

HARVINGTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Draft minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 24th April 2025 at 6pm in Harvington Village Hall, Harvington.

Present: Cllr. Mr. Salter (Chair of the Parish Council), Mrs. N. Holland (Clerk), District Cllr. Mr. Reeves, Cllr. Mr. Bennett, Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator; Mr & Mrs. Monks, Community Support Group; Mr. Redman, Village Hall Committee; Mrs. Dodds Cameo Teas; Lesley Robinson, Phoenix Group; Jessica Brownlee, Girlguiding; Kate Reynolds, Newsletter Editor; and 6 members of the public.

1. Welcome: Apologies received: Andrew Muir (Parish Paths Warden); Alan Williams (Tree Warden); and Mrs. Ball, Village Hall Committee.

2. Minutes of the meeting 25.04.24. Proposed by Ms. J. Smith, seconded by Mr. Redman and **resolved** that the minutes were of a correct record, duly signed by the Chairman.

3. Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council: We started the new council year with the May Annual Parish Council Meeting and the election of the Chair, various Committees and Working Group members. Over the year we have had a few changes to our team. We said goodbye to Councillors Mr. Herdman, Mr. Redman, and Mrs. Arthur. Councillor Mr Barker was co-opted onto the Parish Council in April. After these changes we still have a vacancy if we could tempt anyone to joining our team.

We have also had a change to our District Councillor, after Councillor Bradley Thomas was elected as a MP. Following the by election we welcomed District Councillor Craig Reeves. This year your councillors have continued to attend many training sessions, including new councillor training, planning and finance courses.

May I take this opportunity to thank all of the councillors for their time and efforts they have voluntarily given over the past 12 months. Also the Councils thanks and gratitude go to our Clerk, Nicky Holland, for keeping the wheels turning behind the scenes and keeping us all up to date on the many topics we consider.

We as a Parish Council try to act as quickly and responsibly as possible to reports and concerns raised by members of this Parish. But however, our hands are somewhat tied, as we are dependent on County and District Councils, Highways and Rooftop Housing Association to find the time and funds to complete the requests.

The Parish Council work hard on your behalf to ensure that the village is as safe and as welcoming as it can be. However, over the last year we have had some vandalism around the Village to the Benches in the Orchard and Playing Field, Dog waste bin, 2 x newly planted trees and the old phone box on the Leys Road. Unfortunately, this comes at a cost to repair the damage, out of an already tight budget, obtained through your council tax payments. If you witness any forms of vandalism we ask that report it.

Some of the routine tasks carried out on behalf of the Village, to mention but a few, are the emptying of litter and dog waste bins, amenity mowing, streetlighting, weekly inspections of the playing field, community orchard and defibrillator, maintaining the planters at the entrances to the village and the Christmas tree at the crossroads.

The Village Lengthsman conducts various tasks around the village including flood alleviation work.

The council has many more long term and time-consuming projects on the go at any one time. To mention a couple that you will hear more about later are the Cycleway and Playing Field Refurbishment.

A long time has been spent on the revised Neighbourhood Plan which has now been adopted by Wychavon District Council.

The sighting of the new Defibrillator, outside the shop has been agreed with all parties and the solar powered cabinet has been ordered.

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<p>The Jubilee Orchard is in blossom at the moment, we must thank Mr. Pedrick and Mr. Williams for their time and knowledge on the maintenance of the trees.</p> <p>A new Aser Crimson Tide Tree has been planted to replace the Jubilee tree. Also a new ten-year lease has been signed.</p> <p>The siting of the bus shelter on Village Street has been agreed with the various authorities and we have been informed that it will be installed soon.</p> <p>We have continued to support the organisations in the village through our grant applications. We have given monies to the following in the last 12 months totalling £2199.00:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harvington School for the remembrance garden for Mrs Helen Fishbourne• The school prize• Wychavon games• Harvington Cricket club• Girl guiding midlands• The Church Fete for road closure. <p>Once again I would like to thank organisations, businesses, clubs and individuals who help keep our village a lovely place to live.</p>

