



February 2026

Flore news

Barbara (Bea) Kirkbright (25.1.43 – 21.12.25)

It was with great sadness that the village community learned that Bea passed away on Sunday 21st December. Many of us had enjoyed her company at the Festival of Angels at the Church on the Friday night. It is a blessing that she saw so many friends not long before she died. Bea was known and loved by so many of us in the village, and if there was an award to the person attending the most clubs and events in Flore, she would have won it! And that is despite increasing struggles with mobility and health issues. She was inspirational in this way, and also for her fantastic crafting skills and historical knowledge. But mainly we remember the enormous love and laughter she brought to us.



Bea's funeral service will be held at Flore All Saints Church on Friday 27th February (time to be circulated soon) with a wake at the White Hart pub in Flore afterwards.



Remembering Mrs Barbara Musgrove

Barbara passed away peacefully at Galanos House in Southam on December 21st 2025 aged 95.

She and Bill lived in Capell House on the Green between 1975 and 1996. She loved the village and the lovely people there, many of whom remained dear friends after she moved to Welton. Bill passed away in 2022 and Barbara is survived by her four children, Alan, Elizabeth, Barbara and Robert, nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The funeral service is to be held in St Martin's Church in Welton on February 4th at 11 am.

Improvements to the Village Hall

The Millennium Hall Committee would like to turn the present storage room at the back of the Hall into a Village Library and additional meeting area. Therefore we need to build an extra space to house the Heritage Archive and as storage for all Hall users.

We are proposing to apply for grant funding and also to be fund raising ourselves and would welcome views from those who use the Hall and those who do not. Is there any particular reason why you do not use the Hall? There will be questionnaires in both the Village shop and in Re. If you would like to express your opinions please return the completed questionnaires to the shop or to Re. Alternatively you can return your answers to Gavin.rose77@gmail.com.

You can download a copy of the questionnaire from the Flore Parish website at: www.flore.pc.gov.uk



Vacancy for a Parish Councillor

Flore Parish Council currently has a vacancy for a Councillor and is looking for someone who would like to play a more active role in village life. A Councillor represents the views of residents, discusses local issues and contributes to decisions that affect our community. No experience is necessary other than someone with an interest in Flore and a willingness to get involved.

If you would like to find out more, contact the Parish Clerk on clerk@flore-pc.gov.uk or speak to any of the current Councillors.

Message from the Footpath Warden

After what seemed like an interminable January with it's dark mornings, evenings and all pervading dampness, we notice that nature outside our front door has been busy waking up!

Yes, buds are showing up, early birdsong too! So when you get your boots on and walk our Foot Paths and Rights of Way please take notice of, photos if necessary, of any obstructions / broken stiles etc. and kindly let me know.

Enjoy February outside, even if you feel reluctant!

Nigel Strang (email: nasstrang@gmail.com; mobile : 07887 985845)

28-Day Challenge for Home-Start Daventry and South Northants

This February, we're taking on 28 days of positive challenges to raise money for Home-Start, supporting vulnerable families when they need it most.

The idea is simple:

- ✓ Choose a challenge
- ✓ Do it every day (or across the month)
- ✓ Sponsor yourself £28.00
- ✓ Make a real difference



Challenge ideas include:

- Reading every day before going to sleep for 28 days
- Walking 28 miles over February
- Saying 28 positive things to 28 different people
- Giving up a habit, starting a new one, or creating your own positive challenge

It's not about being perfect — it's about doing something positive for yourself and for others. The challenge runs for the 28 days of February, and you can sponsor yourself £28.00.

All funds raised go to Home-Start Daventry and South Northants, helping vulnerable families build stronger foundations.

<https://homestartinwestnorthamptonshire.org.uk>

Let's turn February into a month of kindness, positivity, and support!

