

Harbury & Deppers Bridge

Annual Parish Meeting

2023



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Annual Parish Meeting
25 May 2023 at 7.30pm

Agenda

- 1 Welcome by Cllr Tim Lockley, Chairman of Harbury Parish Council.
- 2 Apologies.
- 3 Minutes of the annual parish meeting held on 12 May 2022.
- 4 Matters arising from the minutes.
- 5 Report from the chairman of Harbury Parish Council.
- 6 Reports from Harbury Parish Council working parties:
 - Planning
 - Environment
 - Properties
 - Finance & General Purposes
 - Climate
- 7 Reports from village organisations (if your organisation has not already provided a written report or you would like to add something further).
- 8 County & district councillors' reports & questions.
- 9 Any other business.
- 10 Close of meeting.

Minutes of Harbury Annual Parish Meeting
Thursday, 12 May 2022 at 7.30pm
Harbury Library

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Tim Lockley, Chairman of Harbury Parish Council.

Present

17 Electors of the parish (including 10 parish councillors)

In Attendance

Alison Biddle, Clerk to the Council

1 Welcome

Cllr Lockley welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

2 Apologies

Sharon Hancock, Richard Fowler, Southam SNT, District Cllr Harris

3 Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22 April 2021.

The minutes of the annual parish meeting held on Thursday, 22 April 2021 via Zoom were agreed as a true and complete record of that meeting and were duly signed by the chairman.

4 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5 Report from the chairman of Harbury Parish Council

A written report had been provided and was included in the booklet. We are gradually transitioning back to normal events in the village although Covid is still around and some people remain cautious. The chairman welcomed new councillors to the annual parish meeting. He highlighted the council's formal acknowledgement of the climate emergency and the fact that a new working party had been set up to address the issues arising.

6 Reports from Harbury Parish Council working parties.

Written reports had been provided by the chairs of the working parties and were included in the booklet for people to read. In addition, the following comments were made:

Planning

The last year has been quiet with no contentious applications. We still don't know what is happening locally regarding long term planning policy (now that the SDC and WDC merger is not going ahead) or nationally either. The current housing quota for this parish has been met but this could change between now and 2031 when the current local plan expires.

Environment

Cllr Rutherford is the new chairman on this group. There is more work to do on tree planting and they will also be looking at the condition of pavements and issues around streetlights.

Properties

One area for which this group is responsible is the cemetery and it has been very busy. A safety inspection of all the memorials has been completed just today. A lot of money has been spent on repairs to the chapel including a new roof and re-pointed stonework, and new storage racking has been installed creating better storage space which will be well used by various village organisations. The group is also responsible for carrying out regular inspections on the play area equipment. New safety surfacing was recently installed under the junior swings. The allotments also come under 'Properties', and this year has seen several changes in tenancies but all the plots are now let and the waiting list is greatly reduced. A well-being plot is under development which will benefit anyone who would like to spend time outdoors but is not able to look after a full plot or doesn't have a garden of their own.

A resident asked if it might be possible to use the chapel for civil weddings but it was explained that there are no mains utilities and most of the space is filled with storage.

Finance & General Purposes

Cllr Allen referred to the written report and had nothing to add but mentioned that the council was saving towards a new cemetery and skate park/BMX track facility.

Deppers Bridge

The speed of traffic and overweight vehicles crossing the rail bridge continue to be a problem. A residents group is campaigning for a 20mph speed limit. The council has recently installed a defibrillator in the old phone box.

Climate

We are very lucky in Harbury to have so many already established organisations working towards climate change mitigation. As the council has formally acknowledged the climate emergency, this will be taken into account in all council decisions. The group is running an eco-fair at the carnival to bring everyone together and showcase what the different organisations do and encourage people to get involved. The group already has a long list of ideas but they will be looking for guidance from the community.

A resident asked if climate considerations could be a formal part of the council's decision making. The chairman thought this might be overly bureaucratic and is already take into account for large scale housing developments.

Seasonal Lights

Once again, there were lots of volunteers helping to put up the lights, despite the really terrible weather, and it was another great year. The lights remained switched on until the end of February again. Most people seemed to like this and there were just a couple of negative comments. It was pointed out that all the lights are LEDs so they are very low energy. There is no intention to expand the display next year, just to maintain and replace lights as necessary.

7 Reports from Village Organisations

Various organisations had submitted written reports. Additional comments were made as follows:

All Saints Church

Progress is finally being made with Heat, Light & Stone Project and it is hoped that the new heating system will be installed before the winter.

Harbury Village Club

The past year has been a struggle financially but there are now young people on the committee with lots of new ideas.

Harbury Library

The library is celebrating its 10th anniversary as a community run library. Over 200 people have used the library and/or café this week. The committee is working hard to encourage people to come back and use the library again after Covid.

Harbury Twinning Association

The association has recently raised funds for UNICEF. There is no visit to France this year but there will be some French visitors over the Queen's Jubilee weekend.

Harbury Primary School - Pond

The chairman thought the renovations to the pond looked very good and asked if it was open to visitors as he would like to see it but no one knew the answer to this question.