<p>4. <u>To receive the following reports from:</u></p> <p><u>District Councillor:</u> Having been in the position since September last year, it has been a pleasure to represent Harvington at Wychavon. Over the months I have been working with officers and cross-party with three main focuses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To keep the bar high for our village• To help resolve local concerns• And to see the uplift out of neighbouring town, Evesham. <p>Harvington is a beautiful and vibrant village, and since my tenure I have been grateful to meet and discuss concerns and endeavours with many who live here. Some concerns span the County Council responsibility, and whilst I have managed to resolve with County officers a few situations, some officers are less willing without the presence of a County Councillor. As with many County issues that become known to me, it is mostly the result of there having been an absence of communication and presence in the village of said councillor. With a new County Councillor incoming, I am looking forward to working with them, to throw focus and encourage swift action on the concerns that require our County Councillor involvement and I shall share these issues with our new County Councillor when elected to the role.</p> <p>Over the past months, I have built a good collaborative relationship with our MP Chris Bloore who has made himself available to the village and together have performed a surgery - where there have been positive outcomes as a result.</p> <p>For those who have followed my endeavours with Evesham, I am grateful to have also built a relationship with the many Councillors that represent Evesham Town; as well as Wychavon's; Place, Conservation and Enforcement Officers - building momentum to encourage uplift and improve our neighbouring town that so many here rely upon.</p> <p>With planning applications active within the area and a Neighbourhood Plan reviewed and adopted, I stand alongside the Parish Council with their endeavours to steer village growth. The Neighbourhood Plan, the SWDP and NPPF, so far within my tenure, have yet to align, and challenges ensue. It is important that when applications fall in-between the gaps of these policies, that no matter the outcome, we support and voice the value of our local plan and do so with understanding and respecting the hours and dedication given to the plan, over the years by the voluntary team.</p> <p>I advocate for Active travel, in particular the 2 Shires Greenway project. I disclose too much detail on progress as we shall hear from Cllr. Gillian Smith in due course. Rest assured however, that I am lobbying for support and action with this project. Our incoming County councillor will be fully briefed on this situation also.</p> <p>I am grateful to have worked with the empty homes team at Wychavon who have seen a 14</p>
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year vacant property back on the market here in Harvington. These endeavours across the district not only uplift the immediate area and relieve adjoining properties of shared structural problems, but work towards our housing needs.

Drainage issues on Leys Road and the crossroads have seen some resolution with a new grate to be fitted to the culvert, that by design, prevents the build-up of debris, which blocks the drain - this comes with an improved maintenance schedule by County Council. Of course, there is always more to be done to elevate surface flooding in down pour events and I liaise regularly with the engineering team on these matters.

One of my main campaign policies, was to be communicative and visible, and I hope that as a result, the village has been well informed on situations in-and-around our area, and that those who need to, feel comfortable in approaching me for conversation.

I would like to thank Harvington Parish Council for their support and accepting me as their representation at Wychavon and thank those who have reached out and worked with me on guiding me through historic issues and allowing me to engage with resolution.

With the Unitary Council looming, it is important that we achieve as much as possible over the next two years and I look forward to the challenges and achievements ahead of us.

Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator: Mr. Bennett reported that over the last few months in the Villages around Harvington it has been noted that they do not have a Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator. The Neighbourhood Watch team were contacted to set up a network. A co-Ordinator is required for each Village in the Lenches and Harvington. Details have been placed in the Village Newsletter. It was reported all but one Village did not suffer from a burglary. Five households are required to be on the Group.

Village Hall Committee: Mr. Redman reported that 2024 had been uneventful, apart from a couple of leaks. People who have used the Hall are pleased with the facilities. Always available for Hire.

Tree Warden: Report submitted: **Top Crest Hill** - Removed partially broken Oak tree branch by Notice Board. Plan to return in 2025 to remove overhanging branches by the fence.

Stratford Road - Entrance to Village by old bypass. Removed branch fallen over pathway and also removed dead wood and lifted crowns of group of Sycamore trees and the Purple Maple on the small roundabout.

Leys Road - Reduced and thinned the crowns of Whitebeam and Norway Maple by the houses near Poplar Way. Removed the epicormic growth on the Lime tree (this tree will also need its crown reducing in near future but it is too tall for me to use a pole saw so I will need to find out if Limebridge or a local Tree Surgeon can do this in 2025).

