

The logo of Diss Town Council is a circular emblem. It features a central shield with a blue and white checkered pattern. Above the shield is a banner with the word 'DISS' in capital letters. Below the shield is another banner with the words 'TOWN COUNCIL' in capital letters. The entire emblem is surrounded by a decorative border.

# DISS Matters

Spring/Summer 2025

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# Welcome to the Spring/Summer Edition of Diss Matters

Longer days and warmer weather—finally!

This edition is filled with local events, community group updates, and exciting projects.

This May, we're marking the 80th Anniversary of VE Day with a special event, followed by a fun-filled family day out at Diss Carnival in June. There's loads to enjoy at The Corn Hall, and if you're feeling creative, check out the amazing talents at Designermakers21 or get crafty at No.8 Marketplace. Diss High School has been celebrating some fantastic sporting achievements at their recent PE Awards Night, and Diss Library has been keeping families entertained with lots of events too. Don't forget to stay in the loop with the latest Council News and Police Updates!

Want to get involved? There are plenty of local groups making a real difference in Diss, from the Litterpicking Group and Quaker Wood volunteers to Diss WI, Diss U3A, and the Dementia Support Group at United Reformed Church. Plus, keep an eye out for the brand-new 'Visit Diss' website, your go-to-guide for exploring all the lovely things our town has to enjoy!

Have an amazing summer!

*Kim*

**Kimberley**



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# Council news



## New councillor joins DTC

A huge welcome to Catherine Dente, who was co-opted to Diss Town Council at the March Full Council meeting. Catherine has over two decades of experience in the property sector and has recently set up an estate agency business with her husband in the town centre. She has lived close to Diss for most of her life and is actively involved in the local community.

Their business supports local charities, Diss High School's breakfast club & free fruit initiative and The Shelf at Citizens Advice. She decided to apply to be a Town Councillor as she thinks Diss is a wonderful town, is keen to take a role in its future and now has the time to give back to her community.

## DYCC

Councillors received a presentation from FMG Consulting Ltd regarding their findings from the recent survey and stakeholder engagement on the Diss Youth & Community Centre in March. Thank you to the 331

residents who completed the survey. One-third live outside Diss so although this represents just over 2% of the population, which is too low to be statistically significant, the survey was intended to gauge initial public opinion and not provide any immediate answers.

There was broadly a lot of support for further exploring a new roof or building on the same site with access being the primary concern for the Sports Ground site. A key issue is affordability as very few are prepared to pay substantially more Council Tax to contribute to the considerable costs of any option and there is sensitivity to hire charges.

Critical to next steps are South Norfolk District Council's decisions around the John Grose site development to avoid duplication. Monthly meetings are scheduled with the relevant District Officer to maximise engagement and maintain strong relations. Further work will include liaising with the District Council on capital planning and



spending thresholds, assessing demand, developing a business case including options appraisal and financial analysis, and seeking external grants given the considerable investment required.

Diss Town Council will continue to engage with residents as the project progresses and encourages the public to respond to any future consultations to help guide decision-making and ensure we get the best outcomes for Diss taxpayers.

### Improving biodiversity

We've stripped out the weeds, laid matting and introduced new greenery along the Lowes leading to the river Waveney to improve biodiversity and create a more vibrant, natural environment for everyone to enjoy. The old hedge at Rectory Meadow has been removed and a new green fence with two gates has been installed with a new planting scheme scheduled for the Autumn. Four new native trees will be planted to create seasonal interest and a source of pollen and berries for wildlife, interspersed with new easy-to-manage 2-metre length hedges to achieve the highest net biodiversity gain.

At the Assets, Infrastructure & Events meeting in July, members will consider a low-cost proposal to improve the appearance and biodiversity of the Park through a winter and spring flowering bulb display along Park Road in between the established trees. These projects are all in support of our recently adopted Biodiversity policy and to improve the green corridor network around the town. Thank you to George Waterman

for his help in delivering these projects for Diss.



### Have your say!

Following a series of successful community engagement events in the Autumn and now



the warmer weather is here, we are inviting residents to join us on the Market Place on Friday mornings to talk to us about our current projects and plans for the future. The dates of forthcoming events will be posted on our social media platforms, and we look forward to hearing your thoughts.

**Sarah Villafuerte-Richards**  
*Town Clerk, Diss Town Council*

# Diss High School PE Awards Night: Celebrating Sporting Excellence



The idea arose from discussions with SLT (Senior Leadership Team) - in the past we held a Sports Dinner at the end of Year 11. We wanted to celebrate the successes and efforts of our pupils who are so passionate about their PE and sport. With two new members of staff joining the team in 2023 we have seen a resurgence in rugby and cricket with pupils fully engaged with their learning and development in a wide range of activities such as Trampolining, Boxercise and Dance.

There were 54 awards including Outstanding performers in the major sports, Most Improved Performers and Outstanding Contribution to PE. Alongside these we had awards for Team and Team Mate of the Year (elected by the pupils), Rising and Future Stars and Sports Personalities of the Year. The Department are very proud of all of our Award Winners and hope they continue to commit to their sport. We would also like to recognise all our pupils who did not get awards but

continue to work so well in lessons, dedicate their own time to training and represent the school so well.

We were fortunate to have ex-student Emily Pursehouse return to give an insight into her journey through school sport to National Representation for Team GB weightlifting and European Qualification for CrossFit Games to Gym Owner. It allowed our pupils to recognise the wide range of opportunities out there if they keep chasing their dreams.

I have been Head of PE for 21 years and this was one of the highlights of a wonderful time at the school. We must mention the great entertainment from our Year 11 musicians and Mrs Collier (Head of Music) who insured an upbeat evening and our very generous sponsors Turrell Cleaning Services, Amanda Moss at Renvale, CW Logistics Ltd, Stefan Dente at Hus Estates and Spire Solicitors.

