

HARVINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 15th March 2022 at 7.00 pm in Harvington Village Hall, Harvington.

Present: Cllr. Dr. Davies (Chair of the Parish Council), Mrs. N. Holland (Clerk) and 20 members of the public.

1. Welcome, apologies received from Mr. Colebrook and Mr. Williams.

2. Minutes of the meeting held via Zoom 05.05.21. Resolved that the minutes were of a correct record, duly signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising from minutes – nil.

4. Report from Chairman of the Parish Council:

Welcome to the Annual Parish Meeting. We are pleased to be back in the Hall. Last year this meeting was held on Zoom because we were not allowed to have meetings in public.

In May the Government changed the rules again and we were directed to hold meetings in public. With this Hall still out of use we held two meetings at the Cricket Club. At the second of those we could not get into the pavilion so we had an open air meeting on the balcony.

At that meeting we had our first presentation by Lioncourt Homes, the builders of the 35 houses off Village Street. That development and other planning issues have dominated our time over the last year. Lioncourt representatives attended 3 meetings including one in which they heard the thoughts of the residents most affected by the project. Although their suggestions were supported by the Parish Council and Lioncourt, they were rejected by Wychavon District Council Planners. The Planning Officer forgot to invite us to the S106 meeting to discuss the use of community land and the re-siting of the bus shelter. We made a complaint and had an online meeting with the Chief Executive and the Heads of the Legal Department and Highways. We were given assurances that a sum of £13,500 provided by Lioncourt would be used to replace the shelter.

We have since had 2 on site meetings with Highways to discuss the shelter and an online meeting with Wychavon District Council Officers and Lioncourt Developments to sort out issues with the community land. Highways have rejected our suggested site for the new bus shelter on road safety grounds and intend to choose their own site.

Other planning issues include our on-going complaints that the Crest Hill developers have failed to abide by the conditions set for them. We have continued to oppose any larger scale building plans including one which could have seen initially 11 homes on the dog walking field which the potential developer suggested could grow to 80 homes.

We have continued to ask for pavement improvements and after 3 years we are now seeing progress. There is also an agreement for improvements to be made to the footpath down to the playing field. In the play area we have replaced the damaged fencing and carried out maintenance on the benches and the play equipment.

In the Community Orchard we have worked with the Harvington Trust to plant more trees. In the next few weeks we also intend to plant a large Walnut Tree as our contribution to the Queen's Jubilee celebrations. We have had to remove the footbridge across the pond because the supporting timbers were rotten and presented a danger to the public. We are planning to install a new bridge but we are waiting for expert advice.

In other work around the village we installed the two Vehicle Activated signs near the crossroads, which we believe has had an impact on traffic speeds. The telephone kiosk in Leys Road has now been repaired and after redecoration we hope to fit it with the Defibrillator which used to be on the wall of the Coach and Horses.

We were pleased to provide financial support for the 'Party in the Park' last August. That was a great success and raised the spirits of villagers struggling with lockdown fatigue. Our grateful thanks to the team which planned and organised that event. We are delighted that they plan a similar event for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend and the Council will provide financial support again.

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We are concerned that we were unable to keep the Village Newsletter going, and our interim arrangement to provide information via the Arch Messenger was better than nothing, but still a poor way of keeping villagers informed. We are pleased that we have a new Editor for the Newsletter and he is putting together an edition which should reach you in the next few weeks.

Q. It was asked why s106 funds were being used for the Bus Shelter? Explained that there was a sum of money in the agreement for the costs of dismantling, erecting a new shelter and costs associated with this.

Q. Why can dogs not be allowed in the playing field when events are being held? Cllr. Mrs. Allison to ask the question when the group organising the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event next meet.

- 5. Avon and Arrow Greenway Project (AAGP):** Avon and Arrow Greenway Project (AAGP): Ms Smith gave a brief outline of the work that has been done over the last 2 years. Main objective is to connect Evesham to Alcester and eventually Stratford-upon-Avon with a cycleway. The route joins Harvington by the Fishing Lakes, across Anchor Lane to Norton via the Accommodation Bridge to the Valley complex across the A46, underneath the Simon De Montfort Bridge connecting to the railway station. On the route from Harvington to Alcester the route will follow the old railway track to the Church in Salford Priors. From there by the Old People's Home to Wixford where it will follow onto Alcester. It will eventually go from Broom to the Bidford Health Centre and onwards to join the Greenway in Stratford-upon-Avon. This will be a very safe walking/cycle path.
- An Expression of Interest Form for a funding request through the Community Legacy Grant, available through Wychavon District Council, was applied for and accepted. Now in the progress of applying for grant funding which involves consulting with the community by survey, advertising using posters and Newsletter. Ms. Smith will also be visiting various organisations in the Village and holding pop up events. Will take approximately 2 years to complete if the grant funding is successful. Some surveys will need to be done i.e. Ecological, looking at Rights of Way and Permissive Paths.
- Questions:
1. Path will be put in place first, no parking areas planned.
 2. Access to bridge at the bottom of Anchor Lane to The Fish at Offenham: Sustrans carried out a feasibility study but access not possible.
 3. Most of the land to be used is owned by Worcestershire County Council.

