middle ground for this meeting in that the Council could make the space safe and deal with the other aspects later.

Cllr Blazeby was in favour of the fridge project using the space but wanted clarity on what works were required, transparency and cost implications.

Cllr Snape called a point of order as he felt that Cllr Blazeby was repeating his points. The Chairman advised that there was insufficient details for members to vote on this item and requested cost and explanation of other issues to be included in a future proposal.

Cllr Hart proposed giving support regarding the Council's commitment to move forward with the idea to give reassurance to volunteers that the Council were thinking seriously about it.

Cllr Wilsmore asked if there was a case for moving the fridge project to the Hub. Cllr Snape advised that this had been discussed at the Community Services Committee and the Hub had been deemed unsuitable.

Cllr Toinko asked if the previously discussed work had been implemented to install the steel doors. Members noted that an order had been placed.

It was **resolved** to progress with obtaining other relevant information mentioned in this discussion about costs and investigating options for the how it might work for Flitwick Community Fridge to use the Stocksfield Room. This revised proposal would be considered at the next meeting.

*Action: Community Engagement Manager*

## **5950. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### **a. Finance Reports**

Members noted the following finance reports:

- i) Balance Sheet
- ii) Projects Fund

### **b. Central Bedfordshire Council Town Centre Benchmarking Report**

Members were asked to note the report from the Central Bedfordshire Town Centre Benchmarking exercise.

The Chairman commented that the reports were interesting and reinforced the public's views about having a bakery in the town.

Cllr Blazeby advised that historically, previous benchmarking reports had assisted the DTC with grant funding applications as supporting information with recognised data.

### **c. Planning**

Members noted the FTC Planning decisions and the Central Bedfordshire Planning decisions.

## **5951. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

A resident asked about the footbridge application at the station that had been discussed in the meeting and requested information about how this would work. Cllr Hodges, Chair of the PIWG, commented that the existing footbridge was to remain and a new access provided with lifts, ramps etc. The MP had written to Network Rail (NWR) for clarification on what was due to happen and there were no plans to remove the existing footbridge. The resident believed that an entrance point from the car park on Station Road would have been a lot easier to achieve however Cllr Wilsmore pointed out that this car park was privately owned.

Cllr Wilsmore advised that NWR had to purchase a small amount of land for this proposal and that they probably would have had to pay a significant amount of money for it.

A resident asked if it would be possible for a Christmas Lunch for the over 60's this year. The Chairman passed this to the Community Services Committee and Cllr Wilsmore suggested including this in the residents' survey questions.

A resident asked if copies of the survey went to homes. Cllr Blazeby advised that hard copies were held at the Rufus Centre, other community buildings and 'Chat to a Councillor' sessions but most responses were completed online. There would be information about the survey and a link to the questions via a QR code in forthcoming editions of Flitwick Papers. Notices were also displayed around the town and then results were analysed and presented as part of the Annual Town Meeting.

A resident asked for an update on 3 Station Road and the Chairman advised that unfortunately there was nothing to report but that members were conscious of it sitting empty.

Residents left the meeting at 21:14.

**5952. EXEMPT ITEMS**

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

**a. Confidential Report**

Members noted the report.

**b. Flitwick Village Hall**

Members received an update.

**c. Station Road**

Members received an update.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

Meeting closed at 21:53.

**Recommendations and Resolutions of the  
Community Services Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

The Town Council are asked to note the **RESOLUTIONS** and **approve** the **RECOMMENDATIONS** of the Community Services Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

**1341. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Platt – work commitment.

**1347 MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Community Services Meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025 as an accurate record of the meeting.

**1349. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- a.** It was **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Community Strategy and take it to full council for adoption.
- b.** It was **RESOLVED** to accept option two and utilise the additional £5,650.00 money for an all-ages inclusive summer programme.
- d.** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the request from Kings Church to hold their 2026 carol concert on the Town Square.



## Flitwick Town Council

### Stocksfield Room: Configuration Options for the Community Fridge

*(To be read alongside the Report to Town Council dated 20 January 2026) see appendix 4*

#### Appendices

- (1) Labelled diagram of option A
- (2) Labelled diagram option B
- (3) List of itemised costs
- (4) January Report

#### 1. Purpose

This report has been prepared to support the Council in determining how the Stocksfield Room at The Rufus Centre should be configured for permanent use by the Flitwick Community Fridge.

The Council has already agreed in principle that the Community Fridge requires additional and more suitable accommodation. At the January Council meeting, the following resolution was made:

*It was **resolved** to progress with obtaining other relevant information mentioned in this discussion about costs and investigating options for the how it might work for Flitwick Community Fridge to use the Stocksfield Room.*

This report focuses on the practical options for using the Stocksfield Room, and sets out the operational, business, and financial implications of each approach.

#### 2. Background

In January 2026, Council considered a report which demonstrated that the Community Fridge had outgrown its existing accommodation and that continued operation from the current space presented increasing operational, accessibility, and health and safety challenges.

The Council supported the temporary allocation of the Stocksfield Room as the Community Fridge's public-facing operational space.

At that stage, detailed consideration of layout, building systems, and capital works was deferred. Since then, further work has been undertaken to assess how the Stocksfield Room could be configured in practice, including consideration of circulation, compliance requirements, impact on the traded business, and relative cost implications. This report presents the outcome of that work.

#### 3. Options for Consideration

The Council is asked to consider the following options:

- **Option A** – Use the entire Stocksfield Room as a single, open Community Fridge space
- **Option B** – Subdivide the Stocksfield Room to create a segregated Green Room alongside the main Fridge space
- **Option C** – Do nothing and retain the current accommodation

A plan illustrating **Option A (full open plan use)** is attached in the appendix (1) for reference.

## Option A

Under this option, the full Stocksfield Room would be used as a single Community Fridge space with no internal partition. All public-facing activity would take place within one managed area.

This approach provides a straightforward operational model, clear visibility and supervision, and flexibility to adapt the internal layout as demand changes. Building works would focus on access improvements, alarm and lighting adjustments, flooring, and installation of storage and workspace.

The primary implication of this option is the permanent removal of the Stocksfield Room trading services providing additional space for bigger events as additional space, see section 4 for more details on the impact.

**Indicative capital cost:** £11,973.04 this is the total including the itemized costs in Appendix 3.

## Option B

A plan illustrating **Option B (Segregated)** is attached in the appendix (2) for reference.

Under this option, the Stocksfield Room would be permanently subdivided by a fire-rated partition to create a separate Green Room alongside the main Community Fridge space. It introduces a fixed internal layout, requires additional building systems works, and increases management complexity compared with the open plan option.

As with Option A, this option results in permanent loss of the room from hiring out.

**Indicative capital cost:** £3,460.3 plus the £11,973 from option A.

## C – Do Nothing

Under this option, the Community Fridge would remain in its current accommodation and the Stocksfield Room would not be permanently allocated.

This option avoids immediate capital expenditure and has no impact on the traded business. However, it does not address the known constraints of the existing space and carries ongoing operational, safety, and reputational risks. Over time, it is likely to result in reduced service effectiveness or the need for unplanned intervention.

**Capital cost:** £0

## 4. Impact on the Traded Business

The Stocksfield Room has historically been used to support conferences and external bookings as ancillary or breakout space. Permanent allocation of the room under Options A or B would reduce flexibility for some bookings and result in a loss of potential income.

While current occupancy levels suggest many bookings can be accommodated elsewhere, an opportunity cost remains as £3,854 from the Football booking across the year. Option C has no direct impact on the traded business.

At the time of writing this report, there is currently between 10 – 12 events throughout the year that would require use of the green room space.

## 5. Summary of Options

Option	Overview	Cost Position
Option A – Open Plan	Simple, flexible solution aligned to current	Moderate capital + opportunity cost
Option B - Segregated	Greater separation but higher complexity	Higher capital + opportunity cost
Option C – Do nothing	No change	No capital, higher long-term risk

Officers have discussed alternative options such as utilising the old bar or reconfiguration of Aladdin's Cave (current storeroom) and chairs store, however, these options were deemed too costly at the moment in time and create further storage issues.

## 6. Conclusion

The need for the Community Fridge to operate from more suitable accommodation has already been established. The decision now required is how the Stocksfield Room should be configured, balancing cost, operational effectiveness, and wider estate considerations.

This report provides the basis for selecting a preferred option in principle.

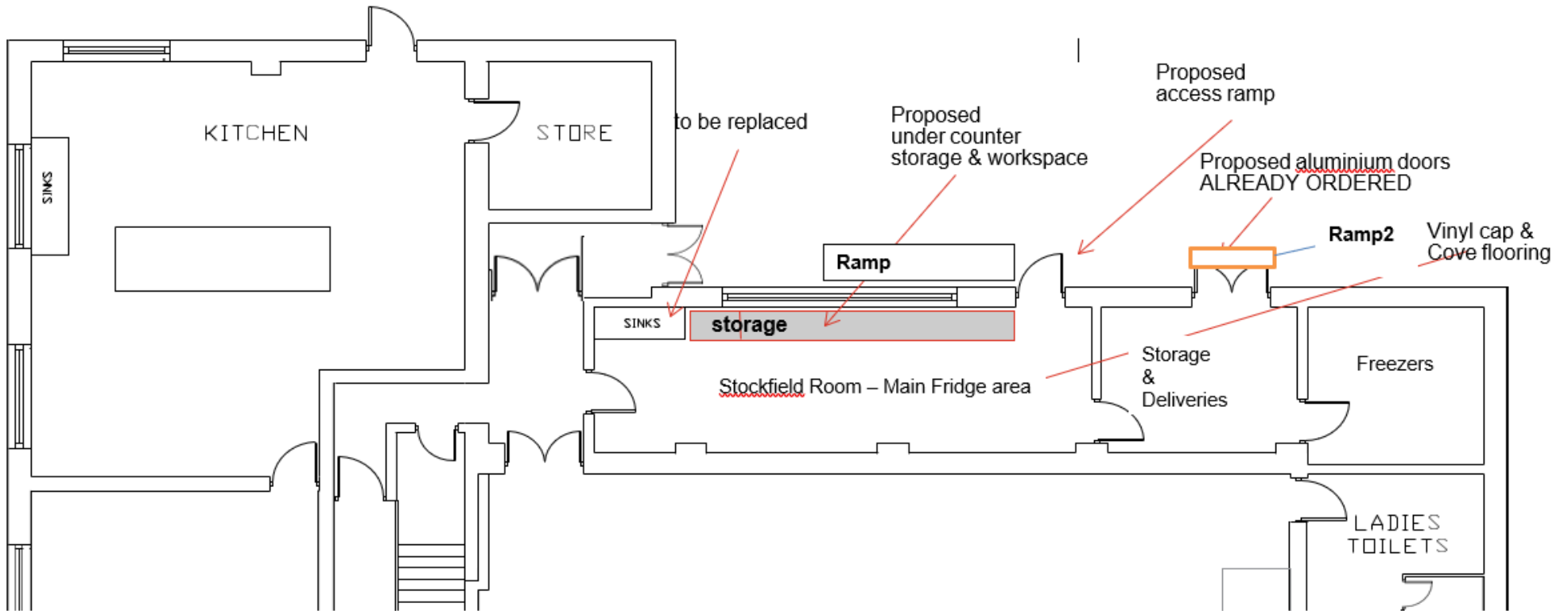
Please note

## 7. Recommendation

1. Members are asked to consider options A, B or C listed above.

Officers' recommendation is to progress with option A.