**Mr James Kemp, Head of PE, Diss High School**



# Celebrating Volunteers and Lifelong Learning with U3A Diss


For the last 40 years Volunteers Week (2nd to 8th June 2025) has been celebrated across the U.K. It is the opportunity to recognise and thank all the volunteers who give their time and energy. U3A Diss is a great example of a volunteer lead organisation and the difference volunteering does for your community and the people in it.

U3A Diss's motto - Learn, Laugh, Live - sums up perfectly this vibrant self-help, self-managed society. Put quite simply, without volunteers this group (and many like it) would not exist. Every volunteer counts whether helping at the monthly meeting with a talk, being part of the 'back-office' planning, supporting and organising or one of the 27 leaders who lead the groups.

If you are interested in coming to see what U3A is all about, why not come to the monthly meeting (first Thursday in the month, 9.45 am with refreshments followed by the speaker at 10.30 am)? You will have the opportunity to meet and chat with a


whole host of different members who have joined one or multiple groups. More information at [www.diss.u3asite.uk/events/](http://www.diss.u3asite.uk/events/)

The opportunity for lifelong learning is good both mentally and physically for everyone and U3A always welcome new members. The group you could join could be crime fiction, dance use it or lose it, a variety of history groups, mah-jong, petanque, crafts to writers' groups. Whatever your interest is, you may well find it at U3A Diss. For a full list [www.diss.u3asite.org.uk](http://www.diss.u3asite.org.uk)



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## Discover Creativity at Designermakers21: A Hub for Art, Craft, and Community in Diss

Designermakers21, home of DesignermakersCIO, is perched at the top of the Heritage Triangle in Diss, opposite the Corn Hall. A vibrant collective of artist's studios across two floors, there is always something new to discover.

Open to the public every Thursday to Saturday, visitors can chat to resident makers in their studios to find out about their diverse processes, which include weaving, mosaic, printmaking, ceramics, metalwork, textiles, and mixed media. The ground floor galleries display a fantastic variety of high-quality Art & Craft for sale, while the upstairs gallery has a rolling programme of events including exhibitions, workshops, and temporary studios.

It has been a busy couple of years for designermakers21, and our Charity DesignermakersCIO, with successful fundraising campaigns to secure the purchase of 21 St Nicholas Street in early 2024, and complete essential building

improvements. We were overwhelmed by the support received, both from major grant donors and the local and wider community.

Now, onto the future! While fundraising continues for building developments to improve accessibility for all, 2025 is already shaping up to be a year full of fantastic events. We have two Craft Fairs lined up, an exhibition by Diss High School students and two shows by local artists. Our Summer Expo and winter Saori Weaving exhibitions will return once again. New for this year is an exciting Workshop Programme with opportunities to get creative and learn something new. Keep an eye out for our ever-popular 'Have a Go' days, full of activities to try with our members.

To find out more, visit [designermakers21.co.uk](https://designermakers21.co.uk) and follow us on social media. Visit us Thursday to Saturday 10am-5pm at 21 St Nicholas Street, Diss.



# Quaker Wood – A place for Nature, and for People

Quaker Wood continues to develop and grow, with it now nearly 15 years since the first saplings were planted. Many of those first saplings are now part of a tall and dense canopy, a mixture of birch and oak, ash and hazel, among many other species. The impressive growth of these trees has created the need for a new project for our volunteers to undertake.

Starting at our February work party, our volunteers have been thinning the canopy of the woodland near the site entrance. This is being done to allow light to reach the woodland floor, in order to give shrubs and undergrowth a chance to establish and spread, creating valuable habitat for a wide variety of birds, mammals and insects.

The team are also working to enhance our wildflower meadow, located at the centre of the wood. In winter we cut a strip of the meadow as low as our mower would allow, then rotavated the strip to turn the soil. We are observing the strip this season to see if our work has unearthed any dormant wildflower seeds or encouraged some new species to appear. If we are successful, then next year we'll repeat the process in another strip!

We always welcome new volunteers to join our work parties, which meet at the wood on the first Saturday of every month, from 9:30am for a few hours. We are also keen to encourage people who may be interested in joining our Steering Group, to help us find ways to manage and improve Quaker Wood, and ensure that it remains what it was intended to be all those years ago, a place for nature and for people.



Please find us on Facebook (Quaker Wood) or contact us via our email ([quakerwooddiss@gmail.com](mailto:quakerwooddiss@gmail.com)) if you would like to learn more.



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# Diss & District Royal British Legion Honoured with Prestigious Award



Photo: Diss Express

The Diss and District Royal British Legion (RBL) Branch has been recognised for its outstanding progress and efficiency, receiving the esteemed Addison-Williamson Award at the Royal British Legion Norfolk County Conference, held at Norfolk County Hall on 1st February 2025.

This award acknowledges the Branch's dedicated efforts in strengthening community ties and promoting remembrance. Key to their success has been collaboration with Diss Town Council, use of multimedia platforms - including a dedicated website, Facebook page, and community forums - as well as regular engagement with local newspapers and radio stations.

A highlight of their activities in 2024 was the Diss Remembrance Drumhead Service, held in partnership with the Diss Salvation Army. This moving event blended tradition with accessibility, ensuring the public could fully participate. Young members from local schools and cadet forces played a poignant role, reading aloud the names from the Diss War Memorial, before the Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church.

The Branch also played a vital role in town events, supporting the Diss Carnival and leading the town's Armed Forces Day celebrations - the latter in partnership with the Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA) and local Army and Air Cadets.

