

Harbury Parish Council

Annual Report 2012/13



Chairman's Report

In many respects this was a relatively quiet year for the parish council. The routine business of the council has been carried out calmly and efficiently by the new clerk (Alison Biddle) and the rest of the council. Playgrounds and playing fields have been maintained, planning applications have been scrutinised and commented on, and village organisations have been supported. While sometimes these things happen as if by magic, in reality a lot of hard work goes on behind the scenes via email (I have received more than a thousand emails related to PC business in the last year!) and sometimes in face-to-face meetings. None of this would be possible without the professionalism of the clerk and the dedication of fellow councillors who sometimes traipse out in all weathers to check on street lights, or a drainage problem, or a broken piece of play equipment. Some of them even do the repairs themselves!

I am very pleased that the PC has continued to support both the library and the village hall this year. Legal delays mean the PC has yet to obtain a lease for the library, but the building is functioning well. These are vital community assets, and the Biblio's café in the library is a very welcome addition to village amenities.

Planning is perhaps the most contentious issue at the moment. Last year I hoped the district's core strategy might be in place now, but we still await it. Without it we can't really move forward with a neighbourhood plan. There have been several controversial planning applications this year and the planning group has worked hard to give a fair view of proposals, reflecting the concerns of locals and of the council where appropriate. New applications in the coming year will almost certainly cause similar anxiety. The second phase of the Bush Heath Lane development, by contrast, was approved without any opposition and shows that an appropriate development that meets local needs will be welcomed.

Dr Tim Lockley
Chairman, Harbury Parish Council

Planning Working Party Report

Most applications have some sort of conditions added to the permission when it is granted such as that it has to be started within 3 years or that a tree/hedge planting has to be agreed first. This is what permission with conditions means. PP or LBC not required means that no application is needed or even building consent. This is possibly a small extension or a porch that is allowed under permitted development. Buildings in the conservation area have to get conservation area consent.

A scoping survey is just what it says. An organisation thinking of a large development has to do a scoping survey looking at all the possible implications before an application is sent into the local authority. At this stage the parish council will not be asked to make any representation. If the electorate are mindful to get together to make a representation to the planning authority they are at liberty to do

so and this might be beneficial for them, to try to influence the final plans for the development.

If an application is turned down by SDC then the applicant can appeal to a higher authority for a decision. After this decision there is no right of appeal from either side. Hedges and trees need planning applications and we tried very hard to maintain an old hedge when a farmer wanted to turn 2 fields into one. Unfortunately the rules are very exact about what has to be retained and after a lot of research we were unable to save this hedge.

This year will see the final phase of the Hereburgh Way development completed the start of which was held up by very wet weather.

The government now has a National Policy Planning Framework and as Stratford DC still does not have a Core Planning Strategy it is the former that district councillors look to when making their decisions. Our local village design statement and parish plan carry some weight but to make a new neighbourhood plan might be in our best interests. However these are still in their infancy and we are going to training sessions to find out how to manage any involvement. A neighbourhood plan would not be just a village matter but we would be best doing it with our neighbouring settlements. These are designed for neighbourhoods to encourage buildings where they are most needed rather than developers buying land for their needs without thought for the local area.

I would like to thank the members of the working group for all their input and training in the last year.

Cllr Jenny Patrick
Chair of Harbury Parish Council Planning Working Party

Environment Working Party Report

2012-13 has been the year of the removal of all concrete street lighting columns, a four year programme to improve safety. The replacement programme saw the first five of these lights fitted in 2011, with three last year and the final six being erected in 2012/2013. It was decided to replace all lighting with LED fittings where the long life of LED (Light Emitting Diodes) lighting means LED lighting life is up to 100,000 hours, where typically this equates to approximately 25 years or a 70% reduction in carbon and in energy consumption.

The parish council has also managed to persuade Linfoot Homes to contribute to a new LED in Bush Heath Lane to help extend the lighting further up the road to reach the new development.

Traffic calming this year has seen the multiplication of speed aware signs, having one in Mill Street (30mph) and a new one on Bush Heath Road (40mph) reminding all vehicles of the need to slow down.