Appendix  
(1) Labelled diagram option A





## Appendix

### (3) List of itemised costs for option A

- Flooring installation - £2,310
- Worktops / Kitchenette - £2,253.11
- Entrance door panel and lock - £102.93
- Access Ramps (as highlighted on diagram) Main ramps £3,700 small ramp £1,095
- Minor service and alarm adjustments – as below (£1,693 + VAT)
- Smoke sensor addition – as below (£819 + VAT)

Total £11,973

### Listed of Additional costs for option B

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Kitchenette base unit and sink
- Door and frame to dividing wall
- Lighting installation

Total £3,460.31



Flitwick Town Council

Report to Town Council on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026

## Use of the Stocksfield Room by Flitwick Community Fridge

### 1. Introduction

Launched in January 2023, Flitwick Community Fridge is a council-supported, community-led project operating from The Rufus Centre. Since moving into a dedicated space in August 2024, the service has continued to grow in scale and complexity, particularly following the introduction of the Supported Tier in August 2025.

The purpose of this paper is to explain why the current accommodation is no longer suitable, to set out the case for using the Stocksfield Room, and to enable Full Council to consider a clear and informed resolution.

### 2. About the project

Flitwick Community Fridge exists to prevent good surplus food from going to waste and to support residents affected by the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. It operates as a membership-based service rather than a traditional food bank and is open to everyone. There are currently 480 active member households, with 185 households registered for enhanced support through the Supported Tier.

In 2025, the service redistributed 78.5 tonnes of food, equivalent to approximately 174,000 meals, and avoided around 53 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e by diverting food from waste. The service recorded at least 16,500 visits in 2025. On a busy day, more than 50 people may pass through the Food Hub.

The service is delivered by a large volunteer workforce. In 2025, volunteers contributed 5,539 hours. The service operates its own electric van, funded by the Flitwick Town Mayor's Charity, and undertakes at least three food collections each day.

The Community Fridge operates with established food safety procedures, safeguarding policies, and governance arrangements, overseen by the Council's Community Services Team. At its current scale, it should be regarded as core local social infrastructure, and our recent win of £30k from the UK Household Support Fund demonstrates this.

### 3. Problem statement: Lack of operational space

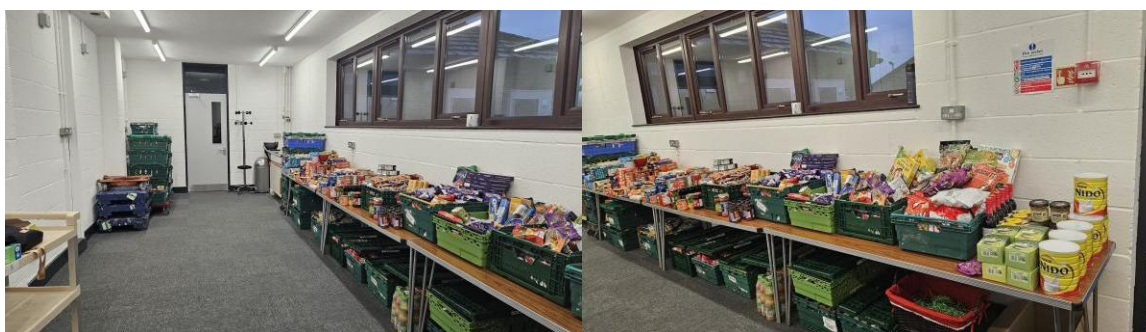
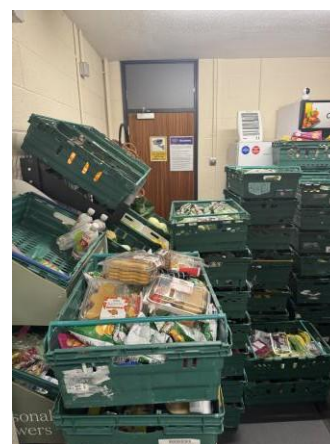
The Community Fridge has outgrown the space it currently occupies. What began as a modest service in the foyer of The Rufus Centre has developed into a high-volume, well-used project responding to real and growing need. The physical space available has not been expanded to meet the level of activity.

The total space currently allocated to the Community Fridge is approximately 22 m<sup>2</sup>, split roughly evenly between a small public-facing area and a stockroom. In practice, this leaves around 11 m<sup>2</sup> of usable public space.

At its current scale, the lack of space creates several persistent problems:

- Insufficient storage capacity for fluctuating volumes of surplus food.
- Inability to accommodate large or unexpected collections, for example, 18 trays of apples weighing around 220 kg, which recently had to be left in the van overnight.
- Unsafe and congested working conditions for volunteers.
- Damage to fridges and freezers due to restricted circulation space.
- Queueing outside during busy sessions undermines dignity and accessibility.
- No level access, with two recorded accidents involving the step and ramp in the past six months.

The service has already operated from the Stocksfield Room on Wednesdays for the weekly dedicated supported tier session and over the Christmas and New Year period. This was transformative, allowing safer working, better flow, improved storage, and a more appropriate experience for service users. A trial use of the Stocksfield Room during January and February is now underway.



*Photos showing the 'top up tables' set out for the supported tier during the current trial use of the Stocksfield Room.*

#### Consequences of not increasing space allocation

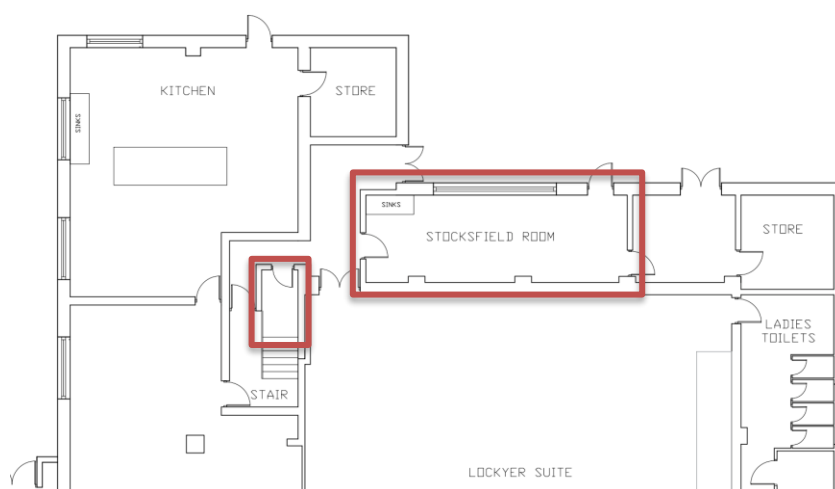
If the space allocation remains unchanged, the Community Fridge will be forced to make changes that materially reduce its effectiveness. In practical terms, this means limiting the volume of food accepted from charity and supermarket partners, seeking alternative storage

elsewhere in the building, which is already constrained and would displace other activity, and reducing fridge or freezer capacity to create minimal additional space.

Doing nothing is not a neutral option. These measures would represent a step backwards for a service that has grown in response to need.

#### 4. Proposal

It is proposed that the Stocksfield Room and under stair cupboard outside the room at The Rufus Centre are permanently allocated to the Flitwick Community Fridge.



This allocation responds directly to the lack of space set out in Section 3 and enables the service to operate safely, accessibly, and with dignity. The change expands the Community Fridge’s usable public-facing space by approximately 33 m<sup>2</sup>, bringing the accommodation into line with the scale and maturity of the service.

Community groups previously using the Stocksfield Room have been relocated to The Hub or other rooms within The Rufus Centre, making better use of an under-utilised community building and ensuring no loss of community activity.

A separate report will be brought to Council in February setting out the capital works and funding arrangements required to support this allocation, including a request to the Flitwick Town Mayor’s Charity.

#### Access and use of space

During opening hours, service users will access the Stocksfield Room via level routes through the Café or the internal corridor. Outside of opening hours, access for service users will be via the fire door directly into the Stocksfield Room. Volunteer access and food collections will continue via the existing external doors, which are due to be replaced shortly.

- The Stocksfield Room will be used as a multi-purpose Community Fridge space, supporting queuing and waiting, meet-and-greet, food selection, Supported Tier sessions, and partner activity where appropriate.
- The two existing rooms currently used by the Community Fridge will no longer be used for public access. They will instead be retained for storage, food preparation, and deliveries only, reducing congestion and improving safety.

- The store cupboard under the stairs adjacent to the Stocksfield Room will be permanently allocated to the Community Fridge for the storage of ambient food, toiletries, and household items.

### **Alarm system and access**

The Stocksfield Room will be removed from the building alarm system, enabling unrestricted volunteer access in line with the realities of a volunteer-run service with variable delivery and collection times.

### **5. Impact on existing community groups and the traded service**

The permanent allocation of the Stocksfield Room to the Community Fridge has implications for how space is used within The Rufus Centre. These impacts have been considered and actively managed. Based on the usage of Stocksfield in the year 2025 the commercial value of hiring the space was £1,850.

Community groups that previously used the Stocksfield Room have not been discontinued as a result of this change. A number of groups have already been temporarily relocated to The Hub, making better use of an underutilised community building, or accommodated in alternative rooms within The Rufus Centre. This has allowed community activity to continue without loss of provision while we have tested out the use of the space.