Representing the Branch at the awards ceremony were Mary Cotton (joint Diss Citizen of the Year 2024) and Robert J Rogers, Branch Secretary, who proudly accepted the framed certificate, signed by the County Chairman and County President, on behalf of the entire team.

Adding to this achievement, the Branch will be featured in a full-page spread in the next edition of the Royal British Legion magazine, reaching over 200,000 members worldwide.

This well-earned recognition highlights the dedication and commitment of the Diss and District RBL, ensuring the legacy of remembrance remains strong within the community.

**Robert J Rogers**  
**Branch Secretary, Diss & District Royal British Legion**



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- Choose between the usual 3.5 mile route and the 1.5 mile Beacon Trail
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# Girl Guiding Update

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers and Leaders from Diss District joined together for a sleepover to celebrate World Thinking Day on 22nd February, which is the day every year when members of Guiding all over the world celebrate being part of a worldwide movement. 21,000 members all over the Girlguiding Anglia region took part in 100s of sleepovers as part of the Girlguiding Anglia Pyjamas Party event, and they all renewed their promise together over a virtual video link. The theme was around the world and girls did activities from Japan, South Africa, Sweden and Australia as well as enjoying a silent disco from Let's Dance Norwich.

1st Diss Brownies and 2nd Diss Guides started the term doing a "Faith Trust and Pixie Dust" badge, with activities around friendship and teamwork with a little bit of fairy dust sparkle.

Guides and Brownies have also been doing first aid badges learning important lifesaving skills including CPR, dealing with cuts and wounds, choking and how to use EpiPens, all whilst having fun.

Guides were given a food budgeting challenge to produce a main course and a dessert including at least one fruit and vegetable on a budget of £2.50. Girls had fun going around Aldi trying to get the most for their money and soon realised that fruits like strawberries didn't fall within budget. The next week was spent cooking up their culinary delights with some excellent creative results.

Rainbows have been doing a cake challenge including making bird cakes.

All units enjoyed the chaos of mass pancake making and eating.



Lots is planned for next term, including Eaton Vale activity day, camps, litter picking and outdoor cooking.

If your daughter is interested in joining any of our units or you would like to volunteer, please register your interest at

[www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/)

Thanks

**Helen Bowman**

**1st Diss Brownies and 2nd Diss Guides**

# Diss Library: Books, Events and Community Spirit!

Diss Library had a busy start to 2025! We've welcomed lots of new library users and have had a number of fantastic book displays to help our customers find their next great read.

The library book group celebrated its 3rd anniversary at the end of February with a visit from local author Stacey Whatling, followed by a chance to review the groups latest read over birthday cake. The group meets on the last Monday of the month at 1:30pm.

For the under 5s Bounce and Rhyme time remains a busy, fun session on a Monday morning at 11:00 and Story Time on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 1pm, often with a chance to get crafting afterwards.

February also saw the library take part in Digifest, an annual celebration of digital creativity in Norfolk libraries. Diss library hosted Botley the Robot and children were able to code and help Botley negotiate planets and capture the space aliens.

The Household Support fund means the library has continued to provide its warm



and well offer, with hot water bottles, draught excluders and blankets offered over the winter months alongside sanitary products and toiletries, available all year round. Warm drinks are available during staffed hours and our Just a Cuppa sessions on Friday mornings continue to grow in popularity for anyone who would like to pop in for a friendly chat.

As we move into Spring, a new silent reading group for young people aged between 9 and 14 is starting up. Running on a Thursday from 4pm – 5pm you can read a book of your choice for a period of time and a chance, if you wish, to have a chat about the books over a warm drink. Please enquire in branch for more details.

For up-to-date news and information on what Diss Library has to offer, follow us on Facebook or pop into branch for a chat with staff.



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# 10 years of Dementia Support at Diss United Reformed Church



Diss United Reformed Church runs several community groups, but this year marks the 10th anniversary of our popular Dove Dementia Cafe. We first opened our Dove Dementia doors in January 2015 to just one person with dementia. But over the years we have grown in size and now regularly seat between 50 and 60 people for lunch. We celebrated our 10th anniversary at our February Dove Dementia Cafe and a good time was had by all!

Our cafe is held on the first Wednesday of every month from 10am-1pm, it's specifically for people living with dementia and their carers and it is free of charge. Our first hour is always spent together with hot drinks and cake. At this time, games such as dominoes are available, as are jigsaw puzzles and a quiz, but this is also a time for catching up with friends. During the second hour, there is a support group for the carers in a

separate room should they wish to go to it. Everyone else takes part in an activity, with our members with dementia being supported by our wonderful volunteers. We have different activities each month which vary from art, poetry, music and exercise, to having outside entertainers visiting. Then we all come back together for the final hour for a light lunch.

If you have, or are caring for someone with dementia, and would like to join us please come along; we would love to welcome you. You may also like to join us for Dove Song from 1.30pm-3pm on the third Monday of each month. This is a free music therapy session for people with dementia.

Please contact Ruth Bridges, our Community Worker, on 01379 309062 or at [rthbridges@gmail.com](mailto:rthbridges@gmail.com) for more details.

# Diss Carnival 2025: Around Our World!

**Pack Your Bags, Grab Your Passports—Diss Carnival is Going Global!**



Mark your calendars for Sunday, 8th June, because the Diss Carnival Parade & Fun Day is back! This year's theme, "Around Our World", celebrates global cultures from vibrant parades to iconic landmarks. Whether you choose to dress as a flamenco dancer from Spain, a mountaineer from the Himalayas, or a samba star from Brazil, we can't wait to see how you bring this theme to life!