8 County & District Councillors' Reports & Questions

The county and district councillors were not present.

9 Any Other Business

- Cllr Thornley asked if it might be worth starting Councillors' Corner again. This will be discussed at the parish council meeting.

10 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

Parish Council Chairman's Report

It has been a year of change on the parish council. Several members decided not to put themselves forward for re-election in the May 2023 elections, many after a long period on the council. I am very grateful for their service for so many years. Their departure, for a variety of reasons, is a significant loss, not only in terms of their experience and institutional knowledge, but also in the practical day-to-day running of the parish council. While we have a part-time clerk, who is absolutely at the heart of what the council does, the councillors are there to assist and help her in a variety of ways. It's often councillors who meet with contractors on site, or attend planning meetings with SDC and developers, and the seasonal lights display is entirely organised by a small group of councillors.

Instead of our normal ten councillors, only seven people stood again in May. We will try to fill those gaps by co-option since the more people who can share the council's work the better. Without additional councillors we will inevitably have to curtail some of our activities. This is not just a Harbury problem. All over the district, and probably all over the country, councils have trouble encouraging people to serve. We have always tried to ensure the parish council broadly reflects the demographic of the village, and that it didn't become dominated by one particular segment of the population. We have an excellent group of younger councillors, and only two of our seven councillors are retired. The significant gap is among those aged 55 to 75, partly reflecting, I suspect, that many people are retiring later than they did 20 years ago (late 60s rather than mid-50s).

Being a parish councillor can be so rewarding. We can help shape the village into a place which we all love, with thriving community groups, sporting clubs, and local businesses. But these things do not happen by magic, they happen because of the vision, dedication and commitment of those who serve as councillors. Every person who has served in the 20 years I have been a councillor has always had the best interests of the village at heart. Sometimes we disagree on the right course of action, but we always disagree agreeably, recognising that there are different but equally valid opinions about many things. I hope that anyone reading this might consider joining us so we can continue to serve the people of Harbury in the years to come.

I would like to thank all those who have been councillors in the last year, and especially the clerk, without whom we really would struggle to achieve anything!

Cllr Tim Lockley MBE
Chairman of Harbury Parish Council

Harbury Seasonal Lights

It has been a year of consolidation for the seasonal lights this year.

Work started in November with the team meeting to PAT test each light, extension lead and timer. This is an important piece of work to ensure our lights remain safe to use and resulted in a few broken lights being replaced.

We rely on the goodwill of homeowners and businesses to power the lights, and due to the economic crisis it felt timely to review the length of time they would be lit. A decision was taken to run them for 8 weeks, 26th November through to 21st January.

A sunny installation day arrived and our team of volunteers came armed with ladders, clippers and good cheer. The lights went up in record time and tea, coffee, bacon and sausage sandwiches were enjoyed by all. It's always an enjoyable day and so many people stopped to thank those installing. It's heartening to hear what a difference they make to the dark nights and we receive so many comments via Facebook, email and directly to the council. We are thankful for that, especially when the weather is less kind .



It felt like no time at all had passed when it was time to take them down again. The volunteers came out in force and the lights were checked and packed away safely ready for next year.

We could not do any of this without help and we would like to thank the following: our group of happy volunteers, the amazing 'Sad Dads', all of the homeowners and businesses powering the lights, the Shakespeare Inn for our refreshments, and Hiresafe for providing a cherry picker and operator to help us install the lights that the ladders won't reach.

Until next year!

Cllr Julie Balch
Seasonal Lights Working Party

Properties Working Party

Cemetery

This year the tired old privet hedge that was blocking the footpath has been removed and a smart new paling fence has been erected. This has made the entrance to cemetery much tidier and has opened up views of the chapel. We have also planted a number of new trees.

Play Areas

The members of the working party continue to carry out their weekly visual inspection of all the play equipment. An annual inspection is carried out independently and the subsequent report has been reviewed; no major work has been identified; a list of minor repairs has been produced. The repair work and maintenance programme will continue during the year.

Allotments

All plots are let and only a few people are now on the waiting list.

The Wellbeing Allotment has three new people, making use of the raised beds that were erected this year.

The six-monthly inspections have been carried out and those who are not making use of their plot have been reminded of the conditions of their tenancy agreement to keep the plot tidy and well cultivated and that their tenancy may be terminated if things don't improve.

Cllr Steve Ekins

Chair of Harbury Parish Council Properties Working Party

Deppers Bridge

Speeding traffic continues to make life miserable for the residents. A small group of residents have started a Speed Watch group with the support of the police and will soon be able monitor speeding vehicles.

Heavy vehicles are still using the railway bridge in spite of the 7.5 tonne weight limit.

At the playing field, we have installed a picnic bench near the play equipment and a bench at the top of the field behind the goal.

Cllr Steve Ekins

Ward councillor for Deppers Bridge

Planning

Many thanks to Cllrs Knowles & Thompson for their work towards the planning working party over the past year.