Attempts were made to share use of the Stocksfield Room between the Community Fridge and other groups. In practice, this proved unworkable due to the scale, frequency, and operational requirements of the service. Shared use created friction, increased set-up and clear-down time, and generated additional workload for officers and volunteers. A dedicated allocation has therefore provided greater clarity and stability for all users of the building.

The Stocksfield Room is primarily designated for community use. While it has occasionally been used by the traded service as part of Lockyer Suite bookings or during periods of full occupancy, removing it from traded availability does carry an opportunity cost.

Meeting room occupancy at The Rufus Centre has been declining over the past year due to wider economic conditions. There is currently spare capacity within the building, meaning that most bookings can be accommodated elsewhere without material impact on the traded service.

Fundamentally, the Council recognises the overall value of the Community Fridge to the community, both in terms of supporting residents through the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and reducing environmental impact. Any opportunity cost associated with this decision must therefore be considered in the context of the wider social and environmental benefit delivered by the service.

Overall, while the change reduces flexibility in one part of the estate, it enables more effective use of other council assets and supports the continued delivery of a high-impact community service.

### **6. Benefits**

The proposed allocation of the Stocksfield Room delivers a number of clear and proportionate benefits, both in addressing the immediate space constraints and in supporting the longer-term sustainability of the Community Fridge service.

### **Safer and more compliant operation**

Expanding the Community Fridge's usable public-facing space by approximately 33 m<sup>2</sup> significantly reduces congestion and improves circulation. This directly addresses health and safety risks associated with manual handling, unsafe storage, restricted movement, and damage to refrigeration equipment caused by operating in an overly constrained space.

### **Improved accessibility and dignity for service users**

The proposed arrangements provide fully compliant level access and enable indoor queuing and waiting. This removes the need for service users to wait outside in adverse weather and materially improves accessibility and dignity, particularly for people with mobility issues, health conditions, or caring responsibilities during busy Supported Tier sessions.

### **More sustainable service delivery**

The additional space allows the Community Fridge to operate in line with its current scale and complexity, accommodating fluctuating food volumes and supported interactions without reliance on unsafe or temporary workarounds. Separating public-facing activity from storage, preparation, and logistics creates a more resilient and sustainable operating model.

### **Better support for volunteers and partners**

Improved layout and working conditions reduce risk for volunteers and support retention within a volunteer-run service. The additional space also makes it possible to continue and develop on-site collaboration with partners such as Citizens Advice and Bedford Credit Union, enabling residents to access advice, debt support, and financial inclusion services alongside food support.

### **Supporting the Council's cost-of-living priorities**

The Council has made a clear and ongoing commitment to supporting residents through the cost-of-living crisis. Enabling the Community Fridge to operate safely, accessibly, and at scale directly supports this commitment by providing practical, dignified assistance to residents while also reducing food waste and strengthening local resilience.

## **7. Financial implications**

This paper does not seek approval for capital expenditure.

A separate report will be brought to Council in February, setting out the capital works required to fit out the Stocksfield Room, including works necessary to support safe operation and removal of the room from the building alarm system. In parallel, a funding request will be made to the Flitwick Town Mayor's Charity to support elements of the capital works. All capital costs and funding sources will be presented transparently for decision at that time.

Removing the Stocksfield Room from traded availability does carry an opportunity cost. The room is, however, primarily designated for community use, and meeting room occupancy at The Rufus Centre has been declining over the past year due to wider economic conditions. There is currently spare capacity elsewhere in the building, allowing most bookings to be accommodated without a material impact on traded income.

Fundamentally, the Council recognises the overall value of the Community Fridge to the community, both in terms of supporting residents through the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and reducing environmental impact. Any opportunity cost associated with this decision must

therefore be considered in the context of the wider social, environmental, and community benefits delivered by the service.

The proposal also mitigates ongoing and escalating financial risk associated with the current accommodation, including potential liability arising from health and safety incidents, damage to refrigeration equipment caused by insufficient circulation space, food safety risks linked to inadequate storage capacity, and the risk of service disruption if the current space becomes untenable.

Addressing these issues now reduces the likelihood of higher costs, unplanned intervention, or service failure in the future.

## **8. Recommendation**

That Full Council:

1. Approves the permanent allocation of the Stocksfield Room at The Rufus Centre to the Flitwick Community Fridge service as its sole public-facing operational space.
2. Approves the permanent allocation of the under-stairs storage cupboard adjacent to the Stocksfield Room to the Flitwick Community Fridge service for the storage of ambient food, toiletries, and household essentials.
3. Notes that a separate report will be brought to Council in February, setting out the capital works and funding arrangements required to support further service development and effective use of the space.

## **Annual Residents' Survey**

### **Members' Suggested Open Questions for Discussion**

#### **Community Safety**

Understanding how safe residents feel in different parts of Flitwick helps the Council and its partners to identify priorities for improvement.

#### **At what times, if any, do you feel unsafe in Flitwick?**

During the day  At night  Both  I do not feel unsafe

**If you do feel unsafe, please tell us where this is and what changes or improvements would help you feel safer.**

#### **Community facilities, town centre and activities**

Flitwick Town Council is continually reviewing its community buildings, town centre provision and programme of events and activities (including The Hub, the Rufus Centre, local groups and initiatives, and community events such as the Family Fun Day).

**What improvements, changes or new ideas would you like the Council to consider in relation to:**

- community buildings and facilities (including The Hub and The Rufus Centre),
- services and facilities in the town centre, and
- community events, activities, and local groups or initiatives?

#### **Inclusion, traffic and the local environment improvements**

The Council is seeking residents' views on how Flitwick can be a more inclusive, accessible and sustainable town.

**Are there any improvements you would like the Council to consider in relation to:**

- support for under-represented or under-supported groups,
- environment and biodiversity, and
- reducing congestion and improving air quality in Flitwick?

## Open Communication

### Anything Else

The Council values open and transparent communication with residents.

**Please use the space below to comment on any of the tick box questions above, or to raise any other issues you would like to bring to the attention of Flitwick Town Council.**

### Individual Councillor Suggestions:

*(Note: Some of the suggestions below have already been incorporated into the expanded questions above)*

Councillor Blazeby:

- The Council is considering refurbishing 'The Hub' (adjacent to Flitwick Library/Millennium Park) to enable increased use by the wider community. What uses or services do you think would benefit from operating out of the building in the Town Centre?
- Since 2020, the Council has put on a 'Family Fun Day' in June. Initially, the fairground attractions were provided free to all. However, in 2025, residents were asked to pay a small contribution towards the cost of using the rides - £1.50 per ride. Do you think we should return to providing these for free in 2026?
- The Rufus Centre (including the Rendezvous Cafe) has become an increasingly popular venue for social use, events and the provision of serviced offices and room rentals since 2020. What improvements could the Council make to ensure that the building and location continue to attract new users in the future?
- Are there any town-specific environmental or social initiatives (e.g., Flitwick Community Fridge, Share Library of Things, Litter picks) that you think Flitwick Town Council should be looking to trial, lead, or support? If so, what?
- There are a number of established events that the Council either runs or supports local organisers to put on each year, e.g., Christmas Lights Switch-on, Family Fun Day, The Vintage Car Show, and Halloween Trail. Are there other event opportunities that you think should be trialled or investigated to become a central community focus? (e.g. Scarecrow Trail, Big Front Garden Sale, Festival of Lights).

## Councillor Harald

- What is the one thing you think would most improve life in Flitwick over the next couple of years?
- Are there any activities, services or facilities you feel are missing from Flitwick town centre?
- What kinds of community events or activities do you think Flitwick needs more of?
- Are there any groups of people in Flitwick who you feel are not well supported or included at the moment?
- What small changes or improvements around Flitwick would make the biggest difference to your day-to-day life?
- Is there anything the Town Council does that you feel is unclear, confusing, or not well explained?

## Councillor Toinko

- After cutting funding from community events including the family fun day and the lunch club for older residents, the Town Council is planning to spend £5,000 on a new 'festival of lights' to take place in November. How do you feel about that?

## Councillor Hart

- **Community Safety**

*Understanding how safe residents feel in different parts of the town helps the Council and its partners to prioritise improvements.*

Do you feel unsafe in Flitwick at any time?

During the day  At night  Both  Never

If you do feel unsafe, what changes or improvements would help you feel safer?

- **Traffic and Air Quality**

*Traffic congestion can affect both quality of life and local air quality.*

What traffic or transport improvements would you suggest to help reduce congestion or improve air quality in Flitwick?



## Flitwick Town Council

# Flitwick Town Council – Community Engagement Strategy

**2025–2030**

Working together for a thriving, connected, and inclusive Flitwick

## FOREWORD

*(Mayor / Town Clerk)*

A welcome from the Mayor or Town Clerk highlighting the Council's commitment to meaningful engagement, listening and acting on feedback, and shaping services around residents' needs.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Purpose:** To provide a clear framework for how Flitwick Town Council will engage with its community, ensuring residents' voices shape services, policies, and projects, and that engagement generates lasting social value.

### **Vision:**

***To make Flitwick a thriving, inclusive, and connected community where everyone has the opportunity to participate, contribute, and feel valued.***

## INTRODUCTION

Residents, community groups, councillors, voluntary sector organisations and local businesses all play a part in shaping our experience of Flitwick. This document outlines how Flitwick Town Council aims to engage with our communities, and how we embed a person-centred and bottom-up approach to service delivery across Flitwick.

Community engagement is an overarching term that describes ways we can build and sustain relationships between the Council and our local community. This will be a catalyst to facilitate open dialogue, helping both Flitwick Town Council and residents to understand issues within and the actions needed to improve the experience of everyone in Flitwick.

The three essential principles to drive successful teamwork and organisational change by fostering transparent information flow, collective problem-solving, and shared dedication to goals. Effective communication ensures understanding, whilst collaboration leverages diverse strengths for collective success. Commitment for all parties to maintain momentum and achieve effective outcomes.

### Communication



Clear, timely, accessible information that enables people to understand

### Collaboration



Working alongside residents and partners to share ideas, strengths and responsibilities

### Commitment



Following through on what we hear, building trust through action and accountability

## PURPOSE

Community engagement is the process of working collaboratively with individuals and groups to address issues that impact their wellbeing. The Town Council recognises that strong engagement leads to better decisions, stronger communities and improved public confidence.

