



Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Clerk: Mrs. L. Ling
Chairman: Mr B. Woods

Minutes

**of the Annual Town Meeting of Redenhall with Harleston Town Council
held at the Harleston Leisure Centre, Social Club
at 7.00pm on Wednesday 12th April 2017**

Present: Councillors Barry Woods (Chairman), Adrian Brownsea, Mark Betts, Ian Broughton, Martin Roberts, Frances Bickley, John Marjoram, Sandy Nicholson, and Town Clerk: Lynda Ling.
Also present were: County Councillor Martin Wilby, District Councillor Jeremy Savage, District Councillor Brian Riches, PC Heather Fields (Police), Norman Hart (Harleston's Future), Mel Jones (Diss & District CAB), Julie Helsby (Harleston Information Plus), Margaret Griffiths (Harleston & District Historical Society), Reverend Nigel Tuffnell, Clive Attwood (Harleston and District Business Forum), Graham Reardon and Les Ferne (Waveney Foodbank), Alan Thorp (Archbishop Sancroft High School)

1. Welcome - Councillor Barry Woods welcomed those present to the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Reverend Nigel Tuffnell to the floor who spoke of the recent deaths of three local teenagers who died tragically in a road accident nearby. A minute's silence then followed.

2. Apologies – None

3. Minutes of last year's Annual Town Meeting held on Wednesday 20th April 2016 - The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and were signed by Councillor Woods. Agreement proposed by Councillor Betts and seconded by Councillor John Marjoram (**appendix 1**)

4. To receive a report from the Chairman– Councillor Woods presented his report (**see appendix 2**) which highlighted the following:-

- Social Room – The room is being updated and refurbished with a view to hiring it out to the community. This follows the closure of the Apollo in January 2017.
- Free-weights area – The gym has extended into the clerk's office to create a free-weights area due to increasing demand and a continuing increase in memberships
- The council continues to work on behalf of residents to maximise the services provided, whilst maintaining a strong grip on the finances in this time of financial problems.
- Thanks to all individuals and organisations who have supported the council over the previous year and also to all the councillors who claim no expenses for their time given up for the community.
- Thanks to ex Councillors S. Marjoram and Goodswen who have recently left the council
- Thanks also to all staff who work so hard to enable the council to properly carry out its duties, including the gym staff, clerk, office administrator, maintenance team and

operations manager.

5. To receive a report from the Vice-Chairman – The vice-chairman welcomed those to the meeting, and presented her report (**see appendix 3**) which highlighted the following:-

- At a public meeting held in December 2016, it was decided by the public present that they wished for the council to seek to keep the car parking in Harleston free at point of use and to form a steering group made up of business owners, residents and the town council to explore avenues to help achieve this ideal.
- The steering group was formed and ably led by Councillor J. Marjoram with support from Councillors M. Roberts and M. Betts.
- A proposal was put before town council on Wednesday 15th March 2017 to discuss the findings of the steering group and agree any action. The proposition was to approach South Norfolk Council to discuss in principle the possibility of the council taking over the responsibility for Harleston's car parks, with no further costs to SNC; a cost neutral offer which is what SNC stated they were willing to consider at the public meeting.
- It was also proposed that the Vice-Chairman write to SNC to ask for this proposal be considered, which was duly done on Thursday 16th March 2017. A response was forthcoming 13 days later stating that a response would be forthcoming after due consideration.
- This is a great opportunity for both SNC and the town council to play a crucial part in safeguarding and enhancing the economic and social quality of our town.
- The leisure facilities that we operate are a wonderful hub that bring members of our community together in so many different ways. It is a business of this town and contributes to the economy of Harleston. Our recreation grounds play host to many clubs and we are proud of our association with these organisations.
- End of year figures for the membership element of the gym is showing at approx. £101,000, proving we have a successful community facility as well as a dedicated, hardworking team running our gym and that is something of which we are all very proud of and bodes well for the future.

6. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Finance Committee – Councillor Woods presented his report (**see appendix 4**) which highlighted the following:

- Precept – reduction of 1% this year on top of the 2.98% last year
- Annual Internal Audit Report for 2015/2016 states that *'based on the review of records and documentation and the testing carried out on the samples selected, is that appropriate financial controls exist at the council, and have been operating effectively throughout the year'*.
- Continuing to plan a frugal budget.