Cancer Support Group — Weedon

The Cancer Support Group in Weedon is for everyone affected by cancer living in Weedon, the surrounding area & all of West Northamptonshire. Whether you are newly diagnosed, going through or finished treatment, living with and managing cancer or part of the valuable support network of carers, relatives & friends. You are all able to share information, stories and anecdotes which will help others and be part of the cancer support network. The group is a place to come and chat over tea & cake, talk about whatever you want and have some time to relax with others. We have a selection of leaflets and information which may be useful and can help to source any other information for you.



The Cancer Support Group is held in the Chapter House at the rear of St Peter & St Paul Church, Weedon, NN7 4PL on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month, 2.00 – 4.00 pm.

Come along and join us on Wednesday 11th & 25th February 2026

A speaker has been arranged for Wednesday 25th February – Mae Campbell – Community Connector with Spring - the community-driven support network, to support adults living in Northamptonshire with a long-term physical health conditions to manage their health and wellbeing. Mae will talk about her role within Spring organising and promoting the clubs, activities and workshops that are arranged for all members to participate, which aim to increase an individual's confidence, self-esteem,

sociability and general wellbeing. Mae will also talk about the role of Spring in the community and the activities available in our area.

Access to the room is flat with no steps, parking is available under the railway arches at the side of the church or in Church Street. If you don't want to come alone, bring a friend.

Anyone who would like to come along and be part of the group, or would like more information, please contact Libby Hart on 01327 341816 or e-mail: csgweedon@btinternet.com.

Find us on Facebook - look for Cancer Support Group - Weedon

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone that came to the Sale of display and showroom items kindly donated by Michael Jones Jeweller, we raised £658.29 which will go to the Church restoration fund.

Also to everyone that helped on the day and to everyone that supplied the wonderful home made cakes for the coffee morning

Flore events

Coffee morning — 6th February

Friday 6th February, 10.30 – 12.00. Chapel Schoolroom. Our next coffee morning will be held in the Chapel Schoolroom and is in aid of the Flower Festival Fund. There will be a Bring and buy stall, and a raffle. Please come along, we look forward to seeing you.

Flore Films — 21st February

Saturday 21st February, 7.30pm. Millennium Hall. **Tickets: £7.00.** We have chosen an English Comedy for February to help us through the winter!

The Ballad of Wallis Island has had very good reviews by the critics. Comedian Tim Key plays an eccentric lottery winner who lives alone on a remote Welsh island and dreams of getting his Folkrock duo back together. His fantasy turns into reality when the band members and former lovers accept his invitation to play at a private show at his home on Wallis Island. Bar and nibbles as usual.

Flore Boards Drama Group presents “A Bunch of Amateurs” — 18th - 21st March

The next production from ‘Flore Boards’ drama group will be “A Bunch of Amateurs”, a comedy by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman.

Performances will be on **Wednesday 18th March until Saturday 21st March** in Flore Millennium Hall at 7.30pm, doors open at 7pm.

Tickets are available from Rosemary Read (01327 341026) and from RE in Sutton Street.

Prices are £10 Wed, Thurs and Fri and £15 for Saturday (includes light bites).

Licensed bar on all nights. Raffle proceeds to local charities.



Flore Arts

Poetry Please — 15th February

Sunday 15th February, 6.30pm. White Hart, Flore. This month's theme is "Nature and the environment". As usual feel free to bring along any poem you would like to share, not necessarily related to the theme. Or just come and listen. Meet at the White Hart in Flore, 6.30pm to 8.00pm.

The rest of our 2026 programme is still in development. However one date that is firmly in the calendar is **Jazz in the Garden** which will again be at Rock Springs in Sutton St, Flore. This year it will be on the afternoon of Sunday July 12th.

We hope to have details of further events ready before the next publication of this magazine. So please keep watching this space - or keep up to date with our plans on our website at www.floreatsevents.com and our Flore Arts Events Facebook page.

Brodie Lodge Playing Field

200+ Club Draw — 19th February

The next 200+ Club draw is to be held **Thursday 19th January** at the at the **White Hart**. All welcome to attend and join in!