This strategy aims to:

- Establish a consistent approach to engagement
- Improve participation and representation
- Strengthen relationships between the Council and the community
- Build community capacity and resilience.

This strategy applies to all Council departments, elected members and partner organisations involved in engagement activity.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This strategy aligns with:

- Town Council Corporate Plan 2025 – 2030
- Equality & Inclusion Policy

Flitwick Town Council has a duty to consult communities on key decisions and to ensure **fairness, openness and accountability in decision making**.

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

Flitwick is a growing market town with a diverse and active community. It benefits from good transport links, attractive parks and nature reserves, a leisure centre, community hubs, and a strong network of local clubs, volunteers, and businesses.

### *Demographic Information (2025 Estimates)*

- Population: Approximately 13,800 residents in Flitwick parish.
- Age Structure: A balanced mix across under-18s, working-age adults, and older residents.
- Ethnicity: Predominantly White British, with small Asian, Black, Mixed, Arab, and other minority groups.
- Households: Around 5,800 households.
- Key Features: Flitwick Manor and Manor Park, Flitwick Moor, Flitwick Wood, The Rufus Centre, The Hub, Flitwick Leisure Centre.
- Transport Links: Excellent Thameslink rail connections to Bedford, Luton, London, Gatwick, plus M1 motorway proximity.

Flagship initiatives such as the Flitwick Community Fridge (reducing food waste and supporting families) demonstrate the Flitwick Town Council's commitment to community-led solutions.

Flitwick is home to a broad range of communities. This strategy recognises their diverse needs and contributions.

## OUR UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement builds and sustains trusted relationships between the Council and local people. It means:

- Open, two-way communication.
- Involving residents in shaping decisions, not just consulting after decisions are made.
- Tailoring engagement to people, place and policy.
- Maximising social value by ensuring activities deliver wider benefits — for example, reducing waste, building skills, strengthening social networks and improving health.

We commit to key principles:

- Inclusion – overcome barriers to participation.
- Planning – clear purpose for engagement.
- Working together – effective collaboration.
- Methods – fit-for-purpose techniques.
- Communication – clear, regular, accessible.

- Impact & Social Value – measure how engagement improves wellbeing, sustainability, and local prosperity.

We will proactively reach out to groups who may experience barriers to participation — including disabled residents, people with SEND, older adults, minority ethnic groups and carers — to ensure their voices are heard and valued.

## STRATEGIC THEMES

Here are the 5 themes that will underpin the strategy and be threaded through Flitwick Town Council's development plans and engagement methods.

### 1. Community Engagement & Inclusion

This theme focuses on ensuring everyone can access, participate in and influence Council engagement opportunities, regardless of background, ability or circumstance. We will use co-design and coproduction approaches to ensure residents, especially those whose voices are less often heard, help shape services and community initiatives.

- Provide regular opportunities for all residents, including disabled people, residents with SEND, older adults, and minority ethnic groups, to share views with the Council.
- Make engagement activities accessible and welcoming to all groups.
- Ensure that engagement contributes to social value by building skills, confidence, and connections.

#### What we have done:

One successful community engagement initiative has been the Annual Residents' Survey, which gathers feedback on Council services, priorities and what residents would like to see included in the Council programme. This survey enables a wide range of residents to share their views and helps the Council collaborate with the community when shaping future delivery.

#### What we will do:

The next Annual Survey will be issued in March 2026. In addition, we will hold community drop-in sessions in different parts of the town and use group feedback forms and targeted engagement activities to help shape service delivery and ensure more residents can influence decisions.

### 2. Health, Wellbeing & Leisure

This theme promotes physical, mental and social wellbeing by increasing access to health services, leisure opportunities and support initiatives across the town.

- Promote healthy, active lifestyles and wellbeing for all residents.
- Work with local partners to increase access to health and leisure opportunities.
- Use community projects like the Flitwick Community Fridge to tackle food waste and support vulnerable residents.

- **What we have done:**

The Council has supported initiatives such as the Flitwick Community Fridge, which helps reduce food waste, supports families, and provides volunteering opportunities that help reduce social isolation and improve wellbeing.

- **What we will do:**

We will continue working with local partners to promote health and wellbeing **events**, increase awareness of local leisure opportunities, and support community-based initiatives that encourage active and healthy lifestyles.

### 3. Events, Culture & Heritage

This theme celebrates Flitwick's identity by promoting cultural expression, community events and heritage awareness.

- Celebrate Flitwick's identity, culture and history.
- Increase opportunities for residents to take part in community events.

- **What we have done:**

The Council has supported and promoted community events and activities that bring residents together and celebrate Flitwick's identity, helping to strengthen community connection and local pride.

- **What we will do:**

We will continue to work with local groups and organisations to develop inclusive community events and cultural activities, ensuring opportunities are accessible and reflective of the town's diverse community.

### 4 Environment & Sustainability

This theme supports environmental responsibility and sustainable practise through community led action and Council leadership.

- Support community-led environmental projects.
- Reduce waste and promote sustainable practices at Council events and facilities.

- **What we have done:**

The Council has supported **community-led environmental activities**, including local clean-up efforts and initiatives that promote pride in the local environment.

- **What we will do:**

We will encourage further **volunteer planting days, litter picks and environmental improvement projects**, and promote sustainable practices at Council events and facilities to support a greener Flitwick.

## 5. Partnerships & Volunteering

This theme develops strong collaborative relationships and enhances the role of volunteers in delivering community outcomes.

- Strengthen relationships with local organisations, clubs and volunteers.
- Recognise and celebrate the contribution of volunteers.
- Ensure partnership working enhances social value outcomes for Flitwick residents.

- **What we have done:**

The Council works with a wide range of local organisations, voluntary groups and partners, supporting collaborative initiatives such as the Community Fridge and other community-led projects.

- **What we will do:**

We will strengthen partnership working through regular engagement with community organisations, promote volunteering opportunities, and continue to support collaborative projects that deliver positive outcomes for residents.

## Methods of Engagement



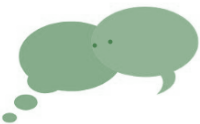
### **INFORM**

#### What this means

We will keep people informed & up to date about services, decisions, opportunities and solutions.

#### Examples

Website, social media, newsletter, press releases, notice boards, public displays accessible formats and group networks



### **CONSULT**

#### What this means

We will gather, listen to, acknowledge & use community feedback to inform our decision making.

#### Examples

Online & paper surveys, focus groups, public meetings, pop-up sessions, ensure accessible venues & translated/Easy Read materials.



### **INVOLVE**

#### What this means

Working directly with people throughout the process to ensure concerns are understood and considered.

#### Examples

Workshops, forums, school assemblies, stakeholder roundtables, drop-ins at community hubs with inclusive practises.



### **COLLABORATE**

#### What this means

We will look to the community for advice & innovation & incorporate both in our working together to the maximum extent possible.

#### Examples

Community needs analysis, focus groups, service user forums.



### **EMPOWER**

#### What this means

We will support the community and implement what is decided together.

#### Examples

Delegated Decisions, Community assets transfer, grants & direct service delivery.

This diagram demonstrates the different levels of community engagement. It is important to know and understand what options are most suitable, depending on what needs to be achieved. In some cases, the community only needs information; in others, helping to empower communities may be more appropriate. As objectives and priorities change over time, approaches can be adapted or expanded the needs of all involved.

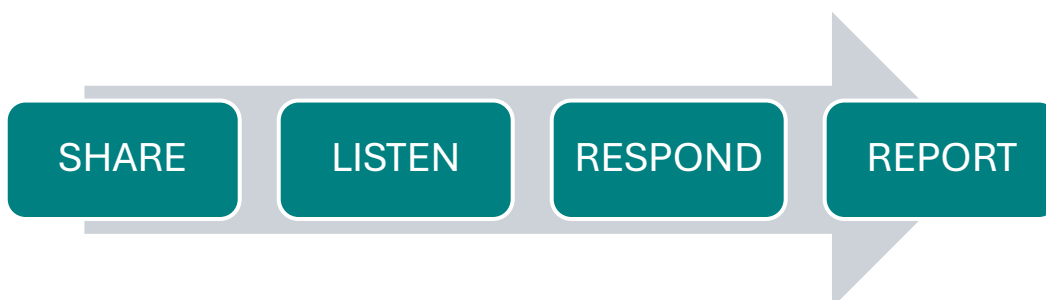
## PLANNING ENGAGEMENT EFFECTIVELY

Before any engagement, we will:

- Define its purpose.
- Identify who should be involved.
- Consider available time and resources.
- Plan how to evaluate success and social value.

We will ensure accessibility, inclusivity and fairness in all engagement processes.

## COMMUNICATION & FEEDBACK

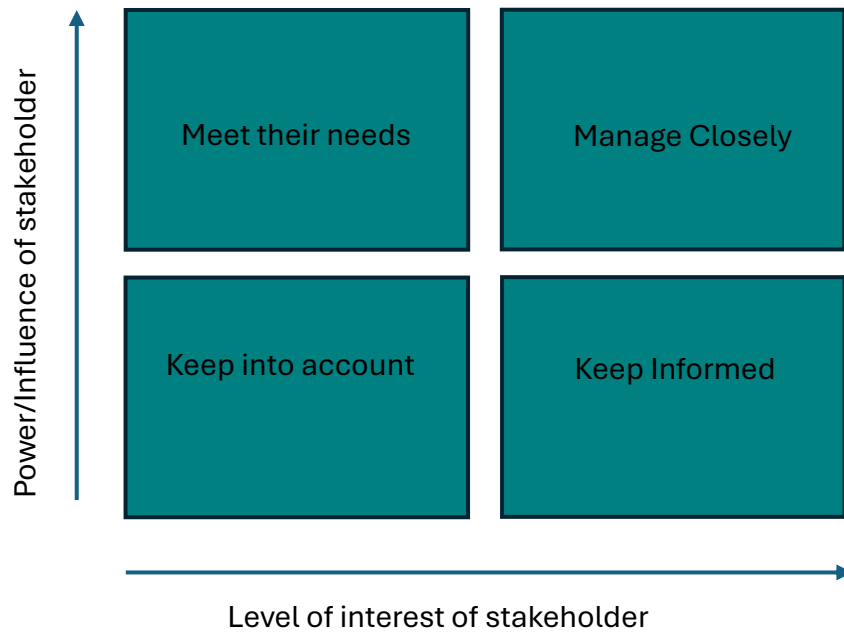


**We will:**

- Define purpose
  - Identify stakeholders
  - Allocate resources
  - Ensure inclusivity
  - Measure Impact.
- 
- Share opportunities widely via Council channels.
  - Provide feedback to participants on how their views shaped decisions.
  - Publish regular updates on engagement outcomes and social value achieved.

