



Your community update

Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Clerk: Mrs. C. Crane

March 2025



Welcome to our March Community Update!

Meetings are a key part of our day to day activity at the Council. They are where items are discussed and considered by the Councillors and decisions made. In March, we invite you to join us at our combined meeting on Wednesday 12th and at our Town Council meeting on Wednesday 26th. All meeting details are available on our website at www.harleston-tc.gov.uk. In addition our next Annual Town Meeting will be held on 21st May at 6.30pm in the Social Room so please do save the date!



Thank you Keith Harrison

Redenhall with Harleston Town Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Keith Harrison following his recent resignation as a councillor on the Town Council. Keith has been instrumental in working with the Council on a range of initiatives including being the Chair of our Finance Committee. We cannot thank Keith enough for the time, energy and effort he brought to his role as councillor and Chair of the Finance Committee. As a Town Council we rely on people, such as Keith, to ensure the Town Council thrives and effectively serves you, our residents. If you have ever wondered what it would be like to be a councillor or to get involved in any of our initiatives, from planter group volunteers to our Youth Forum, for the benefit of Harleston please do not hesitate to contact the office for an informal conversation. You can also find lots of information on our website.

Radio Interview!

The Chair of Harleston Town Council joins Park Radio monthly providing updates and insights about our town. You can listen to all the interviews via our [website](http://www.harleston-tc.gov.uk).



Stay up to date!

Ensure you're fully informed by subscribing to the Town Council website for emailed updates at www.harleston-tc.gov.uk and stay connected with quick updates on the Redenhall with Harleston Town Council Facebook page.



Town Councillor 'Drop-In' Surgery:

Don't forget our Town Councillor drop-in surgeries, held from 10 am to 12 noon on the 3rd Saturday of each month at Harleston Information Plus. Your questions and concerns, along with our responses, are featured on the Town Councillor 'Drop-In' Surgery page on our website. It's a great way to stay informed and you find out about the Q&A's here: [Q & A from the May Town Councillor Surgery – Harleston Town Council \(harleston-tc.gov.uk\)](http://www.harleston-tc.gov.uk).

Town Council updates

VE Day 80



On 8th May 2025 Redenhall with Harleston Town Council and the Harleston and District Branch of the Royal British Legion will be joining groups and people across the country in a shared moment of celebration and remembrance.

In Harleston we have arranged a day of events with more information to come in the following weeks. Underneath is an overview of the day and if you are available we would love to see you there to join in the celebrations and remembrance of this very special anniversary.

At 9.00am we will be raising the VE day flag at the War Memorial with our Town Crier, Norman Steer, reading the VE day 80 proclamation. From 10.00am - 11.30am we will be hosting a morning gathering at the Market Place so bring along a cup of tea and chair and join us! From 9.00pm we will gather once again at the War Memorial for an act of remembrance which will include laying

of 24 individual crosses for men of Harleston, Wortwell and Redenhall who lost their lives during WW2. Then at 9.30pm we will join the nation in lighting the lamp, reading the Tribute and singing the hymn 'I vow to thee my country'. We do hope you can join us on this very special day.

Youth Forum



The Youth Forum held their second meeting in February. This initiative aims to give young people aged 11 to 18 a voice in our community whilst harnesses the ideas and energy of our youth for the benefit of all residents. The next Youth Forum meetings will be held at the Memorial Leisure Centre in the small meeting room (do ask the Gym reception for directions!) at 6.30pm on:

- Monday 17th March
- Monday 14th April.

Lidl update

We wanted to share with our residents an update about Lidl and confirm their project team are due to start on site in March 2025, with the aim of opening the store by the end of 2025. We do hope this update is useful to our residents and we will aim to work with Lidl to keep you up to date with developments.

Kissing gate update

The Town Council has been in contact with the developer in relation to the preservation and repair of the kissing gate along the Angles Way. The developer has updated us and they can confirm the work to improve the kissing gate will be undertaken and completed by early 2026, prior to plot occupations as stipulated in the planning condition.



Harleston Town Planter
Volunteer Group

Seeking Volunteers!

