

Harbury Parish Council News Autumn 2021

Welcome to our latest round-up of parish council news.

Winter & Christmas Lights

We are building on the success of last year's display and have purchased more lights for this year. They will be switched on late afternoon on Saturday, 27 November 2021. Please look out for more information elsewhere in Harbury News and on our Facebook page.

Budget 2022/23

Our financial year runs from April to March. We begin our annual budgeting process in late autumn with the final budget being approved at the January council meeting. We look in detail at every line of expenditure and compare it to what we spent last year, how much we've spent to date and how much we think we will spend by the end of the year. We do the same with our income. We take into account any special projects we want to fund, and any unspent funds at the end of the current year or transfers to reserves. We then work out how much money we need to raise from council tax (the precept) and how much that will cost per elector and the percentage increase on last year. If there is something which you would like the council to consider spending money on next year, please contact us as soon as possible.



Cemetery

Repairs to the chapel have now been completed with the final touch being renovation of the doors which have been treated with preservative while the hinges have been painted and well lubricated. If you've ever tried to open the doors, you will appreciate what a difference this should make. The interior of the chapel has been completely cleared of all the rubbish which had accumulated over the years and shelving has been installed so that future storage can take place in an orderly fashion.

A new memorial safety policy has been adopted (available to read on our website, or a copy can be obtained from the parish council office). This sets out how inspections will be carried out and the processes to be followed for making memorials safe and contacting relatives etc. We are currently making plans for the memorial inspection which is due now and a formal notice will be displayed on the cemetery gates and village noticeboards in due course.



The number of available **burial plots** is becoming critical. Over the next few months, we will begin to use the last complete row of plots and when this is full, we will use the few extra spaces we created a few years ago along the edge of the burial ground at the rear of the houses in Park Lane. To ensure that we can continue to provide burial plots for as long as possible, the council has decided that it will no longer permit the purchase of a burial plot in advance, i.e., it will no longer be possible to reserve a plot. We hope people will understand the reasons for this.

We ask people not to use **glass vases/containers** for placing flowers on graves. They are easily broken and are a health and safety risk for all visitors to the cemetery, including our staff and contractors, especially the strimmers and mowers.

Playing Field Drainage

Drainage works are to be carried out at the far end of the playing field and should begin within the next few weeks. This area is often completely waterlogged for weeks at a time during the winter months, making the path impassable without wellies, and the football pitch unplayable. We are hoping this work will make a big improvement.

Village Tree Planting

Lots of people have contacted us about this. It's great to know so many people are interested and want to help. More information about this will be available soon.



No-idling Signs

In partnership with HEI, we have placed an order for some new “No-idling” signs which will be installed at various locations around the village but particularly outside the school and the shops where drivers tend to let their engines tick over while waiting to pick up their passengers. Please switch off your engines. This is a very simple thing that everyone can do to help the environment and people's health.

Overgrown Hedges

We've received several complaints recently about garden hedges which are spreading across the footpaths. If you have a hedge on your boundary, please go and take a look from the footpath side and consider whether it is causing an obstruction for pedestrians. Please think particularly about older or less mobile people, including people with prams or small children, and those with mobility aids. If people have to walk in single file to get round it, it probably needs cutting back. If people have to walk in the road to get past, it definitely needs cutting back! Your help with this is much appreciated.

Attending Council Meetings

We are pleased to welcome people back to our face to face council meetings. Anyone can come along and listen to the debate. There is also a short time set aside at the beginning of the meeting for members of the public to ask questions or raise concerns about anything on the agenda. We have recently published a protocol for members of the public who wish to attend so you know what to expect and how to make the most of your time in the public forum. This is available on our website or from the parish office. If you have something you

would like to raise with the council, please contact the clerk first who will advise you on the best way forward.

Councillor Vacancy

We currently have a casual vacancy for a parish councillor in the Harbury ward. The role of a parish councillor is diverse and interesting; no special qualifications are required as training will be provided but you will need access to email and the internet and you must be available to regularly attend council meetings on the 4th Thursday of the month. We welcome people from all backgrounds and of all ages from 18 yrs onwards. It doesn't matter if you are new to the village, or have lived here all your life, if you are keen to serve your community and willing to get involved, we would like to hear from you. Please contact the parish council office for more information.

Contacting the Parish Council

The office is usually open between 10.00am and 12 noon Monday to Thursday. Tel 01926 614646 or clerk@harbury-pc.gov.uk Casual callers are welcome, but if you are making a special trip, please phone first to make sure the parish clerk is available to see you, just in case she has another appointment or has had to go out somewhere.