## Join the Parade!

The fun begins at 12:30 pm as the Carnival Parade sets off from Diss High School. The parade will wind through the town via Walcot Road, Mount Street, Market Place, Mere Street and Park Road, before reaching Diss Park. The parade is open to all - individuals, families, schools, community groups and businesses are all welcome! Whether you want to walk, dance, or ride on a float, participation is free! Sign up at [www.diss.gov.uk/diss-carnival](http://www.diss.gov.uk/diss-carnival) to join the fun.

## A Free Fun Day for All!

From 1:30 pm, Diss Park will come alive with 45+ stalls, free activities, and entertainment for all ages. Taste delicious food from around the world, shop with local crafters, enjoy free activities led by the Kinetic Adventure Team or have a go at Foolhardy's free circus skills workshop by the Mere. You can also enjoy rides and amusements at Larry Gray's Funfair and snap a picture in the themed photobooth horsebox.



## Themed Performances to Keep the Energy High

We've got an amazing line-up of themed performances in the main arena and park pavilion to keep the energy buzzing throughout the afternoon. Hosted by Paul Preston Mills, the main arena will feature exciting performances including Chinese lion dance, Brazilian and Caribbean dances, Dan The Hat's Silly Stupid Stunt Show, Tribe All Fitness and more. Over in the pavilion, hosted by Park Radio, see performances from Voice Squad, Bollywood Sparkles, Sakari Männistö, Ebony & Gold Saxophone Quartet and more.

# Fun Dog Show

4 Paws Dog Training will be hosting the Fun Dog Show this year! Bring your four-legged friends along to take part in the arena. There's a chance for every dog to shine! A registration table will be alongside the arena for those wanting to enter their pooches!

Services, Minors & Brady and Priory Healthcare. Your support makes a real difference – Thank You!

# Stay Updated!

For the latest updates, follow us on Facebook (@DissCarnival) and visit [www.diss.gov.uk/diss-carnival](http://www.diss.gov.uk/diss-carnival)



# Walkabout Acts & More

Be sure to check out our walkabout acts and grab a selfie with performers in their amazing costumes. There's no shortage of entertainment and photo ops throughout the day! Look out for the living statue Tutankhamun, Storm In A Teacup Bubble Artist, Circus Skills Workshop and science experiments with Kinetic Adventure.

Keep an eye out for the official Diss Carnival Programme in your letterboxes this May! It's going to be a fantastic celebration of global culture–don't miss it! We can't wait!

# Thank You to Our Sponsors!

We want to say a huge thanks to our generous sponsors this year: Pearce & Kemp, Larter & Ford, Beckford & Lewis, Phoenix Events East, Reads Property, Baileys Fish & Chips, Kings & Co Lettings, Lexham Insurance, Dipple and Conway, Adkins Opticians, Susan Whymark Funeral







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## New to the area? Feeling lonely? Time on your hands?

Whatever the reason, you will be made welcome at Diss WI.

We meet every second Tuesday of the month at 7pm with a variety of speakers and activities to entertain you. These include competitions, raffles and bring-and-buy. There are associated clubs which include lunch in different place every month, a walking group and outings to various locations near and far.

Although a registered charity, Diss WI raises money for other charities and to purchase items for the town. For instance, we donated a seat at Mere's Mouth, made gifts to the local Health Centre and Diss Museum and will be soon thinking about our next contribution.

Find us at Montgomerie Hall, Park Road.

# Make Music, Make Friends, Create Memories with SNSB! 🎵

Do you have a passion for music, a love for performing, and the drive to be part of a vibrant collective based in Diss? **The South Norfolk Symphonic Band (SNSB)** is calling you to join us!

**No audition required** – just bring your enthusiasm and let your love for music shine! We are a welcoming community of over 50 musicians of all ages and experience levels. Whether you're picking up an instrument for the first time, returning after a break or already a skilled player, there's a place waiting for you at SNSB!

At SNSB, music is just the beginning:

- **Connect through Music:** Make lifelong friends as part of our supportive and passionate group.
- **Share Your Talent:** Perform for audiences across the UK and beyond – we've even played at the iconic **Royal Albert Hall** and toured Europe and Malaysia!
- **Be Recognised:** Celebrate with us the honour of receiving the **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**.

Worried about not having an instrument?

We may have you covered! We have a selection of instruments available for members to borrow. Just let us know your needs, and we'll help you get started.

**Rehearsals:** Every Tuesday evening in **The Ballroom@No.8 Marketplace**, right in the heart of Diss.

Want to hear us in action first? Come along to a rehearsal or catch us at one of our upcoming performances:

- **Summer Bandstand Concerts** – June 1, July 6, August 3, September 7 (Diss Park)
- **Christmas Concert** – December 21, 2025 (Roydon Village Hall)

All this for a tiny membership fee of just £1 per week, helping to support our independent, concert-funded activities.

**Contact Frankie Turner for more details:**

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Proudly Run by the Diss Heritage Trust: As part of the "Celebrating the Heart of our Town" initiative, No.8 is fuelled by the passion and dedication of local volunteers, creating a space that truly belongs to Diss.