7. County Council report - County Councillor Martin Wilby presented his report – (**see appendix 5**) which highlighted the following:

- Norfolk schools continue to improve according to the latest Ofsted figures.
- Highways across Norfolk are to benefit from an extra £5m of funding.
- NCC have decided on three major highways projects to be prioritised.
- Harleston and District Business Forum.
- Mobile Library Service.
- Volunteers.

9. District Council report – District Councillor Jeremy Savage presented his and Cllr Brian Riches report – (**see appendix 6**) which highlighted the following:

- Wymondham and Long Stratton Leisure Centre.
- Toilets and car parks in Harleston.
- SNC building houses a business front.
- Loss of 3 young lives.
- SNC in last 6 of best councils.
- Parish Boundary Review.
- Devolution voted against.
- Policing Harleston toilet issue.

10. To receive reports from organisations receiving grant funding over the twelve months

- **Police** – PC Heather Fields is the new Beat Manager and is now covering Harleston 27 hours a week. PCSO Pete Williamson left 27th March. Jim Squires is now the new Engagement Officer.
- Diss and District Citizens Advice Bureau (**see appendix 7**)
- Waveney Food Bank (**see appendix 8**)
- Harleston and District Business Forum (**see appendix 9**)
- Harleston Information Plus (**see appendix 10**)
- Harleston Primary School (**see appendix 11**)
- Archbishop Sancroft High School – The school is supported by Diocese in Norwich it is the only Church of England school in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. The school is losing funding, under pressure to concentrate on Maths and English. The schools is continuing to share swimming facilities and costs.
- Borderhoppa Report (**see appendix 12**)
- Harleston and District Historical Society (**see appendix 13**)
- Senior Section – Girl Guides – Harleston Guides celebrate 100 years on 6th March. The Senior section would like to thank the Town Council for the grant of £400. Found a place to meet at Jays Green and the Catholic Church has been really helpful in giving us storage as well as a place to meet with a fully stocked kitchen and an outside place to do some cooking. Without the council a lot of this would not be possible.
- Harleston's Future

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed:

Date:



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Chairman: Mr B. Woods

MINUTES

**of the Annual Town Meeting of Redenhall with Harleston Town Council
held at the Harleston Leisure Centre, Social Club
at 7.00pm on Wednesday 20th April 2016**

Present: Councillors Barry Woods (Chairman), Adrian Brownsea, Mark Betts, Frances Bickley, Eric Bird, Simon Marjoram, John Marjoram, Sandy Nicholson, Frank Thomas and Town Clerk: Lynda Ling, Minute taker: Andy Jackson

Also present were: County Councillor Martin Wilby, District Councillors Jeremy Savage, Inspector Mike Austin (Police), Norman Hart (Harleston's Future), Mel Jones (Diss & District CAB), Julie Helsby (Harleston Information Plus), Margaret Griffiths (Harleston & District Historical Society), Lisa Blowfield (Harleston Primary School), Reverend Nigel Tuffnell, Reverend Jacquie Evans (1st Harleston Rainbows), Jim Keywood (Royal British Legion), Clive Attwood (Harleston and District Business Forum), Carol and Malcolm Wiles, Maria Tyler and Monica Woods

1. Welcome - Councillor Barry Woods welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. Apologies – None

3. Minutes of last year's Annual Town Meeting held on Wednesday 18th March 2015
- The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and were signed by Councillor Woods. Agreement proposed by Councillor Betts and seconded by Councillor John Marjoram

4. To receive a report from the Chairman– Councillor Woods presented his report – (see appendix 1) which highlighted the following:-

- Carol Wiles was awarded the MBE in recognition of her work in Harleston, this will be covered in more detail at the end of the meeting.
- The precept has been reduced this coming financial year
- Retirement of Cllr Eric Bird, and thanks for his many years of loyal service on this council and his significant contribution to achieving our present secure financial position
- Busy year for the council with a new Town Clerk, Mrs. Lynda Ling, and a restructuring of the duties of the council officers to increase the council's efficiency.
- Thanks to the work of the office staff, Lynda Ling, Andy Jackson and Tina Page, our new office administrator
- Councillors themselves are working to streamline our paperwork and thanks should be given to them for their continuing efforts on behalf of the community,

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Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Friday 9.30am to 1pm and Wednesdays 1pm to 5pm

without their services the council cannot function.

