

## **Harvington Neighbourhood Plan – Local Facilities Sub Group - 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015**

**Present** Gillian Smith, Tony Grey, Jenny Grey, Joyce White, Chris Davies

General discussion – a facility could be a physical place or a service provided. Services could be provided by a local group or a business. We looked at the facilities that Harvington already has and the contribution they make our quality of life. We tried to identify additional facilities which would be of benefit to the village.

We discussed each of the facilities on the list provided by Chris Haynes.

### **Playing fields and childrens' play areas**

The facility behind the village hall is fine. Main problems are that it is too secluded and a significant walking distance for parents with young children. An adult fitness trail has been constructed in the community orchard. There is a clear demand for an additional childrens' play area in the Leys Road part of the village. We could identify a site for future development.

### **Village Hall**

This should be a protected building and should include the village green and tree. Issues include - is it big enough if the village expands, and limited parking.

### **Cricket club**

Would the club be interested in expanding the range of sports facilities it provides eg tennis courts, bowls. Funding is an issue because the club has already had a lottery grant. Is there enough land there ?

### **Churches**

Both St James and the Baptist Church are very active in the village – village fete, cameo teas, car runs, help for the elderly, youth group, coffee mornings, keep fit etc. Is there a need in the village for other faith groups to meet ? In some places school/village halls are used and there are examples where the churches themselves are shared.

### **Shops**

We have a Post Office which is about to close (see next item), the Harvington Convenience Store and Ellenden Farm Shop. These are very conveniently sited retail outlets but with many (most ?) villagers driving to Tesco and Morrisons for their bulk shopping there are concerns about viability in the future. The proposed Gladman development would have an adverse effect on the farm shop but might improve the viability of the other store. If in the future these facilities become non-viable then the village could consider setting up its own community shop run by volunteers. A suitable site would need to be identified.

### **Post Office**

Real concern over the imminent closure of the Post Office. Is there enough space for it to be relocated in the Convenience Store ? Is there enough PO business to make it

worthwhile? What would be the impact on villagers if the PO was lost? With an increasing number of people taxing cars on line and using parcel couriers there may be a terminal decline in the need for a physical post office no matter how much people say they want one.

## **Social Hub**

This was not on our original list but came up in our discussion. There is a demand for social meeting places for the elderly, young mothers, etc, particularly at the Leys Road end of the village. One idea seen elsewhere is for a vacant building, even a house to be purchased and converted into a social hub. This would be too expensive a solution unless grant funds were available (but see Health Centre below).

## **Pubs**

These are a valuable asset to the community and should be protected in some way. They support so many local activities. Pleased to see the reopening of the Golden Cross and we hope the new tenants make it a success. However, we are aware that village pubs are being closed down and disposed of by their owners and if its viability is threatened in the future then we would like to see the building retained and converted into a village facility such as a social hub or health centre.

## **Footpaths**

This is included in the topics for the Environment sub group so was not discussed. We did however identify the need for cycle paths (also in Highways sub group) – if these were of the standard of The Greenway in Stratford then many villagers would be encouraged to cycle eg to Salford Priors or the Lenches instead of using cars.

## **Fishing Lakes**

Although a business enterprise these are an important facility for the village and bring tourists to the area. We would not want to lose them.

## **Views and vistas**

These are covered by the Environment sub group but we agreed that they were a critical aspect of what makes the village a good place to live. They protected wildlife and enhanced the rural feel of the village. We identified the need to preserve the grass verges in the village.

## **Health Centre**

This was probably the facility needed most in the village. A place where we could collect repeat prescriptions, where we could see visiting chiropodists, opticians, district nurses etc without having to go to Evesham or Bidford. One idea was that this could be a facility at a new residential home. This might be difficult with certain profit based developers but could be constructed by eg Rooftop along the lines of Yates Court in Evesham, with additional facilities built in. The Neighbourhood Plan could identify a site for such a development and we could consult developers.

## **Sports Facilities**

We have a football pitch and access to the Cricket Club and golf course and fishing at the lakes. What else do villagers want ? Tennis is available at the Lenches and bowls in Evesham and other villages – would villagers want these facilities within walking distance. Already mentioned the expansion of facilities at the Cricket Club, but are there other sites we could identify.

## **Disabled Access**

Big improvement in drop down kerbs for wheelchairs. What else is needed ? Easiest way is to ask disabled people what they see as issues which need to be addressed. One complaint would be cars parking on pavements. Should any cycle paths be wide enough for mobility scooters ?

## **Allotments**

Almost all of these are now rented. Is there demand for more ? Are they too big – they are much larger than those found in towns – could be a demand for smaller more manageable units. There is a major issue with the lack of a water supply – need to approach the land owners. Should there be an allotments association ? Could something be done about swapping plants or distributing excess produce ?

## **School**

Need to protect the building as it adds to the character of the village. Big issue with parking even after double yellow lines around green. Need to encourage walking or use of safe cycling paths.

## **Playschool**

Good existing provision, but there is an increasing need for before and after school wrap around care. Need to audit existing provision and identify scale of unmet need.

## **Mobile Library**

Not on our initial list but identified as a facility which has been reduced and which will inevitably disappear unless more use is made of it. The service has been well advertised but too few villagers use it.

## **Transport**

Not in our remit but we discussed the ways in which villagers could use community minibuses such as one available from PC Shorthall.