

Support at Christmas and helpful numbers

There are many reasons Christmas can be a difficult time, and we all need to be mindful to take care of our mental health. If you find yourself struggling this festive season, here are a few local resources from Public Health England which we hope might help:

You can find information here: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>

There is also a local mental wellbeing service directory where you can find out about what help is available:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-services-and-support>

NHFT and Mind's helpline for mental health support:
0800 448 0828 - Lines available 24 hours a day, seven days a week
 This also includes a text service.



Helpful Numbers

Food Aid Far Cotton supports vulnerable families in our local community by providing ambient food, fresh fruit and vegetables, eggs and bread. Open Thursdays at St. Mary's Church, Far Cotton. Phone: **07943 054874**
 email: admin@foodaidfarcotton.co.uk

Childline If you're a child and in a situation where you may be experiencing domestic abuse, Childline can offer some advice or support via their free, 24-hour confidential helpline for children and young people who need to talk. Phone: **0800 1111**

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline The 24 hour helpline, run by Refuge is for women experiencing domestic abuse, their family, friends and others calling on their behalf.
 Phone: **0808 2000 247**

Citizens Advice Service provides information on benefits, employment and housing and help on debt, credit and legal issues.
 Phone: **0344 488 9629**

Turn2us is a national charity that helps people in financial hardship gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and support services.
 Phone: **0808 802 2000** (Mon-Fri 9am-8pm)

The Trussell Trust works with local communities to run foodbanks that provide three days' emergency food and support to people in crisis.
 Phone: **0808 208 2138** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

Scan this QR Code to go directly to our Facebook page



Council Meeting Dates

Everyone is welcome to attend our monthly Full Council and Planning Committee meetings. Although council meetings are quite formal, we always set aside time at the beginning for residents to raise any questions or comments. Our Full Council meeting usually occurs on the third Tuesday of each month, and will next take place on **17 December 2024** and **21 January 2025**.

The Planning Committee meets on the second Thursday of every month, with the next meetings scheduled for **12 December 2024** and **9 January 2025**.

Our next Residents Forum meeting will be on Tuesday 4 February

All meetings start at 7.30pm and are held at Far Cotton Rec Centre, Towcester Road, Far Cotton.

A large print version of this newsletter is available on request



The latest news and reports from Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council

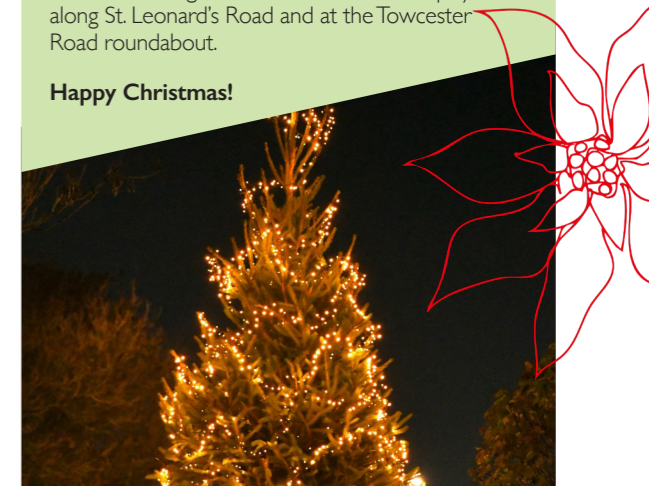


Welcome

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council Newsletter. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank you, the members of our community, for a wonderful year. Whether you've attended our Residents Forums, Community Fun Day, Stay & Play sessions, Men's Breakfast Clubs or Summer Program events, it has been heartening to see so many people using the Community Council's services and has been a pleasure meeting all of you. We look forward to another busy and rewarding year in 2025 and hope you all have a safe and happy festive period.

We also hope you enjoy the Community Council's annual festive lights and Christmas tree display along St. Leonard's Road and at the Towcester Road roundabout.

Happy Christmas!



Pension credit session

At the beginning of November, in collaboration with Councillor Emma Roberts from West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), the Community Council organised a pension credit advice session. In light of changes to winter fuel payments, many individuals expressed concerns about their income during the colder months. The purpose of this session was to ensure that people of pension age were receiving the financial support they are entitled to, and giving them the tools and guidance to complete an application.

Partners from WNC, Age UK, Community Law Service and HMRC were on hand to offer advice. Those in attendance received assistance and many found out that they were entitled to benefits that they were not currently claiming.

To qualify for the winter fuel payment, you must have applied for pension credit by 21 December. If you would like any last-minute support, do get in touch and we may be able to signpost you to the relevant help:
info@farcottonanddelapre-cc.gov.uk
 or **01604 906077**



Poppies

At the start of November you may have noticed vibrant splashes of red throughout Far Cotton and Delapre in the form of the Community Council's annual poppy display. The poppy displays situated on lampposts throughout Far Cotton and Delapre, as well as a designated display on the Towcester Road/St. Leonard's Road traffic islands were put in place to honour Remembrance Day and pay tribute to all those who lost their lives in war. Thank you to our councillors who volunteered their time to set up the displays in our community.