- Our gym is going from strength to strength due to the excellent work of our gym manager Natasha and her excellent staff, so the future is looking good.
- Our maintenance team continue their excellent work and the council has received a lot of positive publicity for our behavior towards our visitors, the swifts, in association with Harleston Future.
- Encouragement is given to everyone to give serious consideration to becoming a councillor when places become available as councillors provide an important service to the community bringing their individual skills to a structured organisation.
- The Council continues to support the Christmas lights organization, and although the Christmas Lights Group is autonomous, they are working with Harleston's Future who are handling the events side of the celebration. Unfortunately there was some vandalism this year to the tree but we still managed to keep most of the lights burning for residents and visitors alike.
- The council continues to try to work with all the organisations that do so much to make Harleston the place we love, and we have a selection of those organisations who form the backbone of Harleston carrying out invaluable work in the community.

5. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Finance Committee – Councillor Bird presented his report – (see appendix 2) which highlighted the following:

- Financial year 2014/2015 income from the precept was £291,890 with a further £38.115 in the form of a grant from SNC. In addition to these receipts the council will receive some £155k from various other sources and earnings.
- Major components of town council expenditure, aside from staff costs, are street lighting and maintenance, grants to local societies and clubs, loan repayments and the car park lease and maintenance. Staff costs, including on-costs, amount to £276k and all other expenses to £88k.
- Considerations were taken into account for major refurbishment of the leisure centre building, which were postponed and the expenditure budget underspent as a result. For the same reason it was budgeted for the gym to achieve lower income than previous years. The year-end figures show that the gym income was greater than in previous years and, for the first time since opening has covered its costs.
- Pleased to report that the precept, which is the charge to residents for local services has, this year, been reduced.
- Parish Council Internal Audit Services – After extensive checks the audit report states 'that based on the review of records and documentation and the testing carried out on the samples selected, is that appropriate financial controls exist at Redenhall with Harleston Town Council, and have been operating effectively throughout the year'.

6. County Council report - County Councillor Martin Wilby presented his report – (see appendix 3) which highlighted the following:

- Make-up of the County Council
- Ofsted figures

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- Highways funding and speeding including the NDR project
- Recycling and waste
- Tribute for local fire station
- Congratulations to all businesses that were nominated in the recent Retail Awards
- Thanks and congratulations to Cllr Eric Bird

7. District Council report – District Councillor Jeremy Savage presented his and Cllr Brian Riches report – (**see appendix 4**) which highlighted the following:

- Congratulating Carol Wiles on her MBE
- Congratulations to Harleston's Future on the sustained flag scheme
- Leases up for renewal on several Harleston shops
- South Norfolk Economic Growth Strategy 2016-2021
- Magpie sign
- South Norfolk Market Town Awards was awarded to Adjandek in Harleston for the best overall and best in customer service
- Grants given to organisations
- New toilet block
- Devolution
- Successful market events including the Antiques Market
- Wishing Eric Bird a long and happy retirement

8. To receive reports from other organisations and those organisations receiving grant funding over the twelve months

- Harleston Information Plus (**see appendix 5**)
- Lisa Blowfield – introduction of new Headteacher of Harleston Primary (**see appendix 6**)
- Royal British Legion – (**see appendix 7**)
- Harleston & District Business Forum – (**see appendix 8**)
- 1st Harleston Rainbows – (**see appendix 9**)
- Borderhoppa – (**see appendix 10**)
- Archbishop High School (**see appendix 11**)

9. Presentation to Carol Wiles MBE – The chairman presented Carol with a framed letter of thanks for her services to Harleston which was followed by a small reception in the clerk's office.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed:

Date:

Town meeting Report – 12/04/17

Report from the Chairman

As you are all aware the Apollo club has closed, reducing the venues which can be used for gatherings for the people of Harleston. If you look around you and think back to the state in which this room has been for some years, you can appreciate the steps this Council is taking to improve facilities for the people of Harleston and the surrounding villages.

This room will soon be available for use for various functions, so keep your eyes open for future events, especially the formal opening.

For those of you who like to visit a gym, or take part in various physical activities the Council is moving forward with its plans to increase the activities on offer. We have extended the free weights area of the gym to free up space within the main hall.