Our village improvements have recognised the new development, where we have joined the pavement between Hereburgh Way and Manor Road last year and sourced dropped kerbs this year. In addition we have had a bus bay marked on Binswood End, helping with road safety on that stretch of road. And safety rails have been installed outside the automatic doors of the Co-operative Store, helping to protect our younger residents on leaving the premises.

Cllr Amanda Lewis
Chair, Harbury Parish Council Environment Working Party

Properties Working Party Report

The Properties Working Party is responsible for the village greens, the cemetery and the playing fields. The mowing and general maintenance is carried out by a contractor. The previous 3 year contract expired at the end of March this year and after a tendering process the contract was awarded to Michael Mann (MFM Services) who had already proved very helpful in undertaking jobs for the Council.

The exceptionally wet weather since last spring has made conditions at the playing field very difficult. It has been waterlogged for many months and this resulted in a lot of damage being caused by vehicles crossing the grass when the bonfire was built in November. It is hoped to repair this now it is drying out and also to undertake necessary hedge work which has also been impossible. Work will also be carried out to clear the ditch which has been partially blocked by rubbish.

Repairs and replacements have proved expensive this year. The multi play unit is a popular piece of equipment and would now be prohibitively expensive to replace. The scramble net has been replaced and the upper level re-surfaced and we hope this will ensure a few more years of useful life. Substantial wear and tear damage to the skate park also required costly repair but we are very pleased with the work. The junior football goalposts had to be removed as they were so worn as to be unsafe and with the support of County Councillor Stevens, we obtained a Community Grant to replace them. Work to improve the BMX track should start soon with the better conditions.

We receive regular complaints about the amount of dog mess on the field. There are two dog bins and it is now considered acceptable to dispose of bags in the ordinary bins so there is really no excuse. A great many people use the field to exercise their dogs and it would be good if they could remember that it is first and foremost a playing field for children and clear up after their animals.

In an effort to improve the use of the car park we have had spaces marked and this has greatly improved the efficient use of the area. There is also now a prominent notice by the bollards with information on how to obtain a key in the event of an emergency vehicle needing to access the field.

A number of graves in the cemetery are affected by growth of brambles and unwanted trees and shrubs and the new contractor is going to tidy these up and

clear the brambles at the far side. This should very much improve the look of the cemetery.

I am indebted to my fellow working party members, Councillors Thompson, Summers, Thornley, Knowles and Mancell for their support. Particular thanks are due to Councillor Summers for tidying up the notice boards and the entrance to the car park. I must also thank Councillors Knowles, Ekins and Thompson for taking part with me in the rota for weekly inspections of the equipment at the playing fields here and at Deppers Bridge. Finally, thanks to our hard working and very efficient clerk Alison Biddle.

Cllr Sharon Hancock
Chair of Harbury Parish Council Properties Working Party

Finance & General Purposes Working Party Report

First I would like to thank our clerk, Alison Biddle, for all of the help and support she has given to me and all of the councillors over the last year. Alison has only been with us for just over a year and she has brought a wealth of experience to our office and has quickly got to grips with our quaint Harbury ways.

The precept for this year, 2013/14 has been increased by £5835 to £77,460; this gives a rise of around £9.65 per year or 80p per month, on a Band 'D' property within Harbury. This is to provide funds to support our community buildings, Harbury Library, Village Hall and the Chapel. As in previous years we are supporting Harbury Library's running costs through its start-up period. This financial year we will start a building maintenance fund (Sinking Fund) for the Library; this extra £5,000 is the bulk of the precept increase for this year. The F&GP working party recommended, in January, to the full parish council that this precept would enable the parish council to fully fund its plans for the year 2013/14.

