

## HARVINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 6.00 pm in Harvington Village Hall, Harvington.

**Present:** Cllr. Dr. Davies (Chair of the Parish Council), Mrs. N. Holland (Clerk) and 14 members of the public.

**1. Welcome:** Apologies received from Dist. Cllr. Mr. Thomas and Mr. Colebrook.

**2. Minutes of the meeting 15.03.22. Resolved** that the minutes were of a correct record, duly signed by the Chairman.

**3. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council:** I am here to tell you what the Parish Council has been doing for the last year. I have looked back through the minutes of our meetings, but I started by seeing what I had reported last March. I was struck by the lack of progress on several issues. Villagers have expectations that when they report their concerns, we will take prompt action. However, our powers are limited, and we are dependent on the County and District Councils, Highways and to Rooftop Housing Association to find the time and funds to sort things out. We have passed on concerns about parking in Leys Road and near the school, trees along Evesham Rd, the bank in Stratford Road and dangerous behaviour by the ditch near the shop. In each case we have met with officers on site to highlight the problems. Sometimes we get a promise that the issue will be addressed but often we are told nothing can be done. In early 2022 we had several meetings with Highways staff about replacing the bus shelter. We thought we were making progress but now it is held up by a county wide review of all the bus services and stops. We do not anticipate losing the 28 service, but we will remain vigilant. We hoped to get Highways to continue the repairs to pavements. Some work was done by the school but there are several areas still on a waiting list. We have continued to push for improved safety at the crossroads. A key factor with these is the support of our county councillor who can put pressure on their relevant officers. We have missed this over the last year. We have made some improvements. We upgraded the village street lighting so that all our lamps are now LEDs which are cheaper to run and last longer. We passed on a request to turn the lights off at night, but Worcestershire County Council tell us that they no longer fit the timing panels needed on lamp posts. We have kept on at Rooftop to repair the lamp in Ragley Road but have now been told that they cannot do it. At least they have at long last repaired the fence at the corner of Ragley Rd. We have removed the dangerous bridge at the Orchard and after taking expert advice we put a replacement path in. We carry out weekly inspections at the Orchard and the Playing Field and arrange repairs where needed. We purchased a walnut tree for the Orchard to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. One concern we have is an increase in vandalism at the Orchard and we have asked the police to make visits. We have worked with the Worcestershire County Council Footpaths Officer to improve the path to the playing field and we await repairs to steps on the path near Anchor Lane. We maintain our commitment to improving the look of the village with the planters and the Christmas tree. We have even employed a window cleaner to keep the bus shelter windows clean. With the phone box in Leys Rd we purchased and fitted a new door, repaired and painted the box. Our aim had been to site the parish defib in the box, but we had an offer from Rob Phillips

## HARVINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

	<p>at the Golden Cross to pay for a new storage box and to site the defib on the wall at the pub. We agreed to that and met with a first responder to check everything. That is now in place and a couple of training sessions have taken place. We now think we will use the old phone box as a book exchange and information centre. We do need to find a volunteer who lives nearby to keep an eye on the box.</p> <p>We have continued to support organisations which benefit the village. These include grants to the Evesham Volunteer Centre, the Harvington Youth Project and the Cycleway project. We have also helped to fund the Platinum Jubilee celebration organised by Chris and Alison Rushworth and their team. I would like to thank them for a magnificent event which was probably the highlight of 2022.</p> <p>The Parish Council decided to mark the Jubilee by issuing a souvenir mug to all the children aged 10 and under in the village. Councillor Allison and I attended the school celebrations and issued the mugs to the children.</p> <p>I am pleased to say that in the last year we have been able to relaunch the Village News and we are grateful to Mike Barbour for doing such an efficient job producing each issue. Our thanks also go to the team of volunteers who deliver the newsletter.</p> <p>Finally, can I thank District Councillor Bradley Thomas who attends all the meetings and takes up any issues on our behalf with Wychavon District Council.</p> <p>My thanks also go to the rest of the Parish Council for their support and hard work throughout the year. Particular thanks go to our parish Clerk Nicky who does all the work behind the scenes and keeps us in line.</p>
4.	<p><b>Cycleway Project:</b> Ms Smith reported that the Group has now been renamed as the Two Shires Project. She gave an interesting presentation with drone footage via projector showing the route from Harvington past the Fishing Lakes to Norton, over the A46 Accommodation Bridge into the Valley Land in Evesham owned by Eagle 1.</p> <p>The Group have held meetings with landowners i.e. Highways England re the bridleway access; Worcestershire County Council for access to the Permissive Path upgrading to a bridleway. Eagle 1 have confirmed that they are happy to allow the route on their land.</p> <p>Funding is in the process of being applied for through Active Travel, Government Funding pots and from the Community Infrastructure Levy received by the Parish Council.</p>
5.	<p><b>Presentation on the Harvington Festival event 2023:</b> Chris Rushworth presented details on the event which is taking place from the 8<sup>th</sup> July to the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023. Website is now available: <a href="https://www.harvingtonfestival.org/2023">https://www.harvingtonfestival.org/2023</a></p> <p>Request has been made asking people to be Friends of the Festival for its inaugural year. It is hoped that this will become an annual event. There are benefits to being a member. Numbers will be limited this year to 30. The Festival will be launched with the Evesham Festival. Plan is for Open Gardens; Children's Storyteller; Flower Festival at the Church etc. Children sessions will be held where stories will be read, making puppets etc. The Youth group will be arranging a Treasure Hunt. Other activities -writing competition; photographic event; Costa Book Club author and others will be attending; Music night in the two public houses and local groups. Two Films will be shown – To Kill A Mocking Bird and the first Railway Children Film.</p> <p>14 events will take place over 7 days including 3 weekends. Ticket prices £5 children; £8 - £25 depending on events for adults.</p>

## HARVINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

### 6. Reports received from:

**a) County and District Councillors:** No reports received.

**b) Village Hall Committee:** No report received.

**c) Tree Warden:** Since May last year I was able to get out and about and with something like my usual energy levels; so far this looks like normal activity levels may have returned (touch wood)! As usual, most of my activities since my last report have involved TLC pruning to remove epicormic growth and lift crowns as the relatively young trees planted 20 to almost 30 years ago continue to grow. The aim is to give a clear bole to roadside trees to a height of 2.5 to 3m and also make it easier for the contractors cutting the grass and hedges. During last year, I was out and about on 34 occasions dealing with:

**Evesham Road** - All the Oaks, Limes, Poplars and Hornbeams along both sides of Evesham Road to the Parish boundary just beyond Ellenden. Also cleared a large area of brambles away from the Ash tree that is regrowing from the storm damage of Feb 2017, hopefully this will recover.

In April this year, I have started clearing ivy and lifting crowns of Lime, Oak, Horse Chestnut and Cedar trees on the Orchard Place fence side of Evesham Road - (At the moment, from the crossroads, I can get a short way along the fence to a couple more trees before having to chop my way through the brambles and detritus between the ditch/brook and fence might become an undesirable task!).

**Alcester Road** - Lifting crown of the Holm Oak for better visibility; Tidying up the remaining branch damage to the Black Poplars at the Parish boundary near Brickyard Cottages.

Removing epicormic growth etc. from all the Oaks, Limes, Poplars, Sycamores along the Green Street Farm side of the Alcester Road (a big thank you to the farmer/hedge trimmer who cleared the thick scrub standing 3ft high between the Oaks which made access possible this year without having to hack through the undergrowth).

**Leys Road** - checking the Ash trees on the outskirts of Harvington for Ash Die Back disease and reporting back to the Parish Council recommending Highways Dept inspect/deal with them. Also pruning epicormic growth from several Limes and about half the number of Poplars along this road towards the Lenches.

Also, with the help of Hugh Nunn in January, we inspected all the experimental Elms along Leys Road and pruned a large number of Elm trees on the hill leading up to the Lenches (these were still in very good condition considering 8 different clones have so far died from Elm Disease). Also I started to cut down one of the dead elms.

**Church yard and Cemetery** - Since August last year have been helping Julian again prune back the beech trees in the Cemetery and continue removing dead branches from the Cypress trees in the Churchyard.

**Tree Planting** - On 20th January this year Hugh Nunn, his daughter Penny and Jeff Soulsby, (Harvington Nurseries), and I planted a new and hopefully more vigorous Common English Oak tree in the place of one that was not growing very well in the vertical direction. Last year I removed all the horizontal branches from this tree leaving 3 pointing up at an angle in the hope that this would persuade it to grow upwards. Hugh Nunn has been concerned about this tree since before he left and referred to it as a "genetic runt" and finally decided it would be best to replace it. He recently bought 3 good oak trees and plant 2 in his local village and brought one to plant in Harvington. Sadly and with apologies to the tree, I had to cut down the old malformed Oak tree a couple of days later.

Finally, with regards to the rest of this year, I have a couple of Crab Apple, Cherry Plum, Swedish Whitebeam, Spindle trees, Field Maple, Sycamore and Hawthorn trees that I have

## HARVINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

<p>grown or acquired over the last few years that would benefit from being planted out. I am looking for appropriate locations to plant these within the Parish boundaries.</p> <p>Places for TLC activity for this coming year will hopefully be Leys Road and the Turkey Oaks plus Poplars at the bottom of Crest Hill.</p> <p>Hopefully, the Highways Dept or local contractors will be able to clear the Evesham Road brambles and undergrowth this year. If not, then I might also have to continue to hack my way along the rest of the Orchard Place fence boundary on Evesham Road in order to get at the trees that desperately need crowns lifting and ivy removing.</p> <p>The Sycamore tree on the green opposite Village Hall and the Lime tree at Grange Lane are both looking OK and not showing any obvious signs of pathogenic damage. I will check them again when they are both in leaf. They are both still dropping small dead branches periodically and again when in leaf, I will try and remove those I can get at.</p> <p><b>d) Parish Paths Warden:</b> Mr. Muir reported that he has only recently taken over the role from Mr. Harrington and has been attending training courses on brush cutting, legislation talks etc. Has been cutting back the path beside the Church as this area is very overgrown; the Bridge on the Golf Course is currently not accessible and needs to be looked at. Grass cuttings are proving to be a nuisance. Harvington has a wide range of circular paths, 15 kilometres.</p>
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<b>7. Matters raised by Parishioners:</b> Nil.
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<b>Meeting closed at 7.00pm.</b>
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**Signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr. Salter:**

**Dated: April 25<sup>th</sup> 2024.**