To paraphrase South Norfolk Council – *'Keeping people fit and healthy across South Norfolk is not only what a good Council should be doing, but it has been proved that every pound spent by local Councils on prevention and well being saves £70 elsewhere in the system.'*

This Council is proud to be doing just that for the people of Harleston.

I would thoroughly recommend your visiting our gym and speaking to our trained staff who are under the direction of the Gym Manager – Natasha Ives-Styman, and Duty Manager – Christy Rose.

For the future, this Council will continue to work on behalf of the residents to maximise the services provided, whilst maintaining a strong grip on the finances in this time of financial problems.

However, I would like to thank all those individuals and organisations who have supported this Council over this last year; and all the Councillors who claim no expenses for their time given up for the community.

And also all our staff who work so hard to enable the Council to properly carry out its duties.

Barry Woods – Chairman of Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Vice-Chair Report

Annual Town Meeting - Wednesday 12th April 2017

At the public meeting, which we held at the Archbishop Sancroft High School hall, in December 2016; it was decided by the public attending, that they wished for us to seek to keep the car parking in Harleston free at point of use and to form a steering group made up of business owners, residents and the town council to explore avenues to help achieve this ideal.

This steering group was ably led by Councillor John Marjoram with support from Councillors Martin Roberts and Mark Betts. A proposal was put before the Town Council on Wednesday 15th March 2017 to discuss the findings of the steering group and agree any action. The proposition was to approach South Norfolk Council to discuss in principle the possibility of us taking over the responsibility for Harleston's car parks, with no further costs to South Norfolk Council; a cost neutral offer, which is what South Norfolk Council stated they were willing to consider at our public meeting last December. This would also mean that the town council would consider entering into a long-term, low-cost lease of the town's car parks, with full responsibility for their management and maintenance, including any required resurfacing. Furthermore it was proposed that I, as Vice-chair, write to South Norfolk Council to ask for this proposal to be considered. As was reported in the local press, this letter was duly sent on Thursday 16th March 2017. A reply from Councillor John Fuller, leader of South Norfolk Council, was received by myself on Wednesday 29th March 2017, stating that they would get back to us once they have had the chance to consider this proposal.

I believe that an agreement to explore this proposal would be a great opportunity for both South Norfolk Council and our Town Council to play a crucial part in safeguarding and enhancing the economic and social quality of our town and I look forward to discussing this further with South Norfolk Council in the near future. I've lived in Harleston now for nearly 11 years. It's a very special place to live and shop and I want to try my best, as a town councillor and resident, to make sure it stays that way.

I would also like to take this opportunity to state that our leisure facilities are a wonderful hub that bring members of our community together in so many different ways. If you happen to enter our facilities, you will notice the buzz and hive of activities that are on offer for all ages of our community. Our recreation grounds play host to many clubs and we are proud of our association with these organisations. It is also a business of this town and contributes to the economy of Harleston.

Many of you may be wondering why we remain steadfast in our decision to retain ownership of our Leisure facilities. Whilst we place great value on our gym, which after all is a business of this parish, it did not make financial sense to give away the income generating part of our council to South Norfolk Council, to be left with the running and maintenance costs of the building in return. The gym is well placed to produce the income we require in the future to replace the reduction in government grants, which will ultimately end by 2019. We are already expanding our facilities and our ever increasing membership is allowing us to plan ahead in phases, to implement our future strategies to increase revenue even further.

As you can see, we are investing in this social room, which when complete will be a wonderful asset to the community and hopefully be utilised by residents and organisations for many happy occasions in the future. All these measures, of course, will help to negate the need to increase the precept of this parish, keeping our portion of the council tax bill as low as possible. In actual fact, as the Recreation Committee Chair, I am proud to state that current figures showing the membership income of the gym has been summed up for the end of the financial year as approximately £101,000. This not only proves we have a successful community facility but a dedicated, hardworking team running our gym and that is something of which we are all very proud of and bodes well for the future.

Cllr. Frances Bickley – Vice Chair

Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Town meeting Report – 12/04/17

Report from the Chairman of the Finance Committee

This last year we have had a change in the Chairmanship of the Finance Committee and a new team has been gathered to manage the finances of the Council. For some year's ex- Councillor Eric Bird had been Chairman of the Finance Committee and had guided this Council towards financial stability, and has largely achieved the goal.

I have taken over the reins of the Finance Committee and together with my team of Councillors are continuing the good work of ex-Councillor Bird.