We are still waiting for national level planning reforms, but there has been some forward movement in terms of the new combined South Warwickshire Local Plan. Stratford District Council and Warwick District Council may not have agreed on enough to fully merge, but some services are now being shared and planning will be a joint effort with a combined local plan.

There has been an initial consultation on some of the broader policy strategies that the proposed plan will then be formed from. In our opinion many of these were poorly thought through with no evidence base. The concept of distributing future development around a rail network that doesn't exist seems farcical. Creating a new town located between Southam and Deppers Bridge with Harbury rail station being the factor for the location is, in our opinion, absurd!

The most recent plans from 2010 onwards used distributed development as a technique for housing supply. This involved taking total numbers required then sharing them out, so bigger towns were required to have more, and smaller villages less. Unfortunately, this has resulted in stretched services, and no triggers reached for infrastructure in the right places. For example, a new primary school is funded with 2000 new homes so if those homes are spread across a 10 mile radius then there is no good place to build that school.

Intensified development strategies (such as creating Gaydon Lighthorne Heath – 6000 homes) can create far more sustainable developments without adverse effects to existing settlements. But correct placement is key.

Stratford DC continues to maintain a robust 6.51 year land supply but at last count Warwick District Council only had 5.08 years of land supply. This puts them in a precarious position for presumption of development, especially with so much of their district being designated green belt. The new combined plan should smooth this situation but disappointingly most likely to the detriment of our district, and will require additional development over that which we would have had to accommodate in the Stratford area alone. Do have a look at the emerging combined plan website for some bedtime reading www.southwarwickshire.org.uk

As part of the parish council, all councilors are required to independently examine any planning application that we are formally consulted upon. We continue to aim to provide sound responses to these applications. Do please continue to contact us with any queries, concerns or information about any planning application in the Harbury parish, so that we might remain reflective of the views of our parishioners. You can also directly comment on

any application online at <https://apps.stratford.gov.uk/eplanning> We do read all sections of planning applications including these comments to create and align our responses.

We also try to keep an eye on any approved in progress development. Stratford District Council has an enforcement team, but it is often the people who live near a development that might see any non-permitted actions. Again, please contact us if you have any queries, concerns or information.

Cllr Samantha Allen
Chair of Planning Working Party

Finance & General Purposes Working Party

I would like to thank our clerk Alison Biddle, for her work and support over the past year. Without her assistance, our roles as councillors would be immeasurably harder. I'd also like to add my gratitude for the contributions and commitment of my fellow working party co-councillors - Cllrs Lockley, Balch and Ekins.

We have reluctantly increased the parish precept for the new financial year 2023/24 from £119,677 to £128,900, giving a 7.9% increase in the band D rate. As a parish we own our streetlights and as such are responsible for maintaining and powering them. The electricity cost has almost doubled in the past year and this makes up a significant portion of the increase along with increased costs for most other areas even despite prudent cutbacks. This does remain less than inflation.

Beyond funding our normal responsibilities such as village maintenance, we also nominally allocated funds to the following areas:

- £5,000 for the community grants budget.
- £10,000 towards the new cemetery project to provide burial facilities.
- £12,500 for the street lighting budget, including electricity and repairs.
- £2,500 towards new play equipment, including surfacing.
- £5,000 for drainage work in the playing field.
- £5,000 towards a skate park and BMX track replacement/upgrade project.
- £2,000 towards small items – benches and seasonal light replacements.
- £1,000 towards climate working party costs.
- £3,200 for councillors allowances (7 elected councillors)
- £700 to support the Harbury Local Market raising funds for local groups.
- £2,000 for a new noticeboard at the cemetery and memorial repairs

Unspent cash at the end of a financial year is moved into reserves so we can start a new year. This year change we plan to use some of this to fund a new bus shelter at Binswood End, install new traffic signage in Bush Heath Road and top up our BMX skate park pot and new cemetery pot. Big projects such as these require many years of saving.

Our website www.harbury-pc.gov.uk is the best way of finding out any information about the council. We have an office at the Bull Ring Business Centre and our clerk is here four mornings a week, Monday – Thursday.

Cllr Samantha Allen
Chair of Finance & General Purposes

Environment Working Party

I would like to thank Andy Rutherford for his work as chair of the environment working party. He recently stepped down from this role and the parish council to focus on other activities; we wish him all the best.

In the past couple of months, the focus has been on the swift box project, which was initiated by local resident, Amanda Randall, to provide nesting sites for these migratory birds and hopefully increase the swift population in the village. The parish council has happily supported this project with funding. A special thanks goes to Chris Beaton who has been very industrious in fitting the boxes. We are set to complete the few remaining homes in time to welcome the swifts back to the village in late April.



Looking to the future we are planning the next round of new tree planting in co-operation with WCC to take place in the autumn. We will also be continuing to monitor the condition of pavements for access issues and the serviceability of streetlighting to ensure our village is safe for all residents.

Cllr Alex Potter
Chair of Environment Working Party

Climate Working Party

The climate working party has continued to work with the Harbury Energy Initiative and Harbury Environment Group this year. We have met several times and focussed on 2 main events:

The Eco-Fair – 11 June 2022

The climate working party was proud to run the first Eco-Fair at Harbury Carnival. The event focussed on understanding what our community needed help with, and experts were in attendance to offer advice. We also asked for ideas on what people would like us to focus on.