## MONITORING & REVIEW

- Evaluate each engagement process to understand who we reached, how people felt, what changed, and what social value was created.
- KPIs – attendances, survey satisfaction, volume numbers, diversity measures
- Review progress annually and refresh the strategy mid-way to keep it relevant.
- Use the below to assess stakeholders' investment and engagement effectiveness.



Success will be measured through:

- Participation rates
  - Feedback satisfaction scores
  - Community Impact
- Diversity (focus groups) of participants  
Number of engagements

### Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholder Group	Examples	Engagement Purpose
Residents	Homeowners, tenants and new housing residents	Ensure local voices influence decisions and services
Local Businesses	Retailers, hospitality, service providers, traders	Support economic development.
Children & Young People	Schools, youth clubs, young carers	Shape youth services and facilities.
Older Residents	Pensioners sheltered housing residents	Address accessibility, isolation and wellbeing.
Disabled Residents	Physical, sensory, learning disabilities.	Remove barriers and improve access
Minority groups	Faith groups, cultural organisations	Ensure culturally inclusive engagement
Community Group	Voluntary organisations, community clubs & charities	Co-deliver services and strengthen partnerships
Education Providers	Schools, Colleges, nurseries	Engage in youth and family services
Public Services	Police, health service, fire and rescue.	Integrated planning and community safety.
Elected members	Town councillors	Representation and governance
Developers & Housing Providers	Housing Associations, planning applicants	Influence sustainable growth and design.

Annual Reviews: Report progress each year; adapt actions based on results and feedback.



**Mrs Jennie Selley MRTPI**  
**Head of Planning Delivery & Building Control**

Cllr Philip Thompson  
Chairman of Flitwick Town Council  
The Oaks  
24a Hampton Road  
Flitwick  
Beds  
MK45 1HX

**please ask for** Susan Ventrone  
**direct line** 0300 300 8635  
**e-mail** [building.control@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)  
**web-site** [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

**your ref**  
**our ref** CB/SN/25/0260  
**date** 05 February 2026

Dear Councillor Thompson,

**Local Government Act 1985**  
**Street Naming and Numbering**  
**Location:** Land South of Steppingley Road, Flitwick  
**Proposal:** 170 new dwellings

I write to inform you that the Council has received the above application for Street Naming. I understand the application is still pending an approval decision, but to give extra time I am submitting the consultation letter to you now. The proposed Street Names are:

**Bonnewit**  
**Muncaster**  
**Servicemen**

The names suggested by the developer in potentially paying respects to the Servicemen who lost their lives in the aircraft crash, on February 24, 1945.

- Pilot Sgt. Jacques **Bonnewit**
- Navigator Sgt. John **Muncaster**

I have attached a history behind the suggested names and a copy of our SN guidance.

Please could you discuss these proposals at your next meeting of the Town/Parish Council and confirm whether or not you are in agreement Friday 27th February 2026.

Yours sincerely

**Mrs Jennie Selley MRTPI**  
**Head of Planning Delivery & Building Control**

**Central Bedfordshire Council**

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Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

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## **Mosquito MK NF XVII HK304, Woodside Field Flitwick 24<sup>th</sup> February 1945**

A cold and windy Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021, saw the unveiling of a memorial in the gardens at the Rufus Centre, Flitwick, Bedfordshire. This stone is to commemorate two Mosquito aircrew, killed when their aircraft crashed into a field between the villages of Flitwick and Steppingley.



Image credit: Jesse Billington

This crash, and the story, is beginning to slip out of living memory. That this memorial now exists is thanks to the hard work and research of Flitwick resident Mark Rankine, with the help of local Ward Councillor, Cllr Gareth Mackey' town council, and the support of Flitwick Town Council and Mayor Andy Snape.

### **The Crash**

At 10:50 on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 1945, de Havilland Mosquito NF Mk XVII HK304 of No. 51 Operational Training Unit, took off from RAF Cranfield in Bedfordshire for a Ground Control Intercept training exercise. At the controls were pilot Sgt Jacques Bonnewit, aged 25, and navigator Sgt John Muncaster, aged 20.

At 12:28, Sgt Bonnewit completed the exercise, and was instructed to reduce HK304's altitude from 10,000ft to 4,000ft: normally, at this point the next transmission would be requesting permission to land. It was sunny with a very slight haze, no cloud, and a moderate west-southwesterly wind.

Witnesses on the ground noticed the aircraft approaching from the southwest. There were often aircraft in the skies, and this would be routine for an aircraft performing a wide, left-hand circuit into RAF Cranfield. This time, however, as

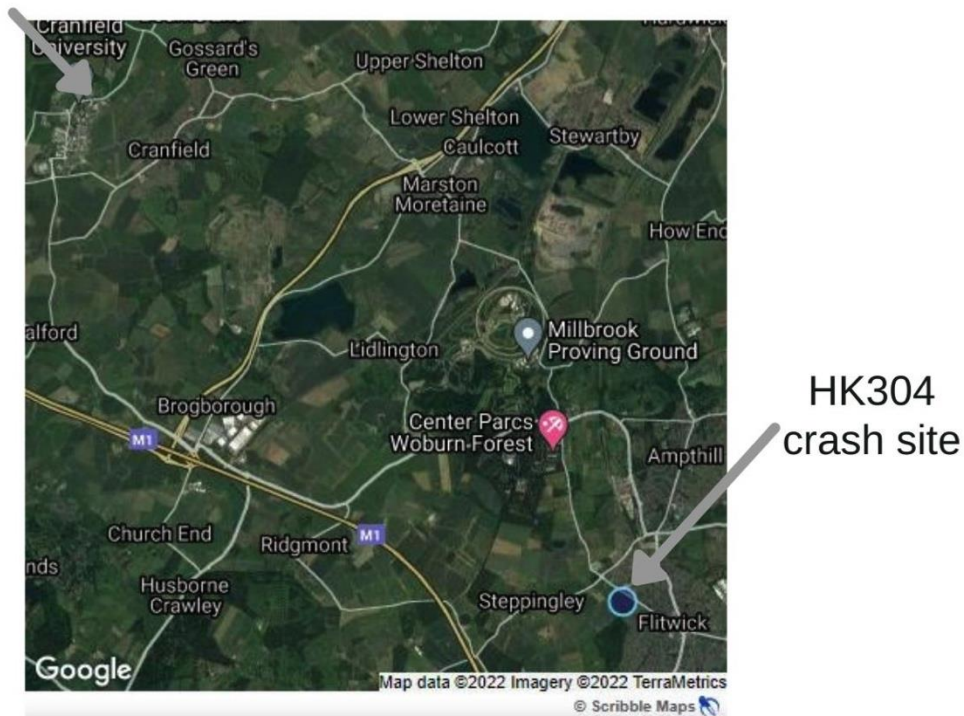
the Mosquito approached Steppingley at 12:32, witnesses reported it to spin down, dive, then recover at an altitude of around 1,000ft. At that point, the wings and part of the tail were seen to break away; the fuselage and centre section of the wings plummeted to earth and crashed into Woodside Field, between the villages of Flitwick and Steppingley. Both Sgt Bonnewit and Sgt Muncaster were killed.

Police Constable G.C. Upchurch was in his garden, when he became aware of an aircraft flying nearby. All sounded normal until there was a sudden bang: he looked up to see the aircraft spiral down until it hit the ground. "He noticed that the outer part of the wings and tail surfaces appeared to be missing but that the engines were in place and that a large number of detached pieces seemed to be hanging in the air above the main part." He estimated it broke up at a height of 1,000ft.

Mrs Finedon also witnessed the accident from her garden, on the east side of the road from Flitwick to Ampthill. Again, all seemed normal, until she heard a "spluttering cracking noise", followed by an explosion and pieces coming off the aircraft. To quote directly from the crash investigation report, her "... impression was that the wings went up above the rest of the machine with other pieces. The body remained complete. It all happened very quickly and the aircraft started to drop down into a spin at once."

Wreckage was strewn over the area. The fuselage burst into flames on impact. Most of the aircraft landed in an area about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile by  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile immediately to the west of where the fuselage landed. A trail of smaller pieces extended roughly  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile further to the east-northeast.

## RAF Cranfield



Locations, using Google Map data (February 2022)

Flitwick has expanded dramatically since the 1940s. Although there isn't a map from the time of the crash, descriptions of the debris field and extent of scatter, together with testimony from other eyewitnesses, hint that the area circled is likely where the fuselage and much of the wreckage landed.

The investigation concluded that the accident was likely to be due to the failure of the rib structure of the starboard radiator upper nose fairing. This occurred at about the time Sgt Bonnewit resumed normal level flight after descending to 4,000ft. This resulted in the tearing away of the wing upper skin, causing temporary loss of control and sending the Mosquito into a roll and spin.

It was considered the evidence pointed to the probability that Sgt Bonnewit had regained control, but the manoeuvres overstressed the airframe such that the wing structure catastrophically failed. Detailed examination showed both wings suffered almost symmetrical failures: the front spars ruptured outboard of the engine nacelles, and the rear spars at the outer end of the outboard tank bay.

It appeared neither of the crew tried to escape the aircraft during its descent.

### **The Aircraft**

De Havilland Mosquito NF Mk XVII HK304 was originally built as a Fighter at Leavesdon in June 1943, but was converted into a Night Fighter in September

1943 by Marshalls in Cambridge. It entered service with 25 Squadron, based at RAF Coltishall. During this time, it shot down a V-1 Flying Bomb. On another 25 Sqn mission, HK304 and its crew at the time, Plt Off Barney Travers and Nav Off Alex Patterson, shot down a Messerschmitt Bf109G-6 flown by Fw Martin Shulze of 1/JG301: Fw Shulze managed to bail out before his aircraft crashed, This is the only known time a 25 Sqn Mosquito shot down a Bf109G. Shulze earlier in July 1944 had claimed shooting down a four engine plane near the town of Breteuil in this area, (SE) at 01H1757, Lancaster JB486 DX-F of 57 Squadron was lost at this time, the seven young crew members who are all buried Poix de Picardie churchyard in France. 1/JG301 was responsible for protecting V-1 launch sites against Allied night air attacks.