Our Chair, Cllr Bright and Vice-Chair Cllr Plowman also attended Remembrance Services on Sunday 10 November at St. Mary's Church and Towcester Road Cemetery. They each laid a commemorative wreath on behalf of the Community Council and all residents of Far Cotton and Delapre.



Neighbourhood Plan - Gloucester Avenue retail amenities



At the end of October, the Neighbourhood planning steering group met to discuss the results of the survey on St. Leonard's Road. We had a brilliant response from local residents highlighting the general feeling towards St. Leonard's Road. This information will be useful in informing our Neighbourhood plan and suggestions for future improvements. If you would like to see results of the survey, you can find them on the Neighbourhood planning page of our website.

We would now like to understand local people's thoughts on the retail amenities on Gloucester Avenue. Everybody's opinion will help, so if you have a few minutes it's worth taking the time to answer our short survey by scanning the QR code on the left or visiting this URL: <https://forms.office.com/e/HrY24zarfd>.

We are also pleased to announce that as part of our Neighbourhood plan, we have been awarded technical support from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. This includes the following:



- Master Planning – focuses on particular areas of interest within our area and creates a master plan for them.
- Design Codes – creates a 'code' for the area by enhancing existing elements such as green spaces or historical features, which will inform future developments.
- Housing Needs Assessment – acknowledges community aspirations to determine the types of housing (if any) that could be needed in the local area. E.g. affordable housing."



Community Safety Day

On Saturday 23 November, Cllr Emma Roberts (West Northamptonshire Council) and the Community Council held a Community Safety and Wellbeing day. The event was attended by representatives from Northamptonshire police, The Emergency Service Cadets, Northamptonshire Fire Service, Off the Streets, Delapre Abbey, Ride Northampton, The Community Law Service, WNC wellbeing service, CHEC and Neighbourhood Watch and we'd like to extend a huge thank you to them all.

Due to parts of Far Cotton and Delapre being in a high risk flood area, the Community Council invited Mary Donhau (also known as Flood Mary), a renowned flood expert, who was on hand to answer questions, and show people around the FloodPod (a moveable trailer showcasing a vast range of flood prevention tools and devices.) For those who could not attend we have a video of Flood Mary sharing handy tips and information on flood prevention techniques and products. You can watch the video by scanning the QR code on the right:



Far Cotton and Delapre Stay and Play

Since returning after the six weeks' holiday, our Stay and Play group has gone from strength to strength. We have had a steady stream of families, both new and old, coming along each week and enjoying the toys, books and crafts. We have followed a timetable of weekly themes including pasta jewellery making, transport and 'under the sea' to ensure the children are exposed to a range of topics and activities. We are holding two special sessions before the Christmas break:

- 12 December - OpenStage "sensory hoo ha" (booking required)
- 19 December - soft play and inflatables

The Community Council are looking for regular volunteers to help set up, serve refreshments and pack down each week and if you are interested in this opportunity, please get in touch with Charley: info@farcottonanddelapre-cc.gov.uk or **01604 906077**



Street Watch

Northamptonshire Street Watch empowers locals to enhance community safety by patrolling neighbourhoods, identifying issues, and encouraging residents to report antisocial and suspicious behaviour. The initiative focuses on fostering community spirit through organised walks with neighbours, acting as a visible crime deterrent. Volunteers patrol for at least two hours monthly, supported by a coordinator and the local police. Participants can organise walks at their convenience, making the program flexible and community-driven while receiving support from local policing teams.

If you are interested and would like to get involved with StreetWatch, you can email citizensinpolicing@northants.police.uk



Bulb planting Queen Eleanor Road

On Monday 2 December, two groups of nursery and reception pupils from Queen Eleanor Primary Academy came along to set out tulip bulbs in the planters on the Queen Eleanor Road and Pleydell Road junction. Alongside ID Verde's Community Engagement Officer, Nicola Clarke, the children learned about the correct way to plant a bulb (with the roots facing down) and did a fabulous job of digging and re-covering the holes. Thanks to the Staff and children from Queen Eleanor Primary and Nicola, the planters will be bursting with colour come spring time!



Bike Doctor – bike donations

Delapre Bike Doctor are a bike repair shop based at Delapre Abbey. They facilitate the Access2 Bikes Scheme, by servicing and recycling old bikes to gift to young people who might not otherwise have access to one.

If you are upgrading any junior bikes in your household this Christmas, then please do think about donating your old bikes to them for a brilliant cause. You can do this by contacting **Steve: 07711 945963** or steve@delaprebikedoctor.co.uk.



Family Film Evening

The Community Council is planning to host free entertainment events in the new year to provide local alternatives to going out and bring members of the community together. After putting out a poll on Facebook, the Community Council have decided to host a family film evening in February, with a view to host more events in the future such as talent shows or open mic nights.

The first family film evening will be held on Thursday 20 February, 6pm at the Far Cotton Rec Centre. Please keep an eye on our social media early next year for more information about booking and the film showing.