Representatives from Harbury Future Energy, Harbury Environmental Group, Harbury Local Market, Harbury Energy Initiative, Harbury Repair Café, and the parish council's new tree planting scheme were available and a free children's activity was available to keep the younger ones entertained.

Hundreds of people came to see us and 45 people took the time to complete questionnaires. There were many areas identified as a need, including insulation, solar power, smart meters, heat pumps, EV charging points, battery storage and living sustainably.

Our thanks go to the Quinney family for loaning the marquee, and all of the organisations who took the time to exhibit on the day.

Harbury Community Event – Energy Saving Advice – 11 March 2023

HEI organised and ran this event on behalf of the parish council which focused on responding to the areas that our community asked for help with at the Eco Fair. These included keeping your house warm, improving energy efficiency, understanding what cost savings could be made and identifying any grants to help achieve this.

Over 200 attendees were given details of energy saving measures for consideration and had the opportunity to talk to experts in the field about their needs.

Our thanks go to HEI who continue to support our community and the parish council, helping us to reduce our impact on climate change.



Cllr Julie Balch
Chair of Climate Working Party

Councillors' Corner

These monthly sessions provide community engagement with parish, district and county councillors and are held on 4th Saturday in the calendar month (excluding August and December) from 10.00am to 11.00am.

Due to Covid, no sessions took place during 2020 and 2021. Monthly sessions were reinstated in September 2022. Initially, these took place in Harbury Library but as the café has become busier, holding consultations with residents in this space became less practical. The sessions therefore moved to Harbury Village Hall from February 2023 and now take place alongside Harbury Local Market.

Four sessions were held between September 2022 and March 2023 with 10 parishioners in total attending these sessions. Problems and questions raised by residents have been addressed and a report of each session is forwarded to councillors to be discussed at the next council meeting as necessary.

Councillors' Corner has provided an opportunity for engagement between councillors and parishioners which has proved there is a need for these sessions to continue.

Cllr Janet Thornley
Councillor's Corner Co-ordinator

Reports from Village Groups & Organisations

Harbury Energy Initiative

A major change this year has been the huge increase in the cost of home energy, partly because of the war in Ukraine. Gas and electricity prices are several times higher than they used to be, and this has given many villagers a fresh impetus to consider energy saving measures.



What has not changed is the urgency of the lifestyle changes that the world needs. 2022 was the hottest year ever in the UK, and the range of extreme weather events across the world that year were frightening. The United Nations COP27 in November expressed “alarm and utmost concern that human activities have caused a global average temperature increase of around 1.1 °C above pre-industrial levels to date and that impacts are already being felt in every region and will escalate with every increment of global warming”. Global action is not in line with the scale or speed required.

Last year's chair's report drew attention to the range of environmental and other groups now running in the village. We have the parish council climate working party, Harbury Environmental Group and the Harbury Bike Workshop and Repair Cafe, not to mention Harbury Future Energy and the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network. This last organisation was initiated by Harbury Energy Initiative (HEI) with strong support from the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA). It aims to stimulate local community activity on climate and the environment by linking village and rural town community groups to share ideas, encourage and stimulate each other. It has now grown to include 30 groups and 134 individual members.

Because many HEI members are committed to several of these village and other organisations, the amount of activity that is specifically led by HEI has been reduced. Nevertheless, it is good news because it shows that HEI's concerns are now much more mainstream and are being tackled by many people in the village.

As I write, Covid restrictions seem like a distant memory. However, it was only during last summer that HEI started to feel comfortable meeting and working together in person, and it was only at our meeting in November that we convened new working groups.

HEI has continued to monitor the school solar PV system. Last year we examined the school's records to show that the system did indeed generate enough power during its first year to pay that year's instalment of the Salix loan that had paid for their installation. Unfortunately, early in the school's covid lockdown, the system had developed an intermittent fault. These are always difficult to trace, and the installers visited twice without diagnosing the issue. After monitoring the system carefully for some time, we finally proved that the panels were not generating to their full capacity, which convinced the installer to replace the offending inverter. Since then, we have carefully monitored the system's performance, and have shown that it is again in line with expectations.

In June, at Harbury Carnival, HEI contributed to the Eco-Fair, organised by the parish council climate working party. We revamped our display boards and organised a questionnaire to find out what further information or events villagers would like. After analysing the questionnaire replies, and considering the increase in energy prices, we ran a major event in the village hall in March to give an overview of the measures householders could take to make their houses more energy efficient. This event was organised by HEI on behalf of the parish council, who funded the event. We would like to thank the council for their financial support - and also for the support of those councillors who came to the event itself.

We worked hard on publicity, culminating in delivering leaflets to every household in Harbury, Deppers Bridge, Chesterton and Ladbroke, and were delighted with the response. More than 100 people came. Anyone who missed the event can find the

presentations and speakers' contact details on the HEI website. Go to www.harburyenergy.co.uk/energy-initiative/ and scroll down the page to the entry for 2023.