In November 1944, HK304 transferred to 456 Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force at Ford in West Sussex, before a brief stay with 68 (Night Fighter) Squadron at Coltishall in January 1945. HK304 then moved to its final posting with 51 OTU (Operational Training Unit) based at RAF Cranfield. Investigators noted that prior to its final flight, the airframe had accumulated 458 hours and 20 minutes of flying time: it was due its next 20 hour inspection at 459 hours.

What was RAF Cranfield is linked to aviation to this day; Cranfield University, still famous for its contributions to aerospace, occupies the site. It originally opened in June 1937, though 51 OTU moved in during August 1941. 51 OTU trained night fighter pilots and radar observers to fly Havocs, Blenheims, Beaufighters and Mosquitoes. This unit stayed at RAF Cranfield until May 1945, when it was disbanded after the end of the war in Europe.

### **The Aircrew**

Jacques Bonnewit was born on 22nd December 1919 in Amsterdam, Holland to Hijman and Reina Meijer Bonnewit. Bonnewit escaped from Belgium on 8th August 1940, and joined the RAF.



Image credit: [Aircrew Remembered](#)

He began his initial flight training in Torquay with 5 Initial Training Wing at the start of 1942, and completed the bulk of the rest of his flying training in Canada over the next couple of years; he passed through 31 EFTS (Elementary Flying

Training School), then 34 SFTS (Service Flying Training School), 32 SFTS and then 17 SFTS. He moved back to England to 12 (P) AFU (Pilot Advanced Flying Unit) at Grantham, and joined 51 OTU, RAF Cranfield, on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1944. This was his final posting.

Few details are known about his flying career; the crash investigators concluded he had his logbook with him at the time of the crash. It's believed he had completed around 200 hours of flying, both dual and solo, and had flown about 25 hours in Mosquitos. He was rated "average", and thought of as a good, steady pilot.

After the war, Sgt Bonnewit was repatriated in 1949. He lies buried in the Pelouse d'Honneur de la Force Aérienne at the Brussels Cemetery at Evere (row 4, grave 8).

Less is known about the navigator, Sergeant John William George Muncaster. He was born in Maryport, Cumbria, England, to Duncan and Sarah Muncaster. He's interred in Maryport Cemetery, Sec O, Grave 180. It has proven harder to trace Sgt Muncaster's living relatives. Mark Rankine has been in touch with local councillors in Maryport, and it seems if there are any, they've moved away from the Maryport area. If anyone has any information they would like to share, we would be very grateful.



Image credit: Aircrew Remembered

### **The Memorial**

In the run up to the VE Day Celebrations, during the first Covid lockdown in 2020, Mark Rankine came across this photograph of Madame Bonnewit by her son's grave.



*The mother of Sgt. Jacques Bonnewit spends time reflecting.*

**Image credit: Aircrew Remembered**

Struck by her emotion, and knowing that nothing had been done in the area to remember the crash, he decided to take action. Along with local councillor Gareth Mackey, he launched a campaign to raise money to build a lasting memorial to the crew. This raised thousands of pounds: it was generously supported by the communities of Flitwick and surrounding areas, as well as Sgt Muncaster's home town of Maryport.

Mark also had this diorama built with the support of the scale aviation community, showing HK304 at the airfield, as it would have been at the time of the crash.



Image credit: Mark Rankine



Image credit: Mark Rankine



Image credit: Lindsay Rumbold

Thanks to the hard work of Mark and Councillor Mackey, the memorial stone was unveiled on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021, in the gardens of The Rufus Centre, Flitwick. The Rufus Centre is very close to the field where the crash occurred, and is the closest public space for such a memorial.



## Mosquito NF. Mk XVII





HK 304 was originally built as an F Mk. II, but was converted to a nightfighter in 1944. During service with 25 Sqn. HK 304 shot down a V-1 flying bomb and a nightfighter Bf 109 G-6 of 1/JG301. The airframe was transferred around units, but saw its final flight with No. 51 OTU. At 12:32 on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1945, in a tragic accident during a training flight pilot Sgt. Bonnewit and navigator Sgt. Muncaster were killed in a crash at Flitwick. This 1:48 model is part of a memorial to these brave men.



 **Sgt.**  
 Jacques L.  
 Bonnewit



 **Sgt.**  
 John W. G.  
 Muncaster

**No. 51 OTU RAF**

♦ 1945: BASED AT RAF CRANFIELD  
 1944-45: Served with 25 Sqn. RAF,  
 456 Sqn RAAF and 68 Sqn. RAF



Image credit: Jesse Billington



Image credit: Jesse Billington



Image credit: Jesse Billington

Amongst other local residents, and town councillors, the ceremony was attended by the 1985 (Flitwick) Squadron Air Training Corps, the Flitwick & District Royal British Legion, Alan Brackley, Chairman of the de Havilland Aircraft Museum, and Mrs Fiona Rogers, the daughter of Air Commodore Ted Sismore DSO, DFC & Two Bars, AFC, AE. The dedication and consecration was given by Rev Canon Nigel Washington, and HM Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Helen Nellis, gave a short but moving speech. I attended on behalf of The People's Mosquito. The memorial was unveiled by HM Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, and Mrs Fiona Rogers.



Image credit: Jesse Billington

Mark commissioned artist Robin Woolnough to create an image of HK304 flying over Flitwick, as it would have been in 1945. A limited number of these prints are for sale to benefit charities including the RAF Benevolent Fund, the de Havilland Aircraft Museum, The Princes Trust, and The People's Mosquito.

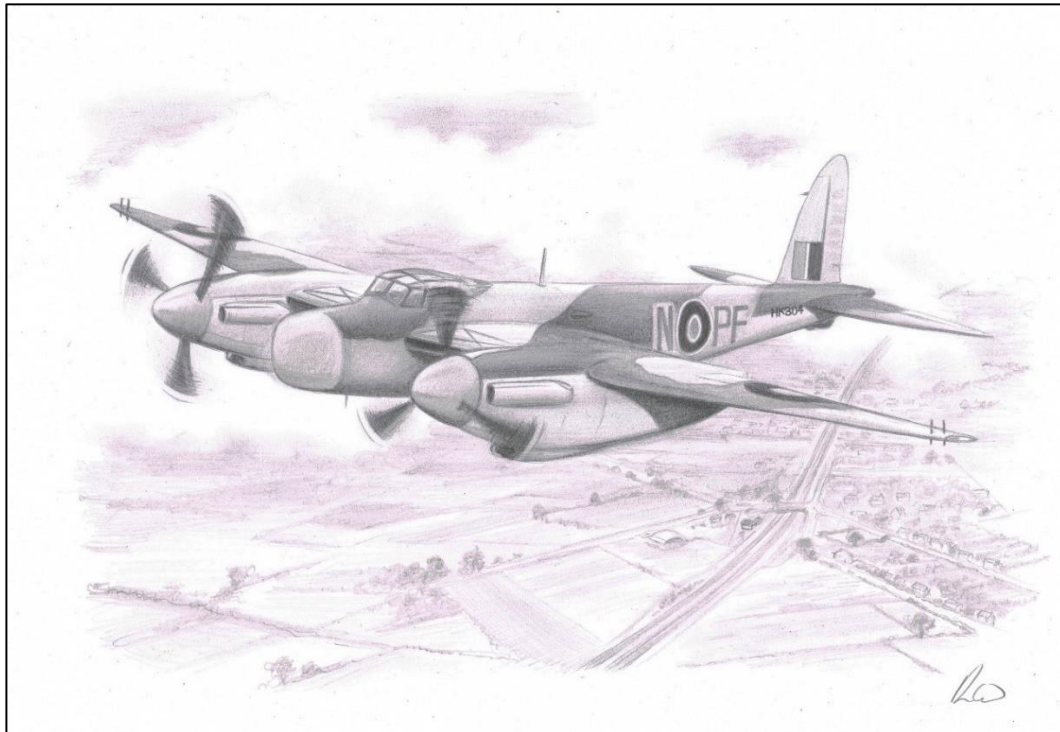


Image credit: Robin Woolnough

**Thanks to:**

Mark's generosity with sharing his research has been absolutely invaluable in writing this article. Mark, and consequently myself, would like to thank the following people and organisations for their help and support:

The scale aviation modelling community  
Dr Andy Dawson of [mossie.org](http://mossie.org)  
Kelvin Youngs of Aircrew Remembered  
Alan Brackley and the de Havilland Aircraft Museum  
The People's Mosquito

References:

Aircrew Remembered: <https://aircrewremembered.com/bonnewit-jacques.html>

HK304 Crash Investigation report AVIA 5/23/W2099, National Archives:

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C6577983>

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# Street Naming and Numbering Guidance

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### **Guidance Notes**

Central Bedfordshire Council has the legal responsibility to ensure that streets are named, and properties are numbered. The Authority has the power to approve or reject property addresses submitted by developers or the public or prescribe its own addressing schemes. Central Bedfordshire Council use the Public Health Act 1925. (sections 17, 18 and 19) for the purpose of naming streets and numbering properties. This power extends to Commercial and Industrial properties as well as domestic.

All property development and address change within Central Bedfordshire is subject to the official street naming and numbering process. Maintaining a comprehensive and high standard for naming streets and numbering/ naming properties is essential as it facilitates.

- Consistency of property-based information across Local Government and within the community of users for addresses.
- Emergency services finding a property.
- Reliable delivery of services and products
- Location of addresses for visitors

Anyone seeking an address change, or the creation of an address for a new property, must apply to Central Bedfordshire Council following the procedures outlined in these guidance notes.

Proposals for street names from developers are welcome for consideration, however it is recommended when making an application, that more than one name is put forward in case the first choice does not comply with the guidelines. It is also recommended for all suggestions for street and building names to have a historical connection with the site or to reflect the local area and to avoid duplication. If suggestions conform to these guidance notes on Street Naming and Numbering and do not meet with any objection from the Town/Parish Councils, the new address will be formally allocated, and all the relevant bodies will be notified.

To aid the emergency services, we will ensure wherever possible, that if a street has a name and has street signs relating to that name, any new properties accessed from that street will be officially addressed using the existing street name and are numbered using an alphabet suffix if necessary unless there are exceptional circumstances.