Make Harleston Bloom! No experience needed—
just your enthusiasm!

Interested? Contact us at:
eloise.wilkinson@harleston-tc.gov.uk

Let's bring our town to life together!

Town Council updates continued...

Upcoming Neighbourhood Police Street Surgeries and Meetings

Please see below dates for upcoming street surgeries and the next quarterly neighbourhood policing meeting.

21st March – Harleston Library (inside) 12:00 – 13:00

22nd March – Needham Village Hall – 14:00-15:30



The next Quarterly Neighbourhood Policing meeting will be on 13th April 2025 at 16:00. This will be a hybrid online and in person meeting for Diss, Long Stratton and Harleston. The location will be confirmed nearer to the time.

The Big South Norfolk Litter Pick



We are excited to let you know about the Big South Norfolk Litter Pick 2025! This year organise a litter pick with your community group, charity or school and you will automatically be placed in to a prize draw with a chance to WIN £200*. Each group taking part will also receive a £20 voucher* to spend in their community!

* Terms and Conditions can be found on South Norfolk Council's website.

Harleston Market

The Town Council would like to extend our thanks to our regular market stall holders—Castle Fruiterers, The Flying Chef, and Bec's Bakes—for their continued presence at our market. Your dedication is truly appreciated.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all the residents who visit the market and support our stall holders, especially during this time of year when the weather doesn't always cooperate. Your support for our local market businesses makes a significant difference.

The Town Council is always actively seeking new market stall holders to join our market community. If you are interested in having a stall, please contact us at enquiries@harleston-tc.gov.uk.



JOIN THE YOUTH FORUM!

EMPOWER YOUR VOICE AND CONNECT

Are you interested in improving things for young people in Harleston? If you are aged between 13 and 18, keen to find out more and get involved then come and join us on:

 Monday - 17th February, 17th March and 14th April

 6:30 PM

 Small Meeting Room at the Leisure Centre

 Free refreshments available 



Reminders!

Hedge maintenance

If your garden boundary is against public footpaths and highways please check your boundaries to ensure hedges are not encroaching on a public right of way. As we are coming into Spring, and the bird nesting season, hedge maintenance can be conducted and hedges attended to, if required, as long as the necessary checks for nesting birds have been carried out prior to commencing any work. Many thanks in advance for your help in ensuring our footpaths and highways remain accessible to all.

Ditch maintenance

During this period it is essential to ensure that all ditches and drainage systems are clear and functioning properly. Regular maintenance helps prevent flooding and protects our homes and roads. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our community safe and well-maintained.

Would you like to become one of our councillors?

Redenhall with Harleston Town Council needs you to help make Harleston an even better place to live. Do you want to...

- Help us support nature recovery
- Develop new skills
- Preserve the historic and natural beauty of the local area
- Help us maintain our recreation ground and amenities
- Support our town events, leisure centre and town initiatives

This is your town, so why not come along and have your say in its future. If you want to talk more about what it involves or how you can balance it with your other commitments speak to one of the councillors or contact Clare Crane the Town Clerk on enquiries@harleston-tc.gov.uk to find out more.

In addition a Casual Vacancy in the Office for Town Council has arisen. Therefore if you are interested in becoming a councillor you can find out more on our website here: <https://harleston-tc.gov.uk/casual-vacancy-in-the-office-of-town-councillor-10/>



Visit Harleston Update!

Bird Trail closes!

During February and running into the February half term we ran another successful Bird Trail which took our intrepid adventurers out and about to find exotic and more familiar birds in some of the amazing businesses in town. We were also in the Diss Express!

Thank you to everyone who took part. The Carter Family were the lucky winner of the wonderful hamper with lots of fantastic goodies donated by our lovely local businesses. Congratulations to everyone!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the businesses who took part and thanks to the following businesses who kindly donated items for the hamper:

The Library
Harleston Gym
The Apiary
Rosedales Funeral Services
Ray Munn
The Soul Cafe

Upcoming events

Easter in Harleston!