Apart from HEI, in the end there were displays and information from seven different companies and organisations. Between them, they covered a very wide range of 'retrofit technologies' - in other words all the things that can reasonably be done to make an older house more energy efficient. One key message was that every householder in an older house needs a retrofit plan. Some measures are very expensive, and some are very disruptive, but rather than giving up altogether, householders just need to think things through and plan to do things when they become possible.

We also benefited from the presence of Act On Energy, an organisation which gives free advice to householders living in Stratford District. Their speaker gave information about Eco 4 and Eco+ grants which should now be available for house owners and renters who live in poorly insulated houses and who receive certain benefits or meet other criteria.

It also became clear at the event that many villagers would like to discover where their energy and money escapes from their buildings. We are therefore hoping that we can bid for the funds to purchase an infrared camera that can be used by householders and our community buildings.

David Bristow
Chair of HEI

Harbury Village Library & Biblio's Cafe

With a particular emphasis on the education of children and young people, [Harbury Village Library](#) provides services in the nationally defined areas of Reading, Health and Wellbeing, Information and Digital, and Culture and Creativity.



In 2022 both the library and cafe continued their recovery from the pandemic. The numbers of visitors, books issued and drinks served were all over 80% of the numbers for 2019. This compares favourably with the average numbers of visitors and book issues for England and Wales which were closer to 70%. Biblio's Café opening hours returned to 2019 levels, while the library was open for 4 ½ hours fewer than before. In the summer of 2022 we added wheels to bookcases which lacked them. This allowed us to carry out a small reorganisation resulting in a larger and more open children's area, which has been well received.

Our role as a community hub has continued to grow. As well as generating income to cover the organisation's operating costs, Biblio's provides a welcoming space for people to meet and enjoy hot and cold drinks together with a choice of homemade baked goods.



This is particularly valuable for people who live alone, or who miss social interaction, and is an important element of the service we provide as part of the "Health and Wellbeing" library offer. We are nationally registered as a Warm Welcome Space and provide "help yourself" tea, coffee and biscuits when Biblio's is closed. Local and national newspapers are available. The public access computers continue to be well used, particularly now that we have access to the [Genealogy & Ancestry from Findmypast](#) family history system.

Regular activities include 'Tunes and Tales' for babies and toddlers, pre-school 'Story Time', 'Board Game Fridays', French and Spanish classes, a classic book group, and a creative writing group. Class visits from Harbury Primary School have restarted, part of a developing closer relationship with the school. Our Book Bear Club scheme has been a big success. The art gallery exhibits work by local artists. Books by local authors and greetings cards by local artists are available for sale.

We regularly host out of hours events and activities including meetings, children's craft workshops, repair cafe events, folk choir rehearsals, music concerts, murder mysteries, etc. Income from hirings now represents a small, but growing, additional source of income. The foyer is now home to a number of recycling boxes, the Harbury Seed Share Library, a collection point for the local food bank, and several shelves of "help yourself" adult fiction books.

The fact that we continue to support the village in this way is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our team of volunteers.

Richard Fowler
Harbury Village Library Lead

Harbury Local Market

The last year has seen the market grow back to the way it was before the pandemic. The team Karena, Steve, Jane & Mandy have been very pro- active and we have some new traders selling a variety of products. We are very grateful for the support received from the parish council in paying the hire of the village hall which makes a huge difference as we are able to give the charity/community group all money raised on the day. Villagers are getting to know that the market is on the last Saturday of each month and at the village hall so the market is very well attended.

This last year from May 2022 we have raised £3,941.20 for local charities/community groups. The charities we supported this year were Harbury Rugby Club, Upper Lighthorne Junior Football Club, St Giles Church Chesterton, Harbury Environmental Group, Art's Uplift, Repair Café, Harbury Pre- School, Night of our Light and All Saints Church Harbury.

We are looking forward to another successful year with the continued support from the Parish Council who we would like to thank.

Jane Ekins
Harbury Local Market



Harbury Village Show

2022 was a very difficult year for growers. The hot weather took its toll on the variety of horticultural produce and flowers that were displayed at the village show. However, the baking, craft and art categories were thankfully well represented.

The aim of the village show is to be accessible to all and not make a profit. We have over one hundred entry classes to enable people of all ages and capabilities to showcase what they can do.



To cover our costs, we hold various fund-raising events throughout the year. A significant part of our costs is the hire of the village hall, and in past years we have been extremely grateful to have been awarded a grant towards this expense by the parish council. The Harbury Village Show Committee hope that the parish council considers that the grant is money well spent!