The **January** 2025 200+ Club Draw took place at the White Hart pub on the 15th January. The winning numbers were drawn by Tom Treacy:

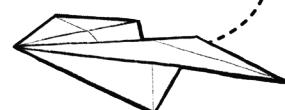
- First prize - £80.00 - Helen Marston (Subscription number 210)
- Second prize - £40.00 - Mr and Mrs J Barker (Subscription number 328)
- Third prize - £20.00 - John Thompson & Sandra Green (Subscription number 101)
- Fourth prize - £10.00 - Mrs P Osborne (Subscription number 197)

The **December** 2025 200+ Club Draw took place at the White Hart Pub on the 18th December. The winning numbers were drawn by Anthony Garrett:

- First prize - £80.00 - Mark Harris (Subscription number 212)
- Second prize - £40.00 - Mr and Mrs D Rogers (Subscription number 112)
- Third prize - £20.00 - Mr L Warren (Subscription number 229)
- Fourth prize - £10.00 - Peter and Carole Loftus (Subscription number 350)

In addition, special Christmas prizes were awarded as follows -

- £78 - Rebecca McIlhiney (Subscription number 259)
- £70 - Mr and Mrs B Topliffe (Subscription number 11)
- £70 - Mrs CM Sharpe (Subscription number 16)
- £70 - Pat Davis (Subscription number 147)



Flag flying in February

4th Sri Lanka. **6th** New Zealand. **7th** Grenada. **18th** The Gambia. **22nd** St Lucia. **23rd** Brunei Darussalam

Flore Parish Council News

Here's a snapshot of what your Parish Council has been discussing recently, along with ways you can get involved.

New West Northamptonshire Local Plan – Consultation Now Open

West Northamptonshire Council's (WNC) Local Plan is a strategy which allows plans for the future of West Northamptonshire to be developed positively and sustainably by guiding decisions on future development proposals and creating places where people wish to live, work and visit.

The draft Plan sets out a vision and objectives for the area, its ambitions for new development (47,000 new homes across the area, from 2027) and commitment to dealing with climate change. The Plan allocates land for housing and employment and contains a series of planning policies for these and many other topics such as leisure, transport, health and wellbeing, infrastructure and the environment, and where development can and cannot take place.

Once adopted the new Plan will replace current plans that cover West Northamptonshire and form part of the development plan against which planning decisions are made.

The Parish Council noted the WNC proposed housing allocation for Flore which is 64 houses allocated in the new Local Plan; and the proposed amended Village Confines boundary which has changed slightly.

Pot Holes and Parking

Stuart Andrew MP - Member of Parliament for the Daventry Constituency, wants to share details of his online survey, which he has launched to gather residents' views on potholes and road safety across our area.

Residents are advised to report individual potholes through the council's FixMyStreet system, and this should of course continue. However, many people have found this system very cumbersome, which is why this wider survey is important in highlighting the scale and impact of the problem.

The survey is available online: www.stuartandrew.org.uk/news/potholes

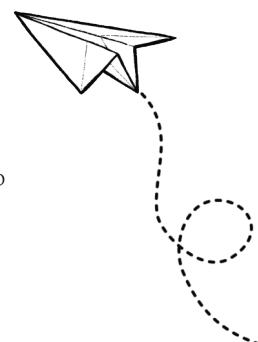
Stuart Andrew MP also has a 'Keep Daventry Parking Free' petition. The more signatures it receives, the stronger the local voice when it is submitted to the Full West Northamptonshire Council meeting in February:

www.stuartandrew.org.uk/webform/keep_parking_free_in_daventry

WNC Consultations

All current consultations can be found on the WNC website:
<https://westnorthants.citizenspace.com>

These consultations provide an important opportunity for local people to comment on priorities and spending proposals that affect local services.



WNC Local Transport Plan

The Local Transport Plan (LTP), which was approved by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) in March 2025, sets out West Northamptonshire's transport priorities for the next five years and long-term strategy for maintaining and improving all aspects of local transport up to 2045.

The LTP identified the production of a series of supporting strategies and action plans over the next five years.