This budget will allow us to carry out our plans in the following areas;

- **Play areas** – While some of the existing equipment has already been replaced and this is on-going, there are repairs needed to the grounds following the appalling weather conditions through the winter along with attention to the ground drainage. Refurbishment work is planned to the BMX and the Skate Park areas.
- **Grants** – This year we have set the grants budget to £5,000 and the council intends, as in previous years, to spend these funds by giving priority to local youth groups. Previously we have made grants to Harbury Pre-School, D of E Group, Harbury Games, Junior Rugby Club and Windmill Nursery to name just a few parish groups.
- **Community Buildings** – We have again this year set aside £5,000 to directly support the development plans for the village hall. We have now included support for the running costs of Harbury Library through the initial period and we will start the Library Building Maintenance Fund, with £5,000 per year.

- **Street Lighting** – The budget for street lighting is being kept the same as last year, with £4000 to cover new and replacement columns with an additional £4000 for maintenance, new LED Street Lights will replace the final concrete columns still in use in the village.
- **Village Maintenance** – We have agreed a new maintenance contract, with a local firm, MFM Services on the basis of best price and very good references.

A summary of the accounts for last year (2012-2013) are shown below. These are well in line with our planned budgetary controls. Copies of the full accounts are appended to this report.

INCOME	
Precepts	71625.00
Interest Received	123.88
Allotment Rents	1015.00
Burial Ground Fees	1588.00
Playing Field Hire	250.00
Way leave	34.28
Grass Verge Contribution - SDC	695.11
Grant Funding	1400.00
Sale of Computer	--.00
Sports Club Contribution	2880.00
Insurance claims	364.77
Other contributions	95.80
TOTAL INCOME	80,071.84

EXPENDITURE	
General Administration	17835.77
Training	77.50
Purchase of Office Equipment	337.97
Parish Office	3705.63
Power Of Wellbeing/Grants	1975.00
Section 137	1575.00
Contribution to Village Hall	5000.00
Library	3277.00
Concessionary Travel	324.00
Running Costs:	
Allotments	767.81
Burial	2673.12
Open Spaces	4320.24
Playing Fields & Car Park	13608.87
Non-Estate Roads	1732.64
Street Lighting	8955.94
Purchase of Village Assets	315.00
Contribution to Sports Clubs Fund	1870.00
Councillors Allowances	2250.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	70601.49

The Parish Office is open four mornings a week, gives us all access to the Parish Council, the Clerk and to minutes, reports, planning applications etc.

The Harbury Parish Council website provides another way to keep in touch with the Parish Council, giving you online access to the minutes, meeting schedules, quarterly reports and the contact details for the all of the Council. Current Harbury Parish planning applications can be viewed via our website, along with the information from many of the other Harbury Community Groups. Please go to <http://www.harbury-pc.gov.uk/>

My thanks go to my colleagues on the F&GP Working Party, Councillors Tim Lockley, Sharon Hancock, Amanda Lewis and Steve Ekins for their help, contributions and commitment throughout the year.

Cllr Tony Mancell
Chair, Harbury Parish Council Finance & General Purposes Working Party

Deppers Bridge Report

We still have an on-going problem, of heavy vehicles (over 7.5T) that are still using the railway bridge. Residents need to be vigilant and report the registration number of offenders to the police. A solution has eventually been found, to the leaking foul water pipe that services Highfield Cottages. The rotten wood on the bench in the park has been replaced.

The solar farm scoping exercise carried out by Solar Power South Ltd, to erect 50,000 solar panels on fields behind houses to the south of Deppers Bridge. Has caused a number of Deppers Bridge residents to form an action group who are ready to oppose this should planning permission be applied for.

Cllr Steve Ekins
Parish councillor for Deppers Bridge

Reports from Village Groups & Organisations

Harbury Junior Netball Club

Last year we were lucky enough to receive a very generous grant from the Harbury Parish Council. We have spent the money on new training and match balls. Also it has help subsidize the kit for all 7 teams. And on top of that we purchased new light weight posts to which the grant contributed.

With now 57 local girls now playing netball for the club it was essential that we were able to provide enough balls for training and that each team had a match ball for their Sunday morning matches. All the girls have looked very smart all season in their new kit and are very proud to wear it.

Unfortunately we have been let down on several occasions regarding erecting the posts. But I am very pleased to let you know that over the summer the new sleeves will be fitted and the new posts will be in position for next year.