Gordon Robbins
Harbury Show Committee

Harbury Heritage Group

Over the past 12 months we:

- Opened and served refreshments at the Harbury Open Gardens weekend in July.
- We held a family 'Treasure Hunt' in August to promote the history of the village.
- We gave a presentation in September on 'Harbury's Schools' to the Harbury Society members.
- In November we gave a presentation to Years 3 and 4 on 'Harbury in WW2'.
- Also in November we gave a similar presentation to the Harbury Society members.
- We have designed, published and sold 185 calendars with work from local artists; giving a donation to Myton Hospice of £1000 which included a matched donation by a local resident of £500.
- We held a fund raising coffee morning in February.
- We have added to our resources by digitising the 1911 census and the 1939 Register.
- The Enclosure Act document having been digitised now has an up to date map to accompany it.
- We have joined the British Association for Local History (BALH).
- We have a public liability insurance policy to cover volunteers and visitors at the centre.
- We have rekindled our links with the school and now hold a termly meeting with the head teacher, Lucy Bosley.
- We have purchased and fitted additional display boards to one side of the centre.

- In March we gave a presentation to Y1 and Y2 on 'Monsters in Harbury'.
- We have upgraded our website which is now more user friendly. [Harbury Heritage - Looking after Harbury's Heritage](#)
- We have opened twice a month to the public and received a steady trickle of visitors.

We continue to maintain the inside and the outside of the building, although the shrubs planted in April 2021 are struggling to grow owing to the proximity of the overgrown trees shrouding the centre. We are grateful to the school for their continued support in allowing us to use the building to house the Harbury Heritage Collection.



Bill Timson
Chairman, Harbury Heritage Group

Harbury Society

Since the lifting of pandemic restrictions, Harbury Society members have enjoyed a full and varied programme of events. There have been several interesting and informative talks beginning with Gordon Robbins on the subject of beekeeping. Over the following months members learnt about deserted villages around Ladbroke, travelled with Alice the Adventurer and went to Borneo courtesy of a presentation by John Smith. There was also a tour of Ladbroke and a visit to the Napton Buffalo farm. Closer to home, Bill Timson, Harbury Heritage Group Chairman, entertained us twice with aspects concerned with Harbury – the schools and WW2 memories. And finally in 2022, Anthony Poulton told us about the Salt Routes and salt in general. In January 2023, a meal and social evening was enjoyed by several members at The Crown in Harbury. A presentation by the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust in February featured 'Hedgehogs' and in March, David Howe gave a talk entitled '100 Years of the BBC'.

The committee also continues to monitor and, where appropriate, comment on local planning applications and recently undertook the task of submitting views on the South Warwickshire Local Plan.

We have also introduced a new initiative, the Harbury Society Heritage Medal. This reflects our support for the heritage and environment of our wonderful village. It seemed right that Linda Ridgley should be the first recipient on behalf of the efforts made to save the Manor House. That success was the starting point for our society. We are very proud and excited to remind you that this is the Harbury Society's 50th anniversary year. We intend to mark the occasion with celebratory events during 2023.

Sue Turner
Secretary, Harbury Society



Harbury Swift Village Project



Swifts were once very common in Harbury, for decades faithfully returning annually to nest under the eaves of many properties; several pairs nesting at the Old New Inn and other buildings in Bush Heath Lane and Mill Street. Swifts were once to be seen flying low in very large parties through the village, but as in the rest of the UK, there has been a massive decline in their numbers. One of the causes of this decline is the loss of their traditional nest sites, due to renovation or demolition of older buildings, while new buildings typically do not provide nesting opportunities for swifts. Renovation work at the Old New Inn was the inspiration for this project to make Harbury one of only a very few Swift Villages in the UK. A Swift Village is a community made up of several groups of neighbouring houses, all with swift boxes, with the shared goal of supporting swift colonies.

In 2022, Harbury Parish Council enthusiastically agreed to give practical aid for swift conservation through generous funding to provide and install nest boxes throughout the village. Initially, the parish clerk contacted the Bishop's Itchington Men's Shed, and in September, with a donation from the parish council, the members of this organisation presented Harbury with ten swift nest boxes. Swifts are gregarious and live in colonies rather than as individual pairs, so it was important to provide groups of boxes, either on a single property, or on several adjacent properties. Harbury Parish Council agreed to fund a further 30 boxes, to be made and inscribed by local carpenter Craig Knowles.

This community initiative really captured the imagination of people throughout the village, with many offering their properties to give swifts a home and as well as purchasing additional boxes to help build a colony in their neighbourhood. Where a choice had to be made, data from the [Swift Mapper | The RSPB](#), and local knowledge of past swift nest sites, helped inform the best place to site the boxes.



Swifts visit us for just three months of the spring and summer, from May to July, so it was crucial to get the boxes up and ready for their arrival in 2023. Chris Beaton (and his ladders!) installed the majority of the boxes at the end of March. The remaining were put up using a 'Cherry Picker' machine in April.

After a 6000 mile journey from Africa, the swifts will soon be arriving back in Harbury, where they will discover a wonderful selection of bespoke new homes awaiting them!

Amanda Randall
Lead organiser for Harbury Swift Village Project

Harbury & Ladbroke News

[The Harbury and Ladbroke News](#) continues to be a much treasured publication within the village. Subscriptions were due in April and besides existing subscribers renewing, we are hopeful of a number of new subscriptions being taken out. As has always been the case, all of the content in the magazine is readily submitted by our correspondents and we never have to seek articles.