The following strategies and action plans will be developed:

- Active Travel Strategy
- Northampton Transport Strategy and Parking Study
- Road Safety Strategy
- Freight Action Plan
- Rail Action Plan
- Mobility Hub Action Plan

The majority of people in their response to the consultation on the Local Transport Plan said that improving Active Travel, bringing together different modes to increase accessibility and transport choice, as well as enhancing rail was important.

WNC have used your comments, and worked with key stakeholders to develop a draft Active Travel Strategy, a draft Mobility Hub Action Plan and the draft Rail Action Plan. The final plans will be placed before Cabinet in Spring 2026 for consideration and approval.

Flooding & Drainage

Flooding remains a key concern for the village.

- A recent flood report highlighted problem areas along High Street and Sutton Street, with recommendations to improve drainage capacity.
- The Parish Council is also working with WNC to clarify responsibilities for a drain near Millennium Hall.
- Recommendations were discussed of the recently published S19 report which is available on the WNC website.
- Plans are underway to:
 - Develop a local emergency plan
 - Create a volunteer flood response group

Further updates will be shared as this work progresses.

Climate, Nature & Wildlife

The Parish Council continues to support climate and nature initiatives:

Work is underway to join a churchyard conservation scheme this spring, which will encourage wildflowers, insects, birds, and other wildlife, boosting local biodiversity.



As part of these efforts, residents are asked to be particularly vigilant for invasive species.

Three-cornered leek
(*Allium triquetrum*)



American Signal Crayfish



Invasive species are plants or animals that have been introduced outside their natural range, often through human activity. Because they did not evolve alongside local wildlife, they can spread rapidly and outcompete native species for space, food, and resources. Over time, this can damage habitats, reduce biodiversity, and disrupt natural ecosystems.

- Flore residents are asked to be vigilant for:
 - **Three-cornered leek** (an invasive plant species): This invasive plant spreads quickly, forming dense carpets that crowd out native wildflowers. While it may look attractive, it reduces the variety of plants available to insects and other wildlife, weakening the local food chain.
 - **American signal crayfish:** Recently spotted in the river, this invasive crayfish poses a serious threat to native crayfish species. It spreads disease, damages riverbanks through burrowing (increasing erosion and flood risk), and preys on fish eggs and aquatic insects, upsetting the balance of river ecosystems.
- If you notice either, please report sightings to Nigel Strang directly or via the Parish Clerk, so they can be monitored.

Rights of Way & Village Maintenance

- Rights of Way maintenance is now carried out by contractors on behalf of WNC.
- If you spot overgrown paths, damaged signage or access issues, please report them to Nigel Strang directly or via the Parish Clerk
- Leaf and gutter clearing has been requested in known problem areas, following resident reports.

Community News

- New skate ramp to be installed at Brodie Lodge Playing Field imminently
- International Women's Day – 7th March

International Women's Day is a global celebration of the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. It is also an opportunity to recognise the vital contributions women make to their communities.

To mark the occasion, WNC is inviting nominations for its “Gift to Gain” Award. This award recognises women who give their time, skills, and energy to support others, strengthen communities, or create positive change—often without seeking recognition.

Nominations are now open, and residents are encouraged to put forward women who inspire them through volunteering, leadership, mentoring, or community service.

Deadline for nominations: 8 February

How to apply: Via the WNC website

This is a valuable opportunity to celebrate and thank the women whose contributions make a real difference to everyday life.

Planning

The Parish Council considered seven planning applications, most of which were retrospective due to time constraints (2025/4897/FULL, 25/5069/FULL, 2025/5070/LBC)

The Council raised no objections to several applications where the proposals were considered acceptable, did not harm the street scene or conservation area, and were in line with the Neighbourhood Plan. These included replacement windows at Chapel Lane, garden buildings and driveway works on High Street, extensions on the High Street (2025/4250/FULL) in addition to replacement facias and guttering, (2025/5016/FULL.)

One application (2025/0067/FULL), for a single-storey side extension raised design concerns. While the Council did not object in principle, it felt the proposed flat-roofed utility did not reflect the character or design quality expected under the Neighbourhood Plan and suggested alternative roof detailing to better suit the existing property.