- 6. County & District Cllrs:** No reports received.

- 7. Village Hall Committee:** Mrs. Atkins reported that apart from Pre-School the Village Hall was closed from March 2020 to July 2021 due to the Covid pandemic. During that time a replacement air source heating pump has been installed, a major expenditure, along with repairs to the wooden floor in the Green Room, new flooring in part of the Hall, all the original air bricks uncovered, and stage lighting updated. The cost of the repairs and refurbishment amounted to over £10,000. The Village Hall Committee accepted a grant from Wychavon District Council to assist with re-opening. This was used to assist Pre-School requirements and towards the cost of repair work. The Committee are confident of having the funds to cover rising costs over the next few years.
- The Annual General Meeting of the Village Hall Committee will be held on the 18th May 2022.

- 8. Tree Warden, Mr. Williams report:**
- Over the last few months I have been able to continue with TLC activities by removing epicormic growth and lifting the crowns of certain trees where appropriate. This applies to the Oak at Finch Lane on the grassy triangle; the Lime tree at Greenacres Lane; the Oaks and Hornbeam near the Parish boundary on the Old bypass; several Oak trees along Alcester Road as well as the two Black Poplars on the edge of the Parish boundary near Brickyard cottages (some lower branches here were damaged during the February hedge trimming and I hope deal with these later).
- At the end of February I started to work along Evesham Rd: reshaping the Copper Beech at Harvington cross roads and tidying up the first few Limes and Hornbeams. As and when I get back in action I plan

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to continue along Evesham Rd. I was asked last year if I could lift the crowns and remove ivy from a number of trees close to the back garden fence of some of the Orchard Place houses that back on to Evesham Rd. Gaining access to some of these trees along this part of Evesham Rd is proving difficult due to a large overgrowth of brambles which I am currently not equipped to tackle. I was wondering if cutting back these brambles is something the Limebridge crew could deal with this year, assuming there is no objection from residents or a requirement to keep these brambles high for garden security reasons.

In addition, over the last 6 months I have been helping the person in charge of the Churchyard and gardens to lift crowns and remove dead, damaged and diseased branches from several trees in the Churchyard.

The Lime tree on the green at Grange Lane has no obvious sign of disease that I can see and several small but dead branches have come down in the recent gales; however, there are still some small dead branches remaining in the canopy.

I note that some of the ends to the drooping lower branches have been trimmed to lift them higher above the roads. I assume this was done by Limebridge last year.

The Sycamore tree on the green opposite Village Hall appears sound but also has a number of small dead ends to branches in the canopy that need removing this year once the tree is in leaf.

In December, you asked me if I knew of any locations for planting a tree (or trees) to commemorate the Queen's 70 year Jubilee. I have looked during several walks around the village but there are very few places in the centre of the village apart from a possible corner of the Village Playing field area or the School playing field. An alternative is the small triangle of land next to the Village Hall - however, not sure if the ownership of this land has changed to allow this and perhaps it would be too close to the buildings for what could become a tall tree! Perhaps the most obvious place would be somewhere in the Harvington Village Orchard, I believe the Parish Council are already considering this. The only other locations where I thought a Jubilee tree or trees could be planted are at the bottom of Crest Hill/ the old bypass road or at the bottom of Stratford Rd near the roundabout and one way entrance into the village from Norton. See photos attached. These locations are far from the centre and may have restrictions on the type and mature height of trees planted.

My apologies for not attending tonight. The Chair asked for it to be noted that Mr. Williams be thanked for the invaluable work he has carried out over several years.

- 9. Parish Paths Warden:** Mr. Harrington reported that there were 37 footpaths in Harvington, 3 now no longer exist, 1 you can only access via a permissive path, 5 footbridges and only 1 stile remains. Now retiring from the post which he has held for the last 7 years. The post is being advertised. Chairman thanked Mr. Harrington for all the work he has carried out on the footpath network in the Village.

- 10. Matters raised by Parishioners:**
1. Trees along Evesham Road that back onto Orchard Place: Trees on the western side that back onto Orchard Place by house numbers 31, 33 require attention.
 2. 12, 13, Ragley Road: Road flooding when heavy rain occurs. Cllr. Mr. Langley to visit the site.
 3. Government Boundary Commission: the Parish Council did respond to this consultation with a statement confirming that Evesham was much closer to Harvington than Redditch.

Meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Signed by the Chairman, Dr. C. Davies. Dated: April 27th 2023.