Last July, our printers ceased trading giving us a month's notice of closure. After seeking quotations from a number of Midland based printers, we moved to another Leamington printing company. Unfortunately, the best printing costs we could find were significantly higher (with another subsequent price increase) and this is presenting a challenge at the moment. After 11 years of holding the magazine subscription, we have had to raise them this year to £8. Advertising rates have also been increased.

The Harbury Directory is published and distributed by the magazine and was due for re-issue this spring. The parish council kindly awarded a grant to cover the full printing costs and the 2023-25 directory was distributed with the May edition of the magazine. We very much appreciate the support of the parish council for this useful publication. Our photo shows the cover of the May edition celebrating the Coronation of HM King Charles III.

John Holden
Chairman, Harbury & Ladbroke News



Harbury Juniors Football Club

From September 2023, Harbury Juniors Football Club (HJFC) will operate teams from under 6 to under 15 with over 125 local children playing football. The objects of the charity are:

“The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation for the benefit of the inhabitants of Harbury and the surrounding area in particular young people up to and including the age of 17, by the provision of facilities for playing football.”

After coaching the team for coming up to 10 years, HJFC have an under 15 team for the new season, the first time they have had a team in this age category for a number of years.

HJFC are incredibly grateful to the parish council to providing funding to purchase size 5 footballs for the squad and new nets for the full size pitch. These have already been in use when the team held their first match on a full size pitch in April. We are also very grateful to the additional support to fund new nets for the middle pitch at the playing field.

Phil Hetherington
Treasurer, Harbury Juniors FC

Harbury Community Well-being Allotment

The work to get the project up and running has taken over two years, and clearly impacted by the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nevertheless, over this period work has been carried out to clear the plot which was heavily overgrown, and raise funding from a number of sources. This year has provided the opportunity to launch the scheme and we now have the first three users of the scheme, each taking one of the three high raised beds. A further 4 smaller raised beds are awaiting users to come forward. The grant funding has provided for all materials, topsoils and compost used to make the raised beds ready for use in 2023.



Comments from current users, include gratitude to the parish council for enabling scheme. They all say they could not engage on this activity without the scheme and hope it may be extended to enable others to benefit and develop the community sharing aspects of the scheme.

Roger Pitman
Harbury Allotment Well-being Project

Parish Council Attendance Record April 2022 to March 2023

There were 12 meetings in total during the year, including the annual meeting of the council. There was 1 extraordinary meeting. A total of 65 members of the public attended during the year.

Name of Councillor	Number Attended	Percentage Attended
Cllr Tim Lockley, Chairman	11	92%
Cllr Keith Thompson, Vice-chairman	9	75%
Cllr Sam Allen	11	92%
Cllr Julie Balch	11	92%
Cllr Jess Dominick	9	75%
Cllr Steve Ekins	12	100%
Cllr Alan Knowles	12	100%
Cllr Tony Mancell (joined Dec 2022)	1 of 4	25%
Cllr Alex Potter	9	75%
Cllr Andrew Rutherford (left Nov 2022)	5 of 6	84%
Cllr Janet Thornley	10	84%

Parish Council Working Parties

Planning: Cllr Allen (chair), Cllr Thompson, Cllr Knowles

Environment: Cllr Potter (chair), Cllr Dominick, Cllr Thornley

Properties: Cllr Ekins (chair), Cllr Thompson, Cllr Dominick, Cllr Knowles, Cllr Potter

Finance & General Purposes: Cllr Allen (chair), Cllr Ekins, Cllr Balch, Cllr Lockley

Climate: Cllr Balch (chair), Cllr Ekins, Cllr Thornley, Cllr Dominick

Seasonal Lights: Cllr Allen, Cllr Balch, Cllr Lockley

Staffing: Cllr Thompson (chair), Cllr Balch, Cllr Ekins

Harbury Parish Council Financial Report 2023

The following is an extract from the full financial report (unaudited) which will shortly be available on our website. The report is a supplement to the council's official statement of accounts which is contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Statement 2022/23 (subject to audit) which will also be published on our website in due course.

Year Ended 31/03/22	Income & Expenditure	Year Ended 31/03/23
GENERAL PARISH FUND		
£	Income	£
116,683.00	Precept	119,677.00
31.69	Interest received - deposit accounts	1,530.63
3.60	Interest received - Tennis & Netball Courts Fund	37.02
1,301.98	Allotment rents	1,274.83
2,735.00	Cemetery fees	2,870.00
1.00	Playing field hire	215.00
34.31	Wayleave	34.29
1,083.86	Grass verge contribution - SDC	1,159.73
500.00	Grant funding	1,000.00
-	Sec 106 & CIL	1,674.38
3,736.26	Sports clubs conts to Tennis & Netball Courts Fund	3,736.26
2,251.37	Misc receipts	1,132.11
128,362.07	TOTAL INCOME	134,341.25
Expenditure		
33,591.57	Administration & salaries	39,200.99
843.09	Training	325.00
228.37	Office equipment	1,509.32
4,732.83	Parish office	4,809.32
7,770.00	Grants	8,919.82
-	Platinum Jubilee	887.58
-	Neighbourhood Plan	-
Running costs:		
1,710.00	Allotments	1,418.75
22,576.79	Cemetery	10,260.54
6,453.88	Open spaces	8,850.69
12,482.59	Playing fields & car park	22,268.18
1,605.00	Tennis & netball court works	2,480.00
1,855.32	Non-estate roads	1,892.40
3,842.18	Street lighting	8,122.39
-	Climate	378.82
6,524.63	Purchase of village assets / village improvements	8,710.36
3,043.00	Councillors allowances	2,450.00
107,259.25	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	122,484.16