Evesham Road - Removed epicormic growth and thinned the crown of the Hornbeam outside Newing Court. Moving along Evesham Road from the crossroad towards the 30mph sign I have lifted the crown of the Copper Beech and removed epicormic growth and overhanging branches from the Hornbeams, Limes, Oaks and Norway Maples to about 2/3 the way along this stretch of Evesham Road. I also need to report that undergrowth is spreading over the footpath between the grass bridge over the drainage channel and the large road sign (see attached photos). This makes it difficult to walk by without stepping into the road or ducking! I would hope the Highways Department would be able to clear this but if not I can cut back some of this later this year but clearing away the brash and brambles is the main problem for me here.

On the Orchard Place fence-side of Evesham Road I have finished lifting the crown of the Cedar of Lebanon for the next couple of years and have started to prune back the first of many Horse Chestnut trees along this stretch but it is hard going cutting through the undergrowth! If only the Highways Department would cut back the brambles along this whole stretch it would make life easier.

Jubilee Orchard - Mr Andy Pedrick and I pruned about 2/3 of the trees (mainly Pear and Plum and a few Apple) in April 2024. We planned to return to do some winter pruning of the remaining Apple trees but Mr Pedrick did this on his own in February. The Cherry trees at the

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top of the orchard have been left alone for now. Most of the trees are looking a bit healthier this year but what looks like 2 of the replacement trees appear to have died. There are some dead branches noticeable on a few of the plum and pear trees and I will remove these in the near future. Mr Pedrick and I will look to do any further pruning of the fruit trees in late Autumn/Winter.

I will report on the health of the Village Green Sycamore and Grange Lane Lime tree later in the year when they have come into full leaf.

Parish Paths Warden: Report received: 528(B) alongside the church had a heavy clearance by contractor but it is starting to become overgrown again. It seems people prefer to pass through the churchyard. I will take a brush cutter down when I have time.

515(C) Monkey Island. I and another volunteer cleared a lot of bramble which had been blown towards the path after a winter storm. Hopefully, that will keep it clear until the summer cut.

538(c) rear of sewage works. A tree had come down across the path which although outside the parish is an important link in our network. This has now been cleared.

528(c) bridge from golf course to Anchor Lane. The bridge had been moved again by the winter storm but has now been reinstated.

General - a few finger posts were damaged by flailing work and have been recorded as needing to be replaced.

Cameo Teas: CAMEO TEAS: means COME and MEET EACH OTHER.

Cameo Teas was an idea to reach out to the community in Harvington and beyond to meet and chat and have Tea and Cakes in the afternoon. CAMEO Teas started in May 2005 when a few ladies got together to talk about it:

How can we reach out to others who most likely live on their own and cannot travel?

We meet on the second Wednesday in the month at 3pm at our Church. It is a very convenient focus point and it is open to all in Harvington. We have a rota which is sent up at the beginning of the year for those friends who have offered to help. Two friends are in charge per month and we set up at 2pm.

CAMEO TEAS is self-financing and the refreshments are all donated by the friends in charge.

Folks who turn up on the day give £2 donation which is saved in a fund for:

For one Afternoon Tea Outing in May (this year we are going to Hillers Farm Shop).

The other outing is at Christmas, normally at Kingscourt Hotel, Alcester for Christmas Lunch. That means that our friends get the Christmas Lunch 1/3 cheaper.

We have an- inter- general Forum with our Primary School in Harvington. Year 5 visit us in June for Afternoon Tea and an exchange chat with children and adults and Rev Richard organizes a quiz for the children. Great fun and all the children and adults love the get-together. In July we are invited by the same children for Afternoon tea in school. This is always a great occasion for the children because they entertain us with tea, cakes and with the latest songs they have learnt.

CAMEO TEAS is a lovely outreach to all in Harvington and we are delighted to be able to do it and are very grateful to all our friends who have so loyally supported this venture since 2005.

Sophie Dodds 20.4.2025

Cricket Club: No report received.