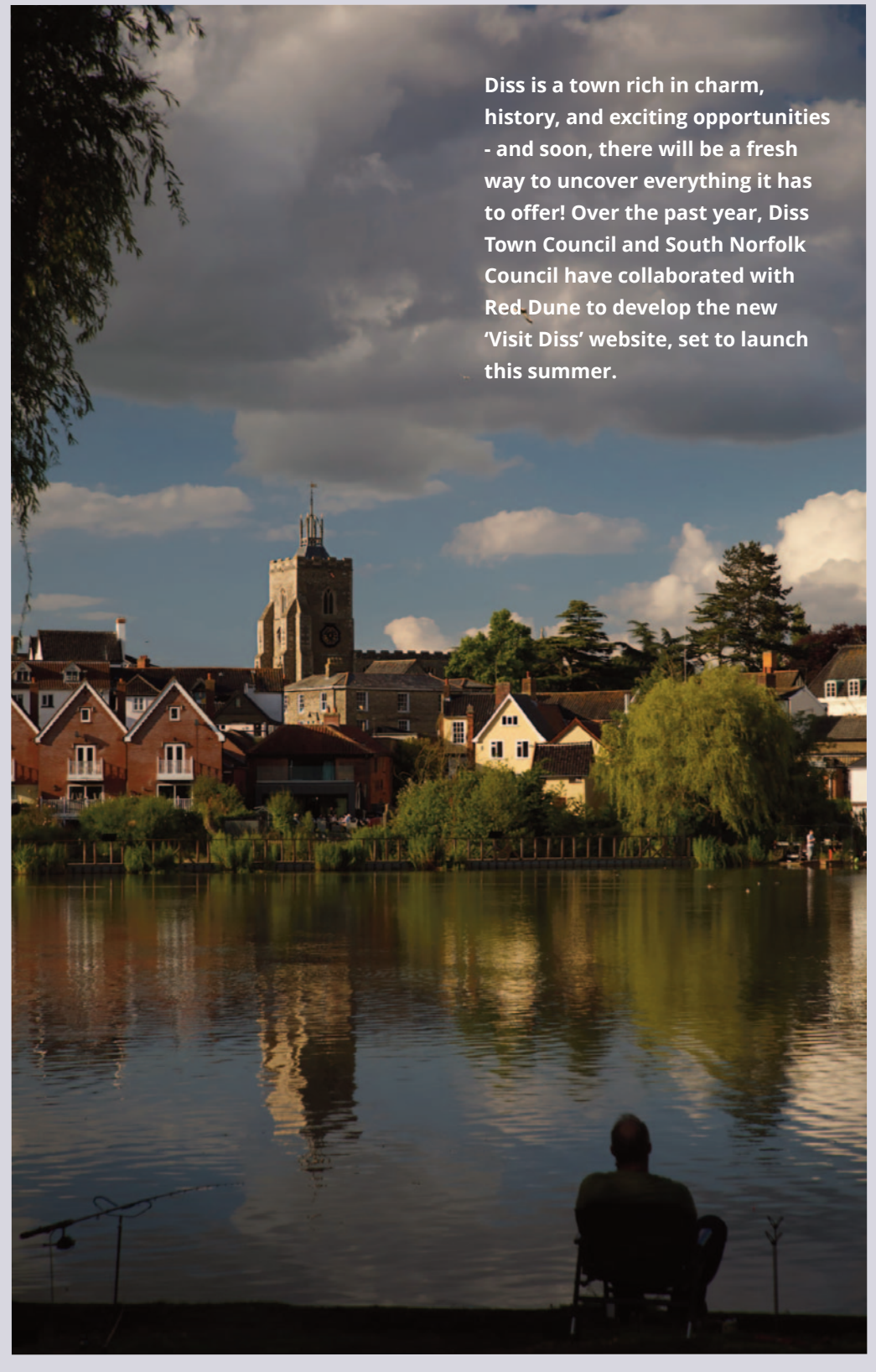
Visit No.8 Marketplace Today: There's nothing like it in Norfolk, Suffolk, or perhaps even the UK! Come and see for yourself, and while you're at it, take in all the independent shops, cafes and restaurants that Diss has to offer.

**No.8 Marketplace, Diss IP22 4AB**

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**e: [marketplacediss@gmail.com](mailto:marketplacediss@gmail.com)**

**Open 10am-4pm, Tuesday to Saturday**



Diss is a town rich in charm, history, and exciting opportunities - and soon, there will be a fresh way to uncover everything it has to offer! Over the past year, Diss Town Council and South Norfolk Council have collaborated with Red Dune to develop the new 'Visit Diss' website, set to launch this summer.

# New 'Visit Diss' Website Coming Soon!

This upcoming online resource will serve as the ultimate guide to Diss, showcasing its vibrant events, fascinating landmarks, unique independent shops, cafés, leisure activities, accommodation, and much more. Whether you're a resident or a visitor, Visit Diss will help you discover everything that makes our market town special – from its medieval yards and the impressive Corn Hall to peaceful nature reserves and historic sites.

## A Great Opportunity for Local Businesses & Attractions

Local businesses and attractions are at the heart of this initiative, and now is the perfect time to get involved! The website will feature a dedicated space where businesses can create an account and manage their own listings. This ensures every shop, café, restaurant, and service has an online presence, allowing them to update their details and connect with a wider audience.

If you run a business, attraction, or event in Diss, you'll have the chance to be featured on the site, helping to boost tourism and encourage visitors to explore all that our town has to offer. A comprehensive directory of accommodation will also be available, making it easier for visitors to find the perfect place to stay.

## Be Part of the Launch

To ensure the website is packed with useful information from the start, we encourage local businesses, community groups, and event organisers to start preparing their listings. If you'd like to feature your business or event, you'll soon be able to submit details at: [www.visitdiss.org.uk/add-listing/](http://www.visitdiss.org.uk/add-listing/)

## Stay Connected

Alongside the website, Visit Diss will have a dedicated Facebook page to keep everyone updated with upcoming events, local groups, leisure activities, shops and attractions – so don't forget to follow it when this goes live!



