



# FLITCHAM cum APPLETON VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

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## Flitcham Parish Council

Our first meeting of 2025 was held on a cold and windy evening but it was good to have Councillor Dark and two hardy members of the public brave the weather and join us. Thanks also go to Richard Gray who kindly chaired the meeting in Susan Allen's absence.

Stuart Dark talked about developments concerning the proposal to restructure the two-tier system of government in Norfolk (currently consisting of one county council and seven district councils) and create a new unitary authority in charge of all previous districts. A proposal to unite Suffolk and Norfolk into one authority is not popular but a meeting in January is expected to decide that discussion should at least be had over the feasibility of having one unitary authority for Norfolk alone.

In terms of issues in the village itself, Highways will be contacted about the state of the footpath in Abbey Road which has virtually disappeared under moss and debris. The Council will also send its reservations concerning removal of the telephony from the phone box but fear that it is a lost cause. The reality is that we do not have substantial evidence that the box is reasonably needed at the site.

The Parish Council has also had to increase the annual precept (the amount of your council tax which is collected on behalf of the parish to pay for services) for the coming year by £300. This is equivalent to an increase of £2.65 per year for a Band D property. This is necessary as costs of services, labour, goods and materials continue to rise. As residents are aware, a lot of money has been saved in the past as some villagers have generously given time and labour free of charge to local projects. However, this cannot continue indefinitely and in the absence of new offers of help, outside labour must be sought and paid for.

Date next meeting: Monday 3rd March 7.30pm



February 23rd - Family Service 11.00 am.



*Back by popular demand*

Following the successful reopening in January, the Coffee Morning at the Community Centre will continue to be held on Saturdays, fortnightly, from 10-12. Come and join us and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea with a delicious slice of homemade cake or perhaps something savoury. The next ones are on February 8th and 22nd. Hope to see you there.

Debbie Griffiths

## The Village Phone Box

The consultation on removing the telephony from this phone box closes on February 15th. Any comments should now be sent direct to the Borough Council:

<https://online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=SNIK6HIV0JA00>

## FLITCHAM SOCIAL CLUB

### FEBRUARY EVENTS

8th Coffee Morning 11 - 12

11th



Special Event raising funds for  
Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge

Eyes down at 7.30pm

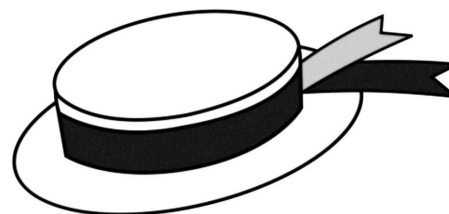
13th Folk Club 8pm

15th **VALENTINE'S MEAL. Places limited  
so BOOK NOW at the bar**

22nd Coffee Morning 11 - 12

27th Folk Club 8pm

**Your Annual Subscription is now (over)due -  
unchanged at £5**



Most football fans know that Luton Town FC is known as "The Hatters" but perhaps not realise how much hatmaking was a mainstay of the local economy, even after the arrival of Vauxhall Motors in 1905 (from Vauxhall in Central London), for which the town is best known. Luton was once regarded as the hatmaking centre of the world and, in the 1930s, was said to produce more than 70 million hats a year.

Susan and I were brought up in Luton and were familiar with the hatmaking tradition; according to my 1958 Kelly's Directory, there were still 144 hat manufacturers listed alongside 47 ancillary trades, including block and pan makers. Most of these were very small scale concerns and relied a great deal on employing 'outworkers' who worked from home and were generally paid a piece-rate. My Auntie Winnie was one of these, gluing in hat bands. She used to visit my grandmother, with whom we lived, and the pair of them sat with a pile of hats and bands. They were each armed with a small paintbrush which they dipped into a large tin of glue; it had the colour and consistency of golden syrup. I was 8 then and used to sit with them, sharing the wonderful smell of the toxic solvent which filled the room.

Speaking of toxic solvents, these are exactly what went into the silver tank on top of [Paul's Bygones](#) from last month - a DIY dry cleaning brush. Just scrub the carbon tetrachloride in and the stains vanished while the fumes quickly disappeared leaving you with a freshly cleaned garment and a mild sense of euphoria, dizziness or nausea according to how diligently you had applied yourself.

There's rather a sad postscript to my reminiscence. I have often wondered whether an afternoon's glue sniffing was a contributory factor in Auntie Winnie being knocked off her bike while cycling home.