An additional application (2025/5264/FULL), was discussed. While the Council did not object in principle, concerns were raised about the lack of clarity in the submitted plans, particularly regarding boundaries and whether the work would remain genuinely subservient to the main dwelling. The Council stressed the importance of clear and unambiguous planning information.

Get Involved

A vacancy has opened up on the Parish Council, and this is a great chance to get involved in your local community. Becoming a parish councillor gives you a real say in local issues, from improving shared spaces to supporting community projects. It's a friendly and rewarding role where you can meet new people, share ideas, and help

make positive changes where you live. No previous experience is needed — just enthusiasm, a bit of time, and a genuine interest in the parish. If you care about your community and want to help it thrive, this could be for you.

If you might be interested, councillors would be very happy to have an informal chat — no pressure, just information. Please contact the clerk for more information.

Meeting Venue Change

The Parish Council would like to say a sincere thank you to the Chapel for hosting Parish Council meetings over the past few years but now it is time for a change of venue. **From February, Parish Council meetings will move to the Brodie Lodge Pavilion.**

Date of next meetings: 7.30pm on 10th February, 10th March, 14th April.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at the Millennium Hall on 21st April and will discuss a number of topics including AI.

Message from Flore CE Primary School

What a busy term we have had! The whole school came together for a delightful Christmas Presentation, where our talented pupils acted out the nativity story, bringing the festive spirit to life. It was heartwarming to see the children's enthusiasm and creativity shine through.

As part of the Angel Festival, each child created a beautiful angel that is now proudly displayed in All Saints Church. If you visit, do take a moment to admire their artwork hanging in the windows at the back of the church; it truly added a magical touch to the festive season. I was so proud of the children who sang at the launch of the Angel Festival.

We also participated in The Salvation Army toy appeal, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to our families for their generous contributions. The toys collected have been distributed to families in need over the Christmas period, making a real difference in our community.

In a lovely gesture, we invited the grandparents of our children into school for a cheeky mince pie and a cuppa. The children sang their nativity songs, filling the room with joy and laughter.

Our KS2 children had the incredible opportunity to join the Young Voices choir in Birmingham, performing alongside 7,000 other children. The evening production was a fabulous showcase of talent for parents to enjoy.

In Class 1, the children are learning a lively dance to "I Just Can't Wait to Be King" from The Lion King, while Class 2 is exploring the fascinating world of sound vibrations in science. Class 3 is delving into classification keys for vertebrates and invertebrates, and in English, they are engaging in discussions on the topic, "Should children clean up around the school?"

What a wonderful Christmas term filled with learning and community spirit! We are so excited at what this is going to bring.

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Transportation of Dogs, Cats and Small Animals to Vets/Groomers/Kennels & Catteries etc. All organised by Paw2Door - Cloverlea Cattery - 07881651061

Authorised by West Northants Council

Are you considering a heat pump installation ?

If your gas or oil boiler is due for replacement, this may be a good opportunity to change to a heat pump system.

Here are some points to consider;

- A complete system installed costs from £9,000 depending on property size, depending on the size of your house.
- The government grant is £7,500 per qualifying household.
- Heat pumps substantially reduce carbon emissions.
- With zero carbon electricity suppliers your home can become an A rated (EPC) Zero Carbon home.
- See if you are eligible at www.gov.uk/apply-boiler-upgrade-scheme

John Thomason
01327 340115
[email sales@atmos-i.co.uk](mailto:sales@atmos-i.co.uk)
Contact for a quote.



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New at Re! We're now serving delicious *iced lattes*, home-made *cinnamon buns*, *giant cookies* and other bakes. As well as the fresh *bread* and *pastries* that you already love we're adding more from our own kitchen. Updates will appear here!

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Further Info



Just 5 minutes from Flore. Opposite Heart of The Shires on the Norton Road. Locally sourced meat, veg, cheese and sweet treats prepared with care, and outstanding service.

Come and meet our team and see how we can help you.