Graham Peers, Economic Development Officer for Tourism at South Norfolk Council, has been instrumental in this district-wide initiative. The Visit brand has already been established in towns like Harleston, Wymondham and Beccles, and Diss is set to be the next exciting addition. Town Clerk, Sarah Villafuerte-Richards shared her enthusiasm for the project: "I'm thrilled that we're getting closer to launching Visit Diss! This will be a fantastic resource, bringing together everything our wonderful town has to offer in one easy-to-use platform. Local businesses and community groups will benefit from free listings, ensuring visibility for all the brilliant events, clubs, and initiatives happening in Diss. A huge thank you to everyone working behind the scenes to help this website come together!"

We can't wait to share Visit Diss with you this summer! If you're a local business, attraction, or event organiser, now is the time to get involved and ensure you're part of this exciting new tourism initiative. Stay tuned for more updates as we get closer to launch!



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We are pleased to announce that we are offering, alongside our usual Bereavement Support Groups,



## **NEW ONLINE SUPPORT** *via the Zoom platform*

This complimentary 8 week course is open to all, no matter how long ago your bereavement or which Funeral Director has been used.

We are offering this online support to families in South Norfolk & North Suffolk. Open to all adults 18 and over.

With this in mind we shall be starting our next online group on  
**Thursday 1st May, 5.30-7.00pm**



On the Zoom platform all participants must have camera on and sound.

**To register your interest** please contact us (*see below*) to reserve your place.

Please allow time for your booking as there will be a registration form to be filled in prior to starting the course.

If you have any concerns about using the Zoom platform or have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

### **Contact**

Lucy Coote on **07753 299925** or email **lucy@rosedalefuneralhome.co.uk**

# Great Nights Out at The Corn Hall

The Corn Hall is a great night out and so much more, right in the heart of Diss, and everyone is welcome! Whether you enjoy live music, gripping drama, great movies, belly laughs or inspiring exhibitions you'll find something to entertain and delight you in our vibrant year-round programme of events. Our website is always the best place to find the very latest information about what's on, with new shows added all the time. Search by month or by genre to find and book your next visit.

Here are just a few of our highlights over the spring and summer...



Didn't get tickets for the Oasis reunion tour? Don't worry! We'll bring you the next best thing on Friday 2 May. Oasis, are one of the UK's most authentic tribute bands and will perform all Oasis' greatest hits - recreating the energy and swagger of the kings of the Britpop era.



Step into the world of Tease on Saturday 7 June - the ultimate burlesque and cabaret experience. The show combines cabaret,

circus and variety acts from across the UK to create an unforgettable evening and a true celebration of love, life and the power of self-expression.



Calling all Country Music Lovers, join us on Saturday 5 July for The Nashville Sounds Experience. Multi award-winning UK Country singer, Mark Hills and his band Wrecking Ball perform a blend of traditional, outlaw and new country music and your favourite country songs.

Local boy, Norfolk panto and Hippodrome circus legend, Ben Langley, brings his hilarious 5-star comedy



show to The Corn Hall on Saturday 30 August for one night only. Best known for his brilliant BGT appearance, come and enjoy a roller-coaster ride into the ridiculous - never to return!

**The Corn Hall**

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# Discover Your Roots with Diss Family History Group



Are you interested in uncovering your family's past? Whether you're an experienced genealogist or just starting, the Diss Family History Group offers a welcoming space to explore family, local, and social history.

We meet at 2pm on the third Wednesday of each month at Diss Bowls Club, Fair Green, which has a large free car park. Our group is part of the Federation of Family History Societies, and we invite anyone with an interest in history to join us.

Each meeting features expert speakers covering a wide range of topics, from tracing ancestry and historical records to local heritage and social history. If you're a beginner, we can offer limited assistance to help you get started on your journey.

We welcome both full members and visitors, with a £4 per meeting fee for guests, which includes refreshments. Our

sessions provide an excellent opportunity to learn, share knowledge, and connect with like-minded enthusiasts in a friendly and supportive environment. We look forward to welcoming you! For more details, visit our website: [www.tharston-past.info/DFHG](http://www.tharston-past.info/DFHG)

Or email Betty Morley at [b.morley@btinternet.com](mailto:b.morley@btinternet.com)

## Diss Youth Café - Spring 2025



Spring brings fresh energy, and at Diss Youth Café, we're excited to welcome new Year 6 members. We meet at the Salvation Army building in Sunnyside every Monday after school during term time. On sunny days, we enjoy the outdoors on the field.

Diss Youth Café is open to school years 6 -13. We offer various games like pool, table tennis, and a game console, plus a weekly craft activity and tuck shop. Our goal is to provide a safe, fun space where young people can make friends and build confidence.

We also run projects across all age groups,

including the St Benet's Multi-Academy Trust chaplaincy and More2Life lunchtime clubs in local schools, where we explore big questions from a Christian perspective. Our termly youth event, Encounter, and the annual Encounter Summer Camp at Sizewell are highlights.

Visit us Mondays, 3:30-5pm, or check out our website: [www.integrateyfc.org.uk](http://www.integrateyfc.org.uk)

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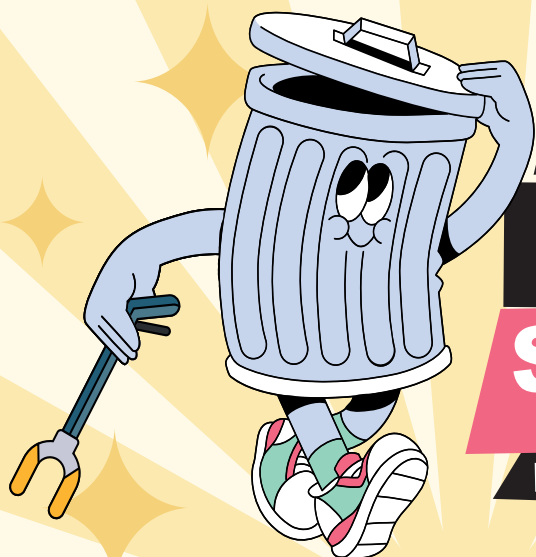


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# South Norfolk **COMMUNITY AWARDS** <sup>2025</sup>

## WHO'S YOUR SOUTH NORFOLK COMMUNITY HERO?

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# Blacker Bombard



If German tanks had approached Diss past Roydon School in WW2, they would have had a nasty shock.