From 7th - 22nd April you can take part in our Easter Bunny Trail throughout the town and find hidden bunnies in shop windows during the Easter Holidays. Pick up an entry form from Harleston Information Plus, Harleston Library and Harleston Leisure Centre. Once you have completed the trail and the form hand back in for a chance to win a fantastic hamper!

Car Boot Sales!

Back by popular demand! This year we are holding our wonderful car book sales and our first one for 2025 in on 18th May on the Recreation Ground. It is £5 per car so if you have some things to sell come and join us!

Get involved!

The Town Council, via our Visit Harleston brand, is working hard to engage with our local community, shops, and businesses. If you are interested in finding out more and getting involved in any of our events, please contact us at events@harleston-tc.gov.uk.

Stay tuned for more details about our upcoming activities and initiatives by visiting www.visitharleston.org.uk.



February update from our County Councillor Cllr Martin Wilby

Norfolk is set to gain new powers and funding following a significant Government announcement on 5th February 2025. Norfolk would be a priority area for devolution and local Government reform. As part of this, the Government is seeking to create a devolution deal for Norfolk and Suffolk, which would include the introduction of an elected mayor. In addition, there are plans to reshape local government in Norfolk. The Government intends to replace the current two-tier structure, where services are shared between county and district councils, with unitary authorities. This would centralize decision-making and service delivery into a single authority, streamlining local government processes and potentially increasing efficiency and saving taxpayers money. These changes will empower local areas with more control over their services and funding. For further details on the progress of devolution and the impact of these reforms, visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/devolution.



Norfolk has launched new grant programmes as part of its five-year economic blueprint. The £1.1m Business Growth Fund offer grants of £5k to £50k, covering up to 30% of project costs. The £1.2m Made Smarter Adoption programme will provide grants of up to £20k, funding up to 50% of advanced manufacturing and engineering projects. These initiatives aim to boost key sectors like clean energy, agri-tech, and research, while unlocking private sector investment. Grants will be available from April 2025. For more details, visit the Made Smarter Adoption Programme East of England webpage.



A scheme to support people in Norfolk with long-term health issues get back into employment or continue in their jobs has already helped more than 1,100 participants. The Working Well Norfolk programme, launched in October 2023, supports individuals with long-term health issues to return to or stay in work. It has already helped over 1,100 participants, with 200 moving into work and 150 staying employed despite health challenges. The programme has received 1,600 referrals and will continue for another 18 months, with additional funding to help 730 more people, totalling 1,830 participants by September 2026. The £5.2m project is managed by NCC and delivered by Seetec Pluss and Standguide Ltd. For more info or to refer visit Working Well Norfolk – Seetec Pluss or call 01603 561054



Norfolk Youth Justice Service (NYJS) has received an overall rating of “good” after an inspection by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP), describing staff as “motivated” and “creative” going “above and beyond” to support the children they work with. The report followed a recent visit by inspectors. NYJS is a multi-agency partnership hosted within Norfolk County Council’s Children’s Services. Its aim is to prevent children from offending, help them repair the damage they cause victims and help children achieve their potential. The inspection found the governance of Norfolk YJS to be strong, with an experienced independent chair of the management board, who is “skilled and knowledgeable.” The quality of resettlement policy and provision was separately rated as “outstanding”



NCC has reached the halfway point of its 1 Million Trees for Norfolk initiative, planting the 500,000 tree. The milestone tree, a Norfolk Oak, was planted at Pracilla Bacon Lodge with support from Paul Bussey, who has funded several tree planting projects across the county.

February update from our District Councillor— Cllr Trevor Graham

Funding from central government is being reduced and there are demands for District Councils to provide even more services, such as food waste collections. Despite the challenges, South Norfolk Council have set the council tax for next year as £175 for a band D property, an increase of only £5. In recognition of the work involved in preparing for local government reorganisation, a reserve fund has been set up. The first requirement is to present our interim plan with a deadline of 21 March.



On a smaller and more local level, I have been able to help the Historical Society with money from my Members Ward Allowance to buy a new projector and display boards. My allowance has again all been used this year, but a new round of funding will soon be open when I hope to be able to help more local community groups. I have already received a request, so if your group would like some help, please get in touch with me.