21,102.82		SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR YEAR				11,857.09
- 4,008.60		Transfer to/from Tennis & Netball Courts Fund				- 3,167.02
-		Transfer to/from Library Maintenance Fund				-
- 10,000.00		Transfer to/from New Cemetery Fund				- 10,000.00
-		Transfer to/from Sec 106 & CIL Fund (net)				-
- 2,772.00		Transfer to/from Office Refurbishment Reserve				1,309.47
-		Transfer to new BMX & Skate Park Fund				- 10,000.00
4,322.22		Balance				- 10,000.46

6. Grants Paid						
Payee		Nature of Payment				£
Harbury Show		Village hall hire				200.00
Harbury RFC Mini & Junior		Flags & bibs				850.00
Harbury School PTA		Values project				300.00
Harbury & Ladbroke News		Printing of directory				265.00
Harbury School PTA		Books				3,000.00
Harbury Juniors FC		Goals & nets				752.34
Well-being Allotment Project		Raised beds				1,412.48 (net)
Harbury Local Market		Village hall hire				640.00
Royal British Legion		Poppy appeal				100.00
				Total		7,519.82
7. Grants & Donations Received						
From whom received		Nature of payment				£
WCC Councillor Fund		Grant for allotments project				1,000.00
						0.00
						1,000.00
8. Sec 106 & CIL Funds Received						
From whom received		Nature of payment				£
SDC		CIL				1,674.38
						0.00
				Total		1,674.38

Funds Statement					
Year Ended 31.03.2022				Year Ended 31.03.2023	
£		General Fund		£	
127,390.86		Balance at 1 April		131,713.08	
4,322.22		Add surplus/less deficit for year		- 10,000.46	
131,713.08		Balance at 31 March		121,712.62	
		Tennis & Netball Courts Fund			
36,034.31		Balance at 1 April		40,042.91	
5,610.00		Add payment into account		5,610.00	
3.60		Add interest for year		37.02	
- 1,605.00		Less payment out of account		- 2,480.00	
40,042.91		Balance at 31 March		43,209.93	
		Library Fund			
8,303.00		Balance at 1 April		8,303.00	
8,303.00		Balance at 31 March		8,303.00	
		New Cemetery Fund			
37,256.00		Balance at 1 April		47,256.00	
10,000.00		Add t/fer from general fund		10,000.00	
47,256.00		Balance at 31 March		57,256.00	
		Sec 106 & CIL			
-		Balance at 1 April		-	
-		Add new CIL receipt		1,674.38	
-		Less expenditure		- 1,674.38	
-		Balance at 31 March		-	
		Office Refurbishment			
		Balance at 1 April		2,772.00	
2,772.00		Add t/fer from general fund		-	
-		Less expenditure		- 1,309.47	
2,772.00		Balance at 31 March		1,462.53	
		BMX & Skate Park Fund			
		Balance at 1 April		-	
		Add t/er from general fund		10,000.00	
		Balance at 31 March		10,000.00	
230,086.99		Total Net Assets		241,944.08	

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2023			
Year ended 31.03.2022		Year ended 31.03.2023	
£		Current Assets	£
200.19		Payments in advance	279.53
2,162.54		VAT Debtor	932.10
-		Other debtors	110.00
-		Cash with clerk to the council	-
228,338.59		Cash at bank	241,265.40
230,701.32			242,587.03
		Less current liabilities	
- 614.33		Creditors & receipts in advance -	642.95
230,086.99		Total Net Assets	241,944.08
		Represented by:	
127,390.86		General fund balance b/f	131,713.08
4,322.22		Less deficit/plus surplus	- 10,000.46
131,713.08		Balance 31 March	121,712.62
		Specific funds:	
40,042.91		Tennis & Netball Courts Fund	43,209.93
8,303.00		Library Maintenance Fund	8,303.00
47,256.00		New Cemetery Fund	57,256.00
-		Sec 106 & CIL	-
2,772.00		Office refurbishment reserve	1,462.53
-		BMX & Skate Park Fund	10,000.00
230,086.99			241,944.08

Contact Your Parish Council

Alison Biddle PSLCC, Clerk to the Council
Harbury Parish Council
2, Bull Ring Business Centre
Church Terrace
Harbury
Leamington Spa
CV33 9HL

Open 10.00am to 12.00pm Monday – Thursday
01926 614646 | clerk@harbury-pc.gov.uk | www.harbury-pc.gov.uk