The Home Guard had a formidable weapon called the Blacker Bombard to protect the town in the event of invasion.

The site has recently been identified and will be commemorated by an event on VE Day, with a plaque and the naming of a new street as Bombard Way.

Stewart Blacker was a career soldier who served in India, flew in WW1 (surviving five crashes), fought in the trenches and again in India.

He devised a machine gun that would shoot through the propeller of an aircraft. He was too old to fight in WW2 but invented various mortars - the Bombard, the Hedgehog, the Petard and the Piat.

He realised that the infantryman needed a hand-held weapon against tanks; but had his own battles in trying to convince Whitehall of this need.

In 1939, he said, the army had the best swords and lances but seemed to be prepared for the war before last, with a dire lack of modern weapons.

Luckily, Churchill was on his side and managed to provide the Home Guard with 22,000 Bombards. They were never used because the Germans never came.

There will be a presentation at 7pm in Denmark Lane on Thursday 8 May, with re-enactors, WW2 songs and a model Bombard. People are encouraged to come in 1940s costumes, with prizes for the best, before moving to the Park for the beacon ceremony (see p36 for VE event details).

The event is supported by Diss Museum, local re-enactors, Diss Community Woodland Project and Places for People.





## VE Day 80th Anniversary Events in Diss

On Thursday 8th May 2025, as the nation comes together to remember the millions who paid the ultimate sacrifice to secure the freedom we all enjoy today, Diss will mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day with two special events.

A parade of cadets and scouts around the Park will signal the start of the beacon lighting event at 8.30pm. Awaiting their arrival will be representatives of the Diss & District Royal British Legion branch, Royal Air Force Association, Salvation Army, Churches Together and special guests including the Deputy Lieutenant for Norfolk and King's representative. The VE-Day commemoration will include the Epitaph, a moving performance of the Last Post followed by a two-minute silence paying tribute to those who gave their lives during the war.

A poem will be read by Diss High School students before the reveille, raising of the standards and prayers. The beacon will then

be lit to signify the light that emerged from the darkness of war, whilst we all join in singing two hymns, 'I vow to thee my country' and 'Land of Hope & Glory' lead by Birgitta Kenyon and Ella-Rose O'Grady (Voice Squad), accompanied by our local Salvation Army brass band. The event will conclude with a special Tribute, Proclamation, and the National Anthem.

Shortly before this event at 7pm, you can see the unveiling of the Blacker Bombard. Find out more on p35.

Other events taking place in 2025 to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe include Armed Forces Day on Saturday 28th June (see more opposite), VJ Day 80 on 15th August, and as part of the Friendly Invasion Festival events programme, delivered by South Norfolk & Broadland Council across the District, an event in Diss on 6th September to honour more than 300,000 Americans who settled into airbases scattered across East Anglia.

# Armed Forces Day

Armed Forces Day will take place in Diss Town centre on Sat 28 June 2025, between 10am and 3pm.

In the 80th anniversary year of VE Day (Victory in Europe) and VJ Day (Victory in Japan), and our own Royal British Legion Branch Centenary we would like to make this an event to remember for serving personnel, veterans and the Diss and District community. This event is not intended to glorify war but to acknowledge the contributions that our grandparents and great grandparents made to provide us with a legacy of freedom.

The event celebrates the contribution made by service personnel, veterans, uniformed youth organisations, families and everyone involved in serving our community.

Do you know someone who could make a positive contribution?

- Military vehicle enthusiast
- Veteran/service charity
- Reenactor

- Singer/band/choir/dancers
- Service-related business
- Anyone who shares our vision for a collaborative fun and a family orientated event.

A special mention at this time for the Ampersand Brew co. who will be creating a one-off special brew for this event which will be on sale at their stand on the day.

We are hoping to offer visitors to the event a retail passport to receive a percentage discount or other benefit from local retailers. So, if you run or manage a local business, please let us know so we can add your offer.

We would love to speak with anyone who can support this event. Thank you. For further information you can contact us on Facebook, The Diss and district RBL web site or email: [neilradc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:neilradc@hotmail.co.uk)

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# Kingsley Home Care Team's 60 Minute Makeover Delights Doreen

The front garden that was once Doreen's pride and joy had become so overgrown she was ashamed to welcome visitors to her home.

But now thanks to the hard work of the Kingsley Home Care team, the lawn has been neatly cut and the flower beds dug and de-weeded.

Kingsley Home Care Services' Chief Operating Officer Georgina Johnston overheard the 79-year-old bemoaning the state of her garden when she dropped into their town centre office to book a care package.

She said: "Doreen can't manage the garden these days because she is too unsteady on her feet. She was having trouble finding someone to do it so I thought, 'we will do it for her as a nice surprise at no charge'.

"As a company we are proud of our family values and are always looking to go the extra mile for our clients."

The team, who work at 36F Mere Street, planned their own version of 60 Minute



Makeover calling on gardeners from sister company Kingsley Healthcare to help them.

Doreen, who receives weekly visits from home carers Nicole Astbury and Ryan Branch, who help with her shopping and household chores, said: "I was amazed by their generosity. What a kind thought. I have got a special name for them now – my Doreen's Angels."