We are very grateful to the parish council for the grant. It is extremely important to our club that we offer as high a level of coaching as we can but at the same time keeping costs down to a minimum and therefore grants of this nature are a great boost.

Becky McDaid
Harbury Junior Netball Club

Windmills Nursery

Windmills Nursery would like to thank Harbury Parish Council for the £1000 grant awarded to them in October 2012.

The money will be going towards a new cover for the outside area at Windmills Nursery including side panels which will allow the outside classroom to be used in all weather and provide a safer friendlier environment for children, parents and staff. The nursery is still fundraising to allow this project to proceed, but the support from Harbury Parish Council has really helped us in our fundraising efforts.

Katharine Giblin
Director Windmills Nursery

Harbury Rugby Football Club

The contribution of £1,010.00 from the Parish Council towards a new disabled toilet and baby changing facilities has yet to be spent.

The overall cost of the refurbishment of Clubroom toilet facilities, of which the disabled toilet is part, has exceeded our original cost estimates and we are putting further funding together to meet this.

In the meantime, we have applied for Building Regulation approval and the project is programmed to start in August and to complete for the start of the new rugby season.

David Andrews
Facilities Manager, Harbury RFC

Harbury Village Hall

Our Village Hall is now in its second half century and importantly continues to thrive and be a major asset to village life. Booking levels remain good and are still growing, providing sufficient income to cover the day to day running costs.

Last year saw the complete, and long overdue, refurbishment of the kitchen. This has been welcomed by the many hall users and has resulted in a significant number of new bookings, notably for wedding receptions. At the same time we have seen a full year's benefit from the installation of photovoltaic panels in the previous year, the income from which almost exactly counters the expenditure on electricity, a welcome reduction in overheads.

One unlikely but very useful windfall has been the acquisition of 150 replacement chairs for the main hall. The old chairs were worn out and over 20 years old, the new ones came from the "Remains of the Games" surplus following the London Olympics.

The Committee's next major project is to build a stage and new changing rooms and showers at the west end of the hall. Tenders are currently being sought for this.

The day to day running of the hall and various improvements all require a huge amount of hard work and I must thank the many people involved. The management committee, the fund raising committee, the Parish Council, the Long family for running the successful rural cinema, CANA for frequently providing liquid refreshment and last but not least the village generally for their goodwill and generosity.

Geoff Thorpe
Chairman, Harbury Village Hall Management Committee

Harbury Twinning Association

Since the very successful visit to Samois-sur-Seine in May 2012 the Association has been busy raising funds and planning for the visit of our French friends from 17th-20th May this year. We had a stall at the Carnival, a Bastille Day celebration, a Christmas party followed by Fete des Rois (French Epiphany) and recently a skittles night. We also had a coffee morning in the Tom Hauley Room, the proceeds of which were donated to the Village Hall.

Around 60 people are coming from Samois. A group are cycling all the way and four Harbury twinners are meeting them at Newhaven and cycling with them to Harbury. On Saturday 18th May there will be a range of activities including a local walk, a garden walkabout and pub games at the Old New Inn. In the evening there will be a giant safari supper. On Sunday 19th May, we will take our guests to Oxford where we have arranged walking tour with a French speaking guide. In the evening there will be a Ceilidh in the Village Hall with a pig roast. Our guests will depart on Monday morning. A great deal of hard work has gone into the organisation of the weekend and there will be plenty more needed over the weekend but we all feel that it is more than worthwhile and many Anglo-French friendships have been made. We would welcome more members especially young families as children gain enormously from the experience.

Committee 2012-13. Chairman. Andrew Patrick. Secretary. Sally Stringer. Treasurer. Tom Smith. Colin and Sallie Humphreys. Tony and Joan Thomas, Margaret McDonald, Anne Vincent, Sharon Hancock, John Stringer, Julie Linforth, Peter Rollason, Jan Freeman.