The Harvington Community Support Group: Wendy Monks reported that the Group was originally supported by Sheila Harris, and is overseen by the rector rev, Riichard Thorniley. It is currently coordinated by Wendy and Konrad Monks, who have lived in Harvington for many years. The purpose of the group is to provide low key practical and emotional support to residents of the village, or to provide advice about how to access help for more complex needs. Our team of volunteers has gradually expanded, so that as well as Mike Barbour, Kay Barrett, Joy Rawes and Annette France, we have also recently welcomed Judith Noon and Sheila Hemming to our group.

The extra volunteers are much appreciated as demand for our services continues to steadily increase. Over the course of 2024 the team responded to 82 individual requests for help, and

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remarkably, we have so far only ever had to say 'no' once. Most of the people who contact us are elderly, and some are very frail. The kind of help they needed is often transport and assistance with attending appointments, but also sometimes getting in shopping, sitting with someone whilst a carer goes out, general 'friendly visiting' helping with computer problems and admin, minor DIY etc.

Feedback we have had from residents suggests that the help we provide is appreciated and that people derive a sense of comfort knowing we are there in the background. As co-ordinators, we enjoy our role in this, but we could not do it without the commitment of our always willing volunteers and we very much value their input.

The 'Welcome to Harvington' booklet was up-dated in the Spring and was distributed to every household in the Village. Feedback from residents both new and old has been very positive and sincere thanks are due to Mike who has put in many hours into this endeavour. It was agreed that the booklet should be updated every two years, and so the next update will be due early in 2026. Many thanks to the Parish Council for funding this project over recent years, and of course we would very much appreciate it if the next version could be considered for similar funding.

Brownies/Girl Guides: For those who do not know, Girlguiding is a national charity that has supported girls in the UK since 1909. It is more than a club and girls are encouraged to push themselves, learn new skills, and make a positive impact in the community. We are part of an international family of scouts and guides; it really is something special to be a part of. In Harvington we now have all of the different Girlguiding sections: Rainbows- 4-7, Brownies- 7-10, Guides- 10-14 and Rangers 14-18. We welcome around 80 young members to our groups each week and a team of 7 adult volunteers work really hard to give all of these girls amazing opportunities. We also have a brilliant group of young volunteers aged 13-18 who are developing their leadership skills and showing us just how much responsibility young people are capable of.

Some highlights: We opened a Ranger unit last June. This was really important to me after seeing how successfully our Guide unit has grown since it was reopened. We started with 5 girls; we now have 28! It would have been a shame for these girls to just have to stop at 14, especially after seeing the impact guiding has had on them. It has been amazing so far.

We went on our first camp since reopening. The group of Guides pushed themselves to have a go at lots of adventurous activities and for many of them it was actually their first trip away from home! We are now busy planning this year's camp.

We have had 3 girls now take part in the Girlguiding Midlands international community experience- a residential adventure where they take part in a volunteering project and adventurous activities. They spend months preparing, meeting up at planning meetings with the other 30 Guides from across the region who were selected. One Guide went to Scotland in October and another 2 are going to the Channel Islands next month.

I myself was selected to be on the leadership team for Girlguiding Worcestershire's 2025 international trip to Finland this summer. We are taking a group of about 15 young people and have been busy planning with them, fundraising together and more over the past year. We will be taking part in a volunteering project and culture exchange with local Guides/scouts.

We took a team of 5 11 year old guides and 2 adults to compete in the Cotswold marathon. This is an overnight hiking competition against other Guides and Scouts. We walked the Bronze route and covered almost 15 miles through thick mud and fog. We were blown away by the determination of these young girls- they really pushed themselves and it really demonstrated what guiding is all about. Guides have been meeting in Harvington for the last 50 years. This is such an amazing achievement for a volunteer-run community group. We have already celebrated with a party which brought together all of the girl guiding groups in the village. We had a silent disco and it was lots of fun. We are currently planning to mark the milestone further with a family funday on 22 June. This is going to be held at Ellenden and we already have a wonderful line up of activities and more planned. The event will be part of the