When the team arrived on Friday 6th September 2024 to start work, they first surprised her with gifts of flowers and a flower-themed cake.

Their work is not finished yet as they plan to return to tackle the back garden too!





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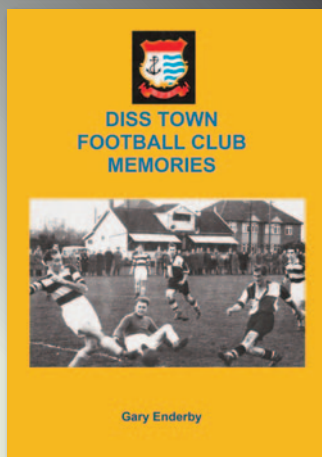
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# Diss Town Council Supports Local Organisations

Diss Town Council is committed to assisting voluntary and not-for-profit organisations working for the benefit of Diss residents. One of the ways this is done is through financial grants.

In the 2024-25 financial year, the full £10k grant pot was awarded to four local organisations. MTM Youth Services was awarded £2,500 to continue delivering projects to reach more young people and support those with more complex needs. Dove Song Plus was awarded £600 to support a singing group for adults with complex needs and their carers. The Diss Corn Hall Trust received £590 towards hosting a monthly Open Mic Night and My Period Ltd was awarded £1k towards providing free accessible period products and advance education. Park Radio Ltd is the recipient of £5,310 to deliver the Voices of Diss - A Community Storytelling & Oral History Project.

At the Annual Town Meeting on 30th April, residents will hear how this fund helped

Diss Town Football Club with their new floodlighting project. Steve Flatman, Chairman of DTFC said, "With the support of Diss Town Council and various other donations and grants, the Club was able to update its main pitch floodlights, which will benefit the Club and community for many years to come. As well as less light pollution, improved illumination of the playing surface and lower running costs due to a more energy-efficient LED system, our carbon footprint is greatly reduced."

The new grant fund for 2025-26 of £10k is now open. We're particularly interested in applications that support our town's distinction and heritage, partnership and synergy, and community and people. Applications received by 31st May will be considered in July for payment from September onwards.

To find out more about our grant scheme and apply, visit

[www.diss.gov.uk/community-grant-scheme](http://www.diss.gov.uk/community-grant-scheme)





# Diss Litterpicking - Our Team Needs You!



The Diss Litterpicking Group is now in its fourth year, and continuing to work hard to keep Diss a clean and tidy place to live! We meet on the second Saturday of every month, at 10am at the DYCC on Shelfanger Rd. From there we head out until midday to pick litter in various areas across town, often those suggested to us by local residents. At midday we bring all collected litter back to the DYCC for disposal before enjoying some well-earned drinks and refreshments!

Our team has made a massive difference to the cleanliness of Diss since we first began in 2021, but there is always more out there for us to tackle, therefore we always welcome new volunteers or supporters for our group! No signup or registration is required to join us, with people of any age or ability welcome, and all equipment needed to take part is provided!

We can also provide volunteering experience for young people completing their Duke of Edinburgh Award, having already helped several young residents gain the hours they need in order to pass the Award!

If you would like to support us in other ways, we always welcome suggestions of areas to visit when we meet, and donations of more equipment or sacks are greatly appreciated too!

If you are interested in learning more, or would like to suggest areas for us to pick, we can be found on Facebook (Diss Litterpicking Group), or we are able to be contacted via our email ([disslitterpicking@gmail.com](mailto:disslitterpicking@gmail.com)). A massive thank you to everyone who has supported us, here's to a successful 2025 and a clean and tidy Diss!



# Safer Neighbourhood Team

The safer neighbourhood team are currently concentrating on road safety, after public consultation in January. Over the past few months, the SNT have been conducting speed enforcement and traffic operations, as well as visiting schools and youth groups to give road safety presentations. We have also been working with partner agencies to address road safety concerns.

The team has spent time promoting a number of useful schemes including the Herbert protocol and Neighbourhood watch.

The Herbert protocol scheme helps support vulnerable people, aiding their independence and protecting them if they get lost or go missing. A form can be filled out containing their details such as contact numbers, medication needs, locations the vulnerable person likes to visit and an up-to-date photo. This form can then be sent or handed to the police if that person goes missing - it is used to save time when trying to locate them.

Neighbourhood Watch is about people getting together with their neighbours to take action to reduce crime. It works by

developing a close relationship between community members and the local police. Neighbourhood Watch schemes can:

- cut crime and the opportunities for crime
- help to reassure those who live in the area
- encourage neighbourliness and closer communities

Information on how to sign up to these schemes can be found on [www.norfolk.police.uk](http://www.norfolk.police.uk)

**Dates for your diary to meet the team.**

16th May 2025

9am - 10:30am – Hempnall, Mill Road junction with The Street (near the Village Sign)

11am – 12:30pm – Scole, The Street junction with Bungay Road

2pm – 3.30pm – Shelfanger, church Road junction with Rectory Road

Our next in person and online meeting is on Thursday 10th July 2025, 6-7.30pm, venue to be confirmed. Please check the Norfolk Constabulary website to obtain venue and online joining details.

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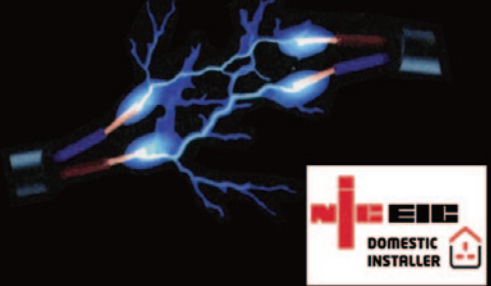


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