Sharon Hancock
Member of Harbury Twinning Association

Harbury Library and Biblio's Café

The library re-opened as a community library on May 10th, 2012. It is now open six days a week, rather than two when WCC operated it, and the café is open four mornings a week. The transformation of the building was only possible via the grants from WCC and the Harbury Energy Initiative, as well as the building repairs undertaken by WCC before the end their lease in March 2012. We inherited a very good facility and we have strived to keep it that way.

We have begun to augment the book stock that had gradually declined over the years. We now have an extra 750 good quality donated books that are part of the 'Harbury Collection' and our Buy-A-Book scheme will allow us to purchase the latest and most sought after books for the library shelves. Estimated footfall for the first twelve months of operation is 16,500 (about 63 people per day), and the café has served more than 5,000 customers since opening.

The heart of our strategy was always that the library should be self-sustaining, and the café was the means of doing it. Thanks to a small but dedicated band of volunteers the café has proved a great success, not only raising more money than we originally hoped, but also becoming a new social hub for villagers.

We are grateful to the Parish Council for taking on the lease, though it has not been signed yet. This will give the library security of tenure and hopefully should not prove too onerous financially for the PC in the near future.

The library and café are a great success story, showing what can be done by villagers working together for the common good.

Tim Lockley
Chairman of Harbury Library Group



Contact Your Council

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

Office opening hours: 9.00am to 12.00pm Monday – Thursday

Telephone: 01926 614646

Email: clerk@harbury-pc.gov.uk

Website: www.harbury-pc.gov.uk

All parish councillors can be contacted via the website or by telephoning the clerk. The website can also be used to access current and historic planning applications, check on local events and download minutes and agendas.

Parish Council Attendance April 2012 to March 2013 (maximum 14)

Cllr Tim Lockley, Chairman	12
Cllr Keith Thompson, Vice-chairman	13
Cllr Jenny Patrick	11
Cllr Sharon Hancock	14
Cllr Pat Summers	11
Cllr Amanda Lewis	13
Cllr Alan Knowles	14
Cllr Tony Mancell	10
Cllr Steve Ekins	10
Cllr Janet Thornley	12

Harbury Parish Council
Financial Statements
Year Ended 31 March 2013

Subject to Audit

Harbury Parish Council
2, Bull Ring Business Centre
Church Terrace
Harbury
Leamington Spa
CV33 9HL



Harbury Parish Council
Financial Statements Year Ended 31 March 2013 (subject to audit)

Year Ended 31/03/12

Income & Expenditure

Year Ended 31/03/13

GENERAL PARISH FUND

£	<u>Income</u>	£
67,256.00	Precepts	71,625.00
96.70	Interest received	123.88
890.00	Allotment rents	1,015.00
2,725.00	Burial ground fees	1,588.00
200.00	Playing field hire	250.00
34.08	Wayleave	34.28
695.11	Grass verge contribution - SDC	695.11
2,411.23	Grant funding	1,400.00
-	Sale of computer	-
120.00	Contribution from sports club	2,880.00
2,220.00	Insurance claims	364.77
12.00	Other contributions/misc	95.80
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76,660.12	TOTAL INCOME	80,071.84
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	<u>Expenditure</u>	
15,822.50	General administration	17,835.77
110.00	Training	77.50
265.20	Purchase of office equipment	337.97
3,670.69	Parish office	3,705.63
1,735.00	Power of wellbeing /Grants	1,975.00
-	Sec 137	1,575.00
5,500.00	Contribution to village hall	5,000.00
-	Library	3,277.00
-	Concessionary travel	324.00
2,305.00	Parish plan update	-
	Running costs:	
550.95	Allotments	767.81
2,381.47	Burial	2,673.12
4,204.60	Open spaces	4,320.24
13,376.14	Playing fields & car park	13,608.87
2,300.00	Resurfacing basket ball court/tennis court works	-
1,499.40	Non-estate roads	1,732.64
5,541.80	Street lighting	8,955.94
1,250.00	BMX track	-
250.00	Purchase of village assets	315.00
1,870.00	Contribution to sports club fund	1,870.00
1,750.00	Councillors allowances	2,250.00
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64,382.75	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	70,601.49
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12,277.37	SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR YEAR	9,470.35