In addition to complying with appropriate legislation, these guidelines are compliant, at the time of implementation, with the document “Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the National Land and Property Gazetteer” version 3.3, available from the National Land and Property Gazetteer custodians at [www.nlpg.org.uk](http://www.nlpg.org.uk)

### **Street Naming and Numbering Procedures**

The purpose of this is to provide guidance to developers and owner/ occupiers on the naming and numbering of streets and buildings across Central Bedfordshire.

This is a statutory function that Central Bedfordshire Council provides in exercise of its powers and duties under the Public Health Act 1925.

The appropriate naming of streets and naming and numbering of buildings forms the basis for identifying property related information which is used by:

- Royal Mail and other services for delivery of post and goods
- The ambulance, police, and fire services for responses to emergencies
- Statutory organisations e.g., the Council, HM Land Registry and HM Revenue & Customs

### **British Standard BS7666:2006 Parts 1 and 2 - Address Data Entry Conventions**

In addition to the traditional method of addressing a property the Government has introduced a British Standard (BS7666) for the precise identification of a property or plot of land. Each property has been allocated a 12-digit Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN). This permits additional information such as co-ordinates to be accessed allowing the property to be located on a map.

Central Bedfordshire Council along with all other local or unitary authorities has created and maintains a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) to the above standard. Updates to this information are submitted daily to the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) which is marketed commercially. This precise location information can then be used by Royal Mail, the Emergency Services and Utility Companies.

As part of the process the location and naming of new streets is an essential starting point. Any new streets are notified by us to the GIS team who hold Local Street Gazetteer (LSG), and they in turn use it to update the National Street Gazetteer (NSG).

It should be noted that the LLPG provides geographic location information for all properties in the district and whilst most addresses are the same as those held by the Royal Mail for postal delivery services there will be some incidences of variation in address format between that held by Royal Mail and within the Council’s LLPG.

### **Applying For A New Postal Address**

Applications for new addresses within Central Bedfordshire should be made to Building Control by completing the Street Naming and Numbering application form and emailing to [street.naming@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:street.naming@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Applications should be made by:

- Individuals or developers building new dwellings, commercial or industrial premises
- Individuals or developers undertaking conversions of existing residential, commercial or industrial premises which will result in the creation of new separately addressed units

Developers who use a marketing name for a site must make it clear to any prospective purchasers, that it is not part of an official postal address.

Applications for new addresses should be submitted as soon as work commences. In the case of new street names this is essential as the time from receiving a proposed name until it is formally adopted can take several months.

On developments requiring new street names the developer may put forward a naming proposal and the Council will consult with the relevant Parish or Town Council to consider if the proposal is acceptable. If the developer has suggested a street name, the Parish or Town Council can either accept the proposed name or suggest an alternative. The Council does not consult where the application is solely for the numbering or naming of a single building.

### **Existing Properties without Postal Addresses**

Occasionally residents of the district report that their property is not shown on established postcode listings. The Council will report the omission to Royal Mail so that the address of the property can be entered into the Postcode Address File. All requests should be made in writing.

### **Street Naming Protocols and Conventions**

When a new development is built, the responsibility for naming the new streets rests with the Council, however, street name suggestions are provided by the Developer as well as the Local Town or Parish Council. It is the responsibility of those parties to check the suitability of the names provided and ensure the new names are suitable and consistent with the Council's protocols for road naming.:

- When possible, the name(s) should have a proven historical connection to the land intended for development. NB – Historic Environment Record
- The name(s) will not be the name(s) of living people and there must be a proven historical connection to the town or parish within which the development falls. The Parish or Town Council must publish a notice with their intentions to use the name for a period of 28 days to allow any member of the public to make their views known and notify Central Bedfordshire Council of any objections. Names will not be considered that may be construed as contravening any aspect of the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy or would undermine the cohesiveness of local communities.
- The name(s) will not be the same or similar to any existing name(s) already in use in the same locality, the same town, post town or within a 8k radius of a neighbouring SNNN authority's administrative area. A variation in the terminal word, for example "street", "road", "avenue", will not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name.
- Street names with phonetically similar names will also be avoided e.g., Churchill Road/Birch Hill Road and Willows Avenue/Winnows Avenue.
- A common request is to repeat existing names i.e.; St Marys Close off an existing St Marys Way. This is not allowed as it can have a detrimental effect in an emergency. This is in line with Government guidance found in Department of Transport Circular 3/93
- If the development contains a new network of streets a theme may be chosen, taking care not to repeat a theme already being used locally.
- Aesthetically unsuitable names or names capable of deliberate misinterpretation are to be avoided.

- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell.
- All punctuation, including apostrophes shall be avoided.
- New street names should end with one of the following suffixes

**Avenue** | **Bank** | **Circle** - for circular roads only | **Close** - only for a cul-de-sac | **Corner** | **Crescent** - for crescent shaped roads only | **Croft** | **Drive** | **Edge** | **Farm** | **Field(s)** | **Gardens** (provided it will not be confused with any local open space) | **Green** | **Grove** | **Hill** | **Lane** | **Mead** | **Meadow** | **Mews** | **Orchard** | **Paddock** | **Park** | **Place** | **Rise** | **Road** | **Row** | **Square** - for a Square | **Street** | **Triangle** - for triangular roads only | **View** | **Way** | **Wharf** - only near a navigable watercourse | **Yard**

- Pedestrian only access thoroughfares should end with: **Walk** | **Path** | **Way**

**Please note:**

- No street name should start with **"The"**
- **"Court"** is not acceptable as a street name suffix but may be used for large multi-occupied buildings.
- **"Terrace"** should only be used as a subsidiary name within another road.

On receipt of a proposed new street or building name, the Council's Responsible Officer will check that it will not duplicate existing names and is in accordance with the naming protocols and conventions shown above.

Central Bedfordshire Council is able to provide historic information, please visit our website at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) for further details.

**Property Addressing Guidelines**

**Building Numbers**

- When naming/numbering new buildings the following conventions will be followed:
- Where practicable a new street should be numbered with the odd numbers on the left and the even numbers on the right from the entrance of the street. In the case of a cul-de-sac, consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.
- All numbers should be used in the proper sequence (excluding 13). However, should a request be made for the inclusion of 13 this may be allowed.
- Where an existing street is extended, it would be appropriate, if possible, to continue to use the same street name including the continuation of the street numbering.
- Buildings will be numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is to be found. If a building has entrances on more than one street, is a multi-occupied building and each entrance leads to a separate occupier, then each entrance should be numbered in the appropriate road.
- Where a building with an already approved house number or name is subdivided then the use of letters or numbers to indicate the separate apartments is acceptable.
- All new properties shall be numbered rather than named. Exceptions will only apply in existing streets where no numbering scheme exists.
- Infill properties will be numbered into the existing street using an alphabet suffix unless there are exceptional circumstances.

- A piece of land e.g., a field, cannot be given an official address, only property on that land that has a delivery point can have a conventional address for the purposes of delivering mail and services.
- Annexes, private garages, and buildings used for housing cars or livestock will not be addressed separately from a main dwelling
- New street names shall not be assigned for the sole purpose of avoiding numbers with a suffix.

### **House Names**

If you are intending to name or rename an existing named property you will need to contact the Council to check whether your preferred name is already in use in the immediate area. If there is the possibility of confusion or the name chosen is deemed to be inappropriate you will be requested to select another name. We will not accept house names that are the words for numbers e.g., Nine.

However, where a numbering scheme is in place a house name can only be in addition to the allocated property number and not a replacement. Please note that the original number should always be displayed on the property and quoted within an address on all correspondence. Please also note that house names used with numbered properties will form no part of the officially registered postal address as held within Royal Mail's Postcode Address File.

If this process is not undertaken the official address of the property will not be revised. Royal Mail will only amend their Post Code Address File with information provided by the Council.

The charge for this service is contained within our fees and charges schedule which is available on the website [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) in the search field input Street Naming and Numbering charges then click on Planning Fees.

### **Postcodes**

The Council is responsible for establishing property addresses up to and including the town or village name. The allocation of postcodes is the responsibility of Royal Mail. In creating and establishing new addresses the Council will liaise with Royal Mail's Address Development Team to provide a suitable postcode.

When a new address, including the postcode, has been created, it will potentially be held by Royal Mail in the Not Yet Built section of the Post code Address File. When Royal Mail are satisfied that the property is complete and is in a state to be occupied, they should make the address live on the Postcode Address File. If you are occupying a new build property and the address is not shown against established postcode listings you should contact Royal Mail directly on 03456 045060.

### **Distribution of All New and Changed Addresses**

Once an address has been created or amended, we distribute this information to a variety of Council services and other organisations. These include:

**Internally:** Council Tax, Electoral Registration, Land Charges

**Externally:** Royal Mail, Land Registry, The Emergency Services, Utility Companies.

Please note that Central Bedfordshire Council are not responsible for updating commercial websites for example: - Google maps and What three words, etc.

## **Application and Fees**

Application and other postal address enquiries can be submitted by email to [building.control@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk), payment made by debit/credit card by contacting Building Control on 0300 300 8635,

## **Street Nameplates**

Under the Public Health Act 1925 there is a duty to erect and maintain street nameplates for all officially named thoroughfares.

The responsibility for the initial provision of street nameplates within a new development, where a street name is required, is devolved to the developer.

All new nameplates should be provided to the Council's specification shown below.

## **Street Sign Specification**

### **Posts**

Black recycled plastic posts

Post dimensions 80 x 80 x 1220mm with bevelled tops

Milled (routed) at top of post to accept main backboard assembly

Base of post drilled to accept anchor pins 10mm x 160mm

### **Backboard**

30mm x 150mm section, overall height and length of backboard is dependent upon number of lines and length of wording.

### **Sign Face**

Stabilised impact resistant polycarbonate.

### **Channel**

“U” section channel to be fitted top and bottom of backboard to retain sign face.

“U” channel to be bonded with 3m Scotchweld EPX bonding adhesive

### **Lettering**

MOT or Kindersley

### **Foundation**

1200mm posts will require foundations 450 x 450 x 450mm. To be backfilled with compacted concrete

## **Address Problems**

The street naming and numbering function deals with all address related queries within the district. If you are having a problem, please contact us

## **Contact us:**

**Email:** [building.control@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) **Tel:** 0300 300 8635



## FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

### Report to Town Council 17.02.2026 Allotment EMR – Rotavator Purchase

#### Background

The Town Council historically offered a service to rotavate allotment plots at either the start of a tenancy (if requested) or when requested by an existing plot holder (at a cost to the plot holder). This service was ceased as the machinery failed and it was not replaced for varying reasons.