I recently had the pleasure of opening a meeting hosted by the Historical Society to discuss a community wide program during the September Heritage Open Days. This is a national event providing a fantastic opportunity for widespread publicity for our town. A great turnout of 28 local groups raised imaginative suggestions including ideas to showcase the Community Nature Recovery work of our town and nearby villages.



This is something I wholeheartedly support, indeed I seconded a motion at Full Council to progress Community Nature Recovery. As part of the agreed recommendations, there is to be a new scheme to help individuals and small organisations to promote nature recovery in their communities. Also, to set up a new 'Conservation Fund' for small and medium scale projects of up to £10,000. I will work with the local nature recovery group to form a proposal for a local project. This all started from an idea by the people of Harleston.



Elsewhere, I chaired a meeting of the Finance Regulatory Audit and Governance Committee to discuss the external audit report and approve the statement of accounts. These may not be the most exciting documents for many people, but as a retired accountant and auditor they reminded me of a former life. With an agenda pack running at over 170 pages there was a lot of work involved. However, following a healthy and detailed discussion and review both the report and accounts were approved and signed.



I had the pleasure of attending a full house of St Johns church for an emotional final sermon from our outgoing Rector, Nigel Tuffnell. Nigel has been very supportive of the town in general and me personally, during my time in Harleston, as Chairman of the Town Council and currently as a District Councillor. He has opened St Johns Church to more community use supporting Nature Recovery in Harleston with a display still hanging from the ceiling, welcomed Heritage Open Days into the church, and planted a tree to commemorate our local association with the sailing of the Mayflower ship to America. Most importantly to me, for moving my 24 years engagement with Chris into marriage last year. Nigel will forever be in my heart and thoughts. I wish him all the best for his future in Swaffham and beyond.

I will hold my next surgery on 8 March at Harleston Information Plus on Exchange Street in Harleston at 10:00. It would be great to see you there.

February update from our District Councillor— Cllr James Eddy

The big development at South Norfolk Council this month has been the agreement of the budget for another year at a meeting that took place last Wednesday. These are evidently complicated times financially for all levels of local government, so it was pleasing to see the desire from all sides to work constructively to find the best deal for the people of South Norfolk and the Waveney Valley.

As a result, due to some significant financial restraints, there will be a small rise in South Norfolk Council's proportion of this year's council tax. This is unfortunate but given that it will only constitute a £5 rise to £175 for Band D households, I do feel it is acceptable in the circumstances.



Alongside this, I am more happy to report that a new budget for preventing homelessness has been created for the next year. The £200,000 set aside for this will not be used for employing new staff and will instead be used to utilise the voluntary sector to resolve disputes and manage people's behaviour. Sadly, homelessness is an increasing problem in the district and there is undoubtedly a need to find sensible cost-effective solutions that can help as many people as possible.



In addition, it was also agreed to make use of a new additional grant of £134,365 for repairs and improvements to playgrounds throughout South Norfolk. Given the level of disrepair that many of our playgrounds are currently in, this does seem like a sensible and long overdue decision. Similarly, it was pleasing that the council agreed to increasing the Community Action Fund in 2025/26 by £100,000. This fund has regularly been oversubscribed in the past and has therefore seen worthy projects passed over for pretty flimsy reasons. My hope is that this additional funding can mean that more projects across more of the district can receive the funding they need and deserve.



On a slightly different note, I was pleased to support a motion recommitting South Norfolk Council to environmental action and Nature Recovery across the district, which will see the council continue to target Net Zero by 2030. In addition, it will also commission a new scheme to educate individuals and small organisations on how they can support Nature Recovery in their communities, and it will pilot a new 'Conservation Fund' in 2025, to fund small and medium scale projects across South Norfolk that meet the combined goals of nature restoration, carbon sequestration and enhancing public access to our countryside.

As always, if there is anything I can do to help or if you have any queries regarding South Norfolk Council then please get in contact by emailing me at james.eddy@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk or pop in to see me at my next councillor surgery at Harleston Information Plus on Saturday 29th March between 10am and 12.