Winter Discount 2025/2026

Book 3 days or more and receive one additional day free! Simply quote 'WinterWarmer' when making your booking. This offer is valid for bookings starting on or after 1st November 2025 and 31st March 2026. Please note that this offer excludes the following dates: 24th December 2025 - 2nd January 2026 and 13th February 2026 - 22nd February 2026



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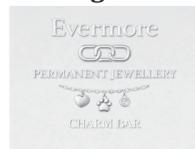
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Clubs & organisations

- Afternoon Tea** 4th Friday of each month, 2—4pm (doors open 1.45pm).
- Dance** Millennium Hall. Ballroom and Sequence. Entrance £5. Hosted by Jane and Alan Rouse (0781 328 3119).
- Art Classes** **Mondays** 2pm—4pm (afternoon class) and 7pm—9pm (evening class), Chapel Schoolroom. One-to-one advice from tutor during first hour. Contact Fiona (01327 341065) or Chris (07969 759105).
- Bible Groups** **Thursday Bible group** will meet on 19 February, 7-8 pm, venue TBA. We are continuing to look at events in the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
- Bible Discovery** will meet on 25th February, 2.30-3.30 at 3 Capell Rise. Join us for our new series exploring what we understand by the Kingdom of God.
- All are welcome at both or either. Please contact Wendy 07816 156876 for more details.
- Brodie Lodge** Contact Chair, Sue Kerrison, email: suekayy@live.co.uk.
- Playing Field (BPLF)** For all bookings, email: enquiries@brodieldodgeplayingfield.co.uk, mobile: 07786 843206.
- Coffee & Company** **Last Monday** of each month 10.30am. 31 Spring Lane. For anyone living alone.
- Flore Allotments** Embrace the joy of cultivating your own produce and become part of a thriving community by securing your own allotment today. Contact floreallotment.membership@gmail.com or message us on Facebook or Instagram.
- Flore Climate Group** This group meets on an ad-hoc basis for various climate and biodiversity-based activities. Please email Emmie Williamson (emmiew@live.co.uk) to be included in email updates.
- Flore Guiding Group** **Rainbows:** Tuesdays 5pm - 6pm at Flore Primary School. For girls aged between 4 and 7 years old (must have started school). Contact Sally Redfern: floeràinbows@gmail.com
- Brownies:** Tuesdays 6pm - 7.30pm at Flore Primary School. For girls aged between 7 and 10 years old. Contact Sally Redfern or Amy Jones: floeràbrownies@gmail.com
- Guides:** Tuesdays 7.30pm - 9pm at Flore Primary School. For girls aged between 10 and 14 years old. Contact Amy Jones: 1stfloreguides@gmail.com