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	<p>Harvington festival programme. Our impact is clear and it is incredibly rewarding to see what our young members can do. They are so capable and we help them to realise that. They learn so many skills, try so many new things, push themselves, earn badges and are simply amazing. It would be great to see more volunteers getting involved in the next year so we can continue to provide girls with wonderful opportunities and lifelong memories. The Girlguiding girls attitude survey- which is well worth a read and a great insight into the lives of young people today, found that girls are over 20% more confident when involved in guiding! Guiding is so special and as one of our new Guides told us- 'It is great to be doing something fun and important, otherwise I just spend all of my time at home doing nothing. I really enjoy Guides.'</p> <p>Phoenix Group: Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening Phoenix is a ladies group open to all ages. Current membership is 35 but many others attend our meetings as visitors or friends. When the subject matter is appropriate we also invite the menfolk to join us. We meet every 1st Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall. Meetings can be a talk, a demo or a hands on activity. We also organise a summer trip, a Christmas meal, a summer garden party & mid-month activities in the spring/summer months. Activities are coordinated by a committee. Every year we raise money for charity mainly through our monthly raffle. We currently have 2 charities ShelterBox & Bidford Dementia Cafe. These charities are currently in their second year of our support. A new charity for 2026 will be chosen by members at our next November meeting. We have had a variety of topics in the past 12 months. Highlights include: How to keep safe from Cyber Crime by Mike Barbour. A very useful & informative presentation guiding the audience through the various types of illegal activity, advising on ways to avoid these dangers & how to report such threats Diamonds by Denis Lavery from Prangles. Denis talked us through how diamonds were formed & how they are mined. He explained carats, cuts & shapes. Attendees were all able to try on a very expensive diamond ring. Training Guide Dog Puppies with Rod Arthur & his current puppy in training. Very interesting talk explaining the process that happens prior to the commencement of formal training. Wills & Power of Attorney with Jerry Carrington from Silvertime Legal. Lots of interesting, informative & thought provoking presentation promoted questions from the floor. <u>Bridges to Prosperity with Jamie Bryan.</u> This is a charity providing funds to help link communities. Jamie talked us through how he became involved in the project, the logistics of the build, the build itself & the relationship with the local team. Lots of great photos. Yearly trips - we always open these up to non-members where seats on the coach permit. Last summer our popular trip was to the Black Country Museum. An extremely interesting place This year our trip is to Bletchley Park, home of the code breakers during WW2. There are still a few places on the Details of our group activities can be found on our Phoenix Facebook page, Parish & Church notice boards, the Harvington Facebook page & in Harvington Newsletter. Our next meeting is 7 May 7.45 - Darjeeling & the last Himalayan Kingdom with Sue Ablett. I hope to see some of you there. Thank you for listening.</p>
5.	<p><u>Presentations:</u></p> <p><u>a)Cycleway Project:</u> Cllr. Ms. Smith reported that the Cycleway planned from Evesham to Alcester to Stratford-on-Avon via Norton & Lenchwick, Harvington and Salford Priors has been ongoing. The Group has been talking to Landowners, District Council and Worcestershire County Council, Highways Department. Lots of work has taken place in connecting communities and people. Harvington applied for a Community Legacy Grant and was awarded £150,000 and £500 from Norton & Lenchwick Parish Council. The latest report from Worcestershire County Council is that the Cycleway is not part of the Infrastructure Plan so at this moment we cannot move forward with it.</p> <p><u>b)Update on the refurbishment of the Playing Field:</u> Consultation has taken place and quotes received. The Pump Track was ruled out at this stage as the cost of doing so was very high. The Council will be discussing at their May meeting quotes received in regard to a Muga football pitch area, replacement goals and nets. Stage 2 will be more play equipment for</p>

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smaller children.

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| 6. <u>Matters raised by Parishioners:</u>
<u>Parking:</u> Damage to Village Green area and the area at the bottom of Crest Hill. Council members asked to look at the posts on the corner of Hughes Lane.
<u>Meadow Walk:</u> Yellow covering on footpath is causing concern throughout the Village as especially when wet is slippery and being treaded into households. Rights of Way Officer to be contacted.
<u>Allotments:</u> Queries to the company that look after the Allotments are not being responded to. Suggest contacting the Vicar, Richard Thorniley. |
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Meeting closed at 6.52pm.