Harbury Parish Council
Financial Statements Year Ended 31 March 2013 (subject to audit)

Year Ended 31/03/2012	SPECIFIC FUNDS	Year Ended 31/03/2013
£	Tennis & Netball Court Repairs	£
	<u>Income</u>	
53.85	Interest received	142.95
1,750.00	Contributions from parish council	1,870.00
3,860.00	Contributions from sports clubs	3,740.00
- 1,746.00	<u>Less payment</u>	- 2,880.00
<u>3,917.85</u>	TOTAL INCOME	<u>2,872.95</u>

Harbury Parish Council
Financial Statements Year Ended 31 March 2013 (subject to audit)
Supporting Statement

1. Debtors

Debts Outstanding at 31 March 2013

At the year end a total of **£1,472.48** was outstanding and due to the parish council. This debt relates to VAT paid and will be re-imbursed during the next financial year.

Payments in Advance	£	
Two months of insurance premiums		394.83

2. Creditors

These are made up of:

Allowance for audit fee	500.00
Allowance for street lighting electricity	329.82

Payments made in advance to the parish council

Allotment rents	550.00
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Total	<u><u>1,379.82</u></u>
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3. Sec 137

The power of wellbeing was repealed in the summer of 2012 and was replaced by the general power of competence. For a short transitional period, the council reverted to the use of Sec 137 to pay grants to village organisations which it was not able to pay using any other power. The expenditure limit for 2012/13 was £6.80 per elector.

The relevant payments are:

Payee	Nature of Payment	£
Harbury Pre-School	Grant	500.00
Windmills Nursery	Grant	1,000.00
Royal British Legion	Donation	75.00
	Total	<u><u>1,575.00</u></u>

4. Other Grants

Payee	Nature of Payment	£
Harbury Junior Netball Club	Grant	565.00
Harbury Village Show	Grant	200.00
Harbury RFC	Grant	1,010.00
Harbury Library (First Aid Courses)	Grant	200.00
	Total	<u><u>1,975.00</u></u>

Harbury Parish Council
Financial Statements Year Ended 31 March 2013 (subject to audit)

Funds Statement

Year Ended 31.03.2012		Year Ended 31.03.2013
£	General Fund	£
43,655.09	Balance at 1 April	55,932.46
12,277.37	Add surplus/less deficit for year	9,470.35
55,932.46	Balance at 31 March	65,402.81
	Tennis & Netball Courts Fund	
23,724.03	Balance at 1 April	27,641.88
5,610.00	Add payment into account	5,610.00
53.85	Add interest for year	142.95
- 1,746.00	Less payment out of account	- 2,880.00
27,641.88	Balance at 31 March	30,514.83

Asset Register

As of 31 March 2013, the assets belonging to the parish council can be summarized as follows:

	£
Community & land assets with a nominal value	14.00
Office equipment	3,283.01
Street furniture	122,068.02
Cemetery - land and chapel of rest	28,500.00
Play equipment	92,451.32
Tennis & netball courts	16,300.00
Total	262,616.35

Harbury Parish Council
Financial Statements Year Ended 31 March 2013 (subject to audit)

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2013

Year ended 31.03.2012		Year ended 31.03.2013
£	Current Assets	£
375.44	Payments in advance	394.83
2,590.69	VAT Debtor	1,472.48
-	Other debtors	-
100.00	Cash with clerk to the council	100.00
84,076.19	Cash at bank	95,330.15
87,142.32		97,297.46
	Less current liabilities	
- 3,567.98	Creditors	- 1,379.82
83,574.34	Total Net Assets	95,917.64
43,655.09	General fund balance b/f	55,932.46
12,277.37	Less deficit/plus surplus	9,470.35
55,932.46	Balance 31 March	65,402.81
	Specific funds:	
27,641.88	Tennis & Netball Courts Fund	30,514.83
83,574.34		95,917.64

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31 March 2013 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.

These financial statements were approved by Harbury Parish Council on.....

Signed.....
Chairman of Harbury PC

Date.....

Signed.....
Clerk to the Council & RFO

Date.....