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- Flore Scout Beavers:** Thursdays 6pm - 7pm at The Cabin, Kings Lane. Open to **Group** boys & girls aged 6yrs - 8yrs. Contact Hannah (07789 312142).
- Cubs:** Mondays 6pm - 7.30pm at The Cabin, Kings Lane. Open to boys & girls aged 8yrs - 10.5yrs. Contact Stacey (07887 982827).
- Scouts:** Wednesdays 6.30pm - 8.30pm at The Cabin, Kings Lane. Boys & girls aged 10.5yrs - 14yrs. Contact Ben (07889 321405).
- Flore Library** **2nd Wednesday** of each month, 10am—12pm. Millennium Hall. Worth a visit, take out on loan, or swap, no fines, just a friendly relaxed library.
- Lunch Club** **2nd Friday** of each month, 12.30pm. Chapel Schoolroom. Every one welcome.
- Garden Society** **2nd Wednesday** of each month, 7.45pm. Chapel Schoolroom. Next meeting 11th February: Susie Lickman - How to enjoy your houseplants
- Heritage Society** **1st Wednesday** of each month, 7.45pm. Chapel Schoolroom. Next meeting 4th February: Talk by Elisabeth Nye on Flore Village Pubs.
- Kerry School of Irish Dance** **Thursdays** 6-7pm. Millennium Hall. www.facebook.com/kerryschool. Contact Sam (sam@thekerryschool.co.uk).
- Physio-led Pilates** **Fridays** 10—11am. Millennium Hall, Flore. £8/session. Most abilities catered for. If you are interested in joining us or would like more information, please contact Katy Briggs via email (kjphysio@hotmail.com) or text/WhatsApp (07779 312181).
- Short Mat Bowls** **Tuesdays** 9.15am—12pm. Millennium Hall. New members warmly welcomed. Refreshments provided. For further information call Morris Freeman on 01327342607 or 07709082231.
- Table Tennis Club** **Thursdays** 1.30pm—2.30pm. Millennium Hall. £3.00 per week with no ongoing commitment. New players very welcome. Call Linda on 01327 563035 for further information.
- Tots, Tea, and Toast** **1st Tuesday** of each month, 10.00—11.30am. Chapel Schoolroom. Mums-to-be, parents, carers and grandparents are all welcome to enjoy free tea/coffee and talk whilst the children play, sing songs, and enjoy storytime. Call Hilary for information 07900 676006.
- Weedon Cancer Support group** **2nd and 4th Wednesday** of every month, 2.00—4.00pm. Chapter House at the rear of St Peter & St Paul Church, Weedon. For adults affected by any type of cancer, whether patient, relative, carer, or friend. Contact: Libby Hart csgweedon@btinternet.com
- W.I.** **2nd Tuesday** of each month, 7.30pm. Millennium Hall. Flore WI will be having a talk from Dennis East on 'Poetry to Make you Laugh & Think' on Tuesday 10th February. All ladies are very welcome. For further information please e-mail florewi56@gmail.com.



Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends.

The beginning of a new year is often a time of fresh starts and optimism, but this year feels different. Writing recently on the BBC News website, veteran war correspondent John Simpson said that 2025 was the most worrying year he's known. Less than a month in, 2026 has continued in that same, worrying vein. The world feels more precarious than it has for decades. What can we do in the face of all that is going on in the world?

In pondering this question recently, I was introduced to the idea of the 'long defeat', first coined by JRR Tolkien in *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien, a devout Roman Catholic, fought in the trenches of the First World War. The carnage and horror he witnessed changed him forever. Having seen the worst of humanity, his hope for the human race was demolished. Yet he didn't abandon hope all together. The 'long defeat' suggests that in the struggle against evil, the best efforts of humanity alone are doomed to failure, but good will still triumph in the end. Those who have read the *Lord of the Rings* will know that over the course of the trilogy, good prevails, even though each member of the fellowship is flawed and prone to failure. Even when Middle-earth's very best try to do right, things go wrong. But there is still a victory: the One Ring is destroyed.

Why fight the long defeat? Because the alternative—not fighting—is intolerable. Despair is a device of the Enemy. Furthermore, the 'long defeat' does not imply 'absolute defeat', only that all human attempts to bring peace, reconciliation and healing to a broken world are doomed to be incomplete or even failures. Even so, we should keep doing all we can because that's the right thing to do. And maybe, with God's help, our actions – small as they might be – will be glimpses of a final victory.

If we turn from Middle Earth to the Bible we find that the overarching story of God and his creation, of God and humanity, is a story that leads ultimately to victory. One that leads to a new heaven and a new earth, where there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. It is a story grounded in the belief in a divine purpose that cannot and will not be thwarted by the best laid schemes of humanity - which have an infuriating tendency to go wrong. Here, in this story is hope. This hope is not derived from the natural processes of the cosmos, which tend towards decline and failure. This hope depends not on processes but on a Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – with good and loving purposes for humanity, the world and the cosmos. This is what our Christian hope relies on - God is working his good purposes out through events big and small. What can we do in the face of all that is going on in the world? We can move into the new year with hope, looking forward with confidence, transforming the present, shaping the future, giving glimpses of the ultimate victory we know will come.

With my prayers and blessings for 2026.