#### Introduction

Over the past couple of years an increase in new tenants taking on plots and then giving them up within a year has been noticed. The main reason for people giving these up are that the ground is unworkable – too hard, too weedy/grassy and it is just too time consuming for hand tools.

It has highlighted that additional Officer time is spent showing prospective tenants' allotments, administration of the letting of the plot and Public Realm team time to trim and clear the plots of rubbish. This time is in addition due to the turnover of new tenants giving up on the unmanageable plots.

This additional Officer time could be reduced if the plots are in a workable condition at the start of a tenancy. To be able to achieve a workable state, some plots will benefit from a rotavator. The time taken to rotavate a plot would be considerably less than strimming and clearing (which only removes the grass and weeds to ground level).

In addition, Officers often receive requests from existing tenants asking if we can rotavate their plot. If the Council were to purchase a rotavator, as recommended, this could be a service that the team offer at a nominal charge to the plot holder (suggested £30-40) as has been in the past.

#### Additional Matters

Quotes:

1. 1 x HUSQVARNA TR348 Rotary Tiller £999.00 (includes a customer discount of £292.00) – Local supplier
2. 1 x HUSQVARNA TR348 Rotary Tiller £1207.50 – direct from Husqvarna

This report was scheduled for consideration at Finance Committee but has been brought to Council for consideration as the February Finance Committee was cancelled.

Currently £16,469.18 sits in the Allotment EMR.

#### Recommendations

Option 1: To purchase a rotavator at a cost of £999.00 (Quote 1) from the Allotment EMR

Option 2: To not purchase a rotavator at a cost of £999.00 (Quote 1) from the Allotment EMR

#### Officer Recommendation

Option 1: To purchase a rotavator at a cost of £999.00 (Quote 1) from the Allotment EMR

Sarah Burgess  
Amenities Officer

## Balance Sheet as at 31st January 2026

31st March 2025

31st March 2026

Net Value	<u>Fixed Assets</u>	Cost of Asset	Depreciation	Net Value
<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<b>Long Term Assets</b>			
<u>0</u>			<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<b>Current Assets</b>			
92,680	DEBTORS	16,672		
5,599	Burial Grounds & Cemeteries	0		
19,462	VAT Control Account	23,671		
28,835	PREPAYMENTS	19,977		
8,166	Mthly Business Prepays	15,170		
53,989	PrePayment for Land Sale	68,932		
4,532	Accrued Income	0		
3,298	Stock Held - Bar	3,043		
4,346	Stock Held - Food	3,778		
5,569	Current Bank Ac Barclays 009	5,110		
42,231	Barclays Business Reserve 106	133,638		
0	Prepayment Cards: Equals	955		
1,000	PDQ Account	873		
46,550	Tenants Deposits Account	64,101		
400	Petty Cash Control (YE)	400		
400	Float - Main Safe (YE)	200		
400	Float - Cafe Safe (YE)	600		
15	Float - Reception Safe (YE)	15		
80	Float - Cafe Till Drawer	80		
1,133,095	CCLA Deposit Fund	845,595		
<u>1,450,647</u>			<u>1,202,810</u>	
	<b>1,450,647 Total Assets</b>			<b>1,202,810</b>
	<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
15,997	DEBTORS Control: Functions	1,919		
0	Burial Grounds & Cemeteries	2,831		
0	Barclaycard	1,701		
3,441	CREDITORS	54,301		
7,943	ACCRUAL - Loan Interest (YE)	0		

## Balance Sheet as at 31st January 2026

31st March 2025

31st March 2026

12,119	ACCRUALS (YE)	0
17,763	PAYE/NIC Due	15,205
10,568	LGPS Pension Control	9,148
3,128	NEST Pension Control	3,799
6,400	Income in Advance (YE)	0
0	Ticket Sales Return Due (NT)	1,121
4,722	Past Yr TM Charity (YE)	0
2,291	Past Yr TM Allow & Civic Recep	0
77	Past Yr Leader Expenses (YE)	0
52,188	Tenants Rent Deposits	60,744
500	Refundable Deposits: Functions	350
1,079	Barclaycard Year End balance	0
<u>138,217</u>		<u>151,119</u>
<b>1,312,429</b>	<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>	<b>1,051,692</b>
	<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>	
<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>
<b>1,312,429</b>	<b>Total Assets Less Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>1,051,692</b>
	<b>Represented By</b>	
397,766	GENERAL RESERVE	322,746
914,664	Earmarked Reserves	728,946
<u>1,312,429</u>		<u>1,051,692</u>

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st January 2026 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :  
Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Signed :  
Responsible  
Financial \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

**FTC Projects Review 2025-26**

(315)	Central Project Fund	Opening Balance	£	<b>92,164</b>	
315	PLUS 2025/26: Agreed CPF Precept Funding		£	89,747	(1st Instal £44,874 rec'd April & 2nd Instal £44,873 received Sep)
800s	LESS: 25/26 Projects Opening Balance		£	186,576	25/26 temporary balance of EMR 315
	LESS Projects Overspend from CPF		£	-	
	PLUS Projects Underspend		£	4,665	
(315)	Central Project Fund YTD Funds Available		-£	<b>0</b>	Working balance (315) less 2nd precept instal (Oct)= Complete

Accepted Project budget variance at 5%.

Last Updated: 31 January 2026

**2025-26 Capital Projects Funding**

As at April 25, the Central Project Fund is committed spend to 3 Station Road project.

All identified capital projects to be considered on a case-by-case basis and funded through the Operations Reserves (EMR 319).

	PROJECT Details					Project Details								24/25 FUNDING Details				Comments		
	Project Code	N/C	Project Description	Committee	Minute Ref	Project Start Date	Whole Project Funds Committed	Previous Year's Project Spend	25/26 Opening Project Balance	GRANT Received	25/26 Project Spend to Date	Overspend Funded by CPF/Ops Reserve	Underspend Returned to CPF	Project Commitment Remaining YTD		TOTAL Approved Grants/ Funding	Prev Yrs Funds Received		25/26 Funds Received	Grants/ Funding Budget Remaining
Ongoing Projects	800	4212 110	Proj - Nature Park	Community	Del. Auth	Apr-21	£ 3,000	£ 13,490	£ -	£ -	£ -			£ -	0%	£ 283,385	£ 10,490	£ -	£ 272,895	S106 remaining: Phase 1 E7,106.89, Phase 2 E274,728 & Plans £1,550 (CBC to be invoiced for S106 once works completed). SL 7/9/22. Planning Consultant RCF approved July 23. Jan 25 : CPF Fund & 24/25 Grant Instal complete. Outstanding approved grant fund (£272,895) not yet claimed. No further CPF spend committed. £10,490 received on ETCR584 June 2024.
	801	4819 110	Proj - Flitwick Town Sq Defib	Community	5213d	Feb-22	£ 1,770	£ 1,048	£ 722	£ -	£ 292			£ 430	24%					Defib Purchased and installed March 2024. Further costs anticipated due to possible relocation fees.
	802	4823 110	Proj - Heritage Website	Corporate	753a 5252a	Jun-23	£ 3,800	£ -	£ 3,800	£ -	£ 1,580			£ 2,220	58%					
	803	4837 110	Proj - Rural Match Fund Benches	Community	5226e	Mar-22	£ 2,000	£ -	£ 2,000	£ -	£ -			£ 2,000	100%					Resolution made at Council March 2022 confirmed March 2023 to be match funded by CBC - amount TBC
	808	4853 110	Proj - Nature Park Planning	Community	5622c	Apr-24	£ 23,673	£ 21,859	£ 1,814	£ -	£ 1,814			£ -	0%					PROJECT COMPLETED & CLOSED - Oct 25
	814	4859 110	Proj - Skate Park Extension	Community	5681gii	Jul-24	£ 9,600	£ 9,600	£ 36,100	£ -	£ 36,100			£ -	0%	£ 64,900	£ 64,900	£ -	£ -	£38,400 match funding from CBC UKSPF Community Grant £26,500 from CBC S106 Funding PROJECT COMPLETED & CLOSED - June 25
NEW Projects: 2025/26	106		3 Station Road Project	FTC			£ 126,395		£ 126,395	£ -	£ 32,559			£ 93,836	74%					Please refer to full project schedule for details
			Historic Project Refund										£ 4,665							Refund from UKPN (Chq rec'd, paying in reference 201765) for historic project dated 25/10/2022 in relation to feeder pillar installation credited to CPF. Refurbishment works to Tractor Store and Play Areas (Fir Tree Close Park & Station Rd Park) funded by: £54,059.80 CBC S106 invoice FTC9193 £12,000 Ops Reserves EMR 319 transfer (Journal 4263). PROJECT COMPLETED & CLOSED - Dec 25
	817	4862 110	Proj - Public Realm Improvements	Community	Del Auth	Jul-25	£ -		£ -	£ 66,060	£ 66,060			£ -	0%	£ 54,060	£ 12,000	£ 66,060	£ 66,060	Refurbishment works to Room 21 of Rufus Centre funded by £6,445 from Ops Reserves EMR 319 transfer (Journal 4303). PROJECT COMPLETED & CLOSED - Nov 25
	818	4863 110	Proj - Room 21 Refurb	Business	5886c	Sep-25	£ -		£ -	£ 6,445	£ 6,717	£ 272		£ -	0%			£ 6,445	£ 6,445	Funded by £5,000 from Ops Reserves EMR 319 transfer (Journal 4463). PROJECT COMPLETED & CLOSED - Nov 25
	819	4864 110	Proj - Community Fridge Door	Business	5934c	Dec-25	£ -		£ -	£ 5,000				£ 5,000	0%			£ 5,000	£ 5,000	Funded by £16,250 from Ops Reserves EMR 319 transfer (Journal 4463).
	820	4865 110	Proj - Manor Park Carriageway	Community	5934h	Dec-25	£ -		£ -	£ 16,250				£ 16,250	0%			£ 16,250	£ 16,250	Funded by £60,181.25 from CPF + £57k from dedicated EMR 329 in line with delegated authority decision.
	329	4866 110	Proj - Rufus Boilers	Council	5920b	Nov-25	£ 60,181		£ 60,181	£ 57,050	£ 114,523			£ 2,708	0%					