Rev'd Stephen (07415 691541)

Church services in February

Flore Christian Partnership and the Anglican churches of Heyford, Stowe-Nine-Churches and Brockhall

Weekend services

Sunday 1 st	10:00am	Holy Communion at Church Stowe
	11:00am	United First Sunday Service at Flore Church
	6:00pm	Evening Prayer at Heyford
Sunday 8 th	10:00am	Benefice Communion Service at Church Stowe
	10:00am	Morning Worship at Flore Chapel (Rae Morrell)
Sunday 15 th	10:00am	Holy Communion at Heyford
	10:00am	Partnership Service at Flore Chapel (Hilary Crane)
	6:00pm	Holy Communion at Upper Stowe
Wednesday 18 th	7:30pm	Holy Communion (with Ashes) at Heyford Church
Sunday 22 nd	10:00am	Holy Communion at Flore
	10:00am	Family Service at Upper Stowe
	10:00am	Creative Spirit at Flore Chapel. A different, informal and interactive form of worship. It is a means of enabling us to look at the Christian story through art, offering opinions and thoughts or just listening. Refreshments provided. All welcome!
	4:00pm	Café Church at Nether Heyford

Mid-week services

Thursdays	10:00am	Holy Communion at Flore Church
	2:30pm	Flore Church open for private prayer (not 5 th Feb)
Fridays	9:00am	Morning Prayer via Zoom. All Welcome. Please let the Rector know if you'd like to join the service.

Praying for our villages in February

During February we shall be praying for people living in Hillside Rd and Hillside Crescent here in Heyford, Sutton St, Yew Tree Gardens and Sutton Acre in Flore, The Manor in Church Stowe and the Gate House and the Old Dairy in Brockhall.

General information & contacts

Flore Parish Council

Mrs Susan Halkett	Clerk	florepc@btinternet.com	01327 341057
Tom Higginson	Chair	tom.higginson@me.com	

Welcome Packs for newcomers

Newcomers moving in near you? Recently moved to Flore but have not received a welcome pack? Contact **Nigel Strang**: cornsayl@me.com, 07887 985845, or 27/29 Sutton St.

Defibrillator locations in Flore

One is positioned on the wall at Brodie Lodge Playing Field. The other is next to the door of the Millennium Hall on the High St. If someone has collapsed dial 999.

List of Flore Businesses and Services

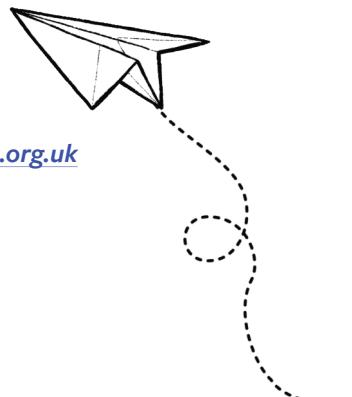
Find a list of business and services here: <https://tinyurl.com/FloreBusinessList>

If you have a business/service offering and live or work in Flore, please add it to the list by completing this very short survey: <https://tinyurl.com/FloreBusinessServiceSurvey>

Church contact details

Parish Church

Revd Stephen Burrow	Rector	07415 691541
Sue Raven	Churchwarden	01327 340183



United Reformed Church (Chapel) — www.floreurc.org.uk

Revd Jay Phelps	Minister	01327 340282
Lis Nye	Secretary	01327 342002
Daphne Chaplin	Elder	01327 340368
Wendy Pittman	Elder	01327 342302
Chris Littlewood	Elder	01327 340918
Hilary Crane	Elder	07900 676006

Information for the Messenger — 22nd of each month

Please send signed entries for the Messenger by the 22nd of each month to appear in the following month's publication, to **Andrea Gauthier** (email preferred):

Andrea Gauthier flore.messenger@gmail.com 07496 186633
(Editor) Barn Cottage, 34 Sutton Street

Adverts for the Messenger — 20th of each month

Please contact **Christine** to discuss paid advertising. Ad space is intended for Flore businesses or people in Flore who have a business of interest to Flore residents:

Christine Mackintosh chrismac100@btinternet.com