In ex-Councillor Bird's last budget we reduced the precept claim on the residents of the Redenhall with Harleston Town Council area by 2.98%.

It is noticeable that on the current bills that are dropping on your doormats, this Council is the only one which has succeeded in reducing our claim on your money, this time by a further 1%. We achieved this by a carefully planned frugal budget as we are aware of how the precept affects our residents.

Though we obviously cannot promise to continue to reduce the precept claim on your pockets, the Finance Committee will be doing its best to mitigate any changes adversely affecting our finances.

Barry Woods – Chairman – Finance Committee

Annual County Council Report 2017

I am pleased to say that Norfolk's schools continue to improve according to the latest Ofsted figures. We are very fortunate in having excellent schools in this division of East Depwade which gives our youngsters the best possible start in life. Archbishop Sancroft High School, The Pulhams Primary, Scole Primary and Harleston Primary.

Highways across Norfolk are to benefit from an extra £5m of funding which was recently awarded to us by the Dft. 136 small highway schemes are to benefit through our popular Parish partnership scheme which are funded jointly by NCC, town and parish councils, the most applications were 56 for SAM2 which are the mobile flashing speed camera's. A big thank you to all of the volunteers that look after the SAM machines and collecting the data from them. Speed is still a major issue through our town and villages, so I ask that all drivers please think about the speed you are doing.

At this years budget I have put forward the plan for a Local members budget of £6,000 each which can only be used for local highways projects.

At NCC we have decided on three major highways projects to be prioritised, they are, The Long Stratton Bypass and Hempnal crossroads, Norwich Western link that will join the NDR up with the A47 and The Great Yarmouth 3rd river crossing Bridge. Good progress is being made on the Northern Distributor road and it's due to open in December 2017 and consultations are taking place on a set of improvements on the A47, where work is due to start in 2020, plus we have put forward our plans to dual the Acle straight and East Winch to Tilney also on the A47, so you can see that there is a lot going on now to improve Norfolk's Infrastructure and a lot being planned for the future. We are also working with our market towns(local knowledge is so valuable) across the County to work up highways strategys so that they can identify current and futue issues, so we are planning for the future.

Norfolk's re-cycling rates continue to improve, in 2015/16 we achieved our highest ever recycling rate of 45.8% compared to the national rate of 44.3%. We still have much to do to improve our recycling rates, so please continue to recycle/reuse and to compost.

I pay tribute to all of our emergency services for the work they do and their speedy attendance to all incidents The tragic accident at Pulham Market on April 5th where 3 young boys lost their lives, Kyle Warren, Billy Hines and Dominic O'Neil. The Fire in London road earlier this year was quickly brought under control and made safe for everyone. Also thanks to our local first responders who again carry out vital work helping others in our community. We have an excellent library in Harleston and our mobile library vans are as popular as ever out and about in our communities.

ALL VOLUNTEERS

We have a very active Harleston and District Business forum who have monthly breakfast meetings at the Swan, High school and Farmers Kitchen with a topical speakers keeping us all informed about current affairs and business opportunities, in March they visited the House of commons along with students from the high School.

We also have many popular pubs, shops and restaurents, which we can enjoy using, but also they help to attact tourist that come along to the Waveney valley to also visit attractions such as Billingford Windmill which is now being restored and the 100th Bomb Group Museum at Thorpe Abbotts which will gain international recognition when filming takes place for the Tom Hanks production of Masters in The Air

Appendix 6

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – 12TH APRIL 2017

TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

Brian and I are deeply distressed at the loss of 3 young lives in the terrible accident at Pulham; our sympathies are with the families and friends.

South Norfolk was in the last 6 in the Council of the year competition, I am proud of the fact that South Norfolk, a small District Council has reached the last 6 out of 380 UK Councils in these awards, this recognises that South Norfolk is one of the best places to live and start a business in the country and South Norfolk Council is one of the most forward thinking and best administered Councils.

Parish Boundary Review – A Community Governance Review is currently taking place; this is an opportunity to square off any illogical boundaries and in some cases to amalgamate Councils to make a more practical working unit. In some of our smaller Councils two thirds of the precept is spent on the Clerk and insurance. We are also concerned that out of 119 parishes in South Norfolk only 19 held Parish Council Elections in 2015 which is not good for local democracy.

District Council Boundary Review – The Boundary Commission has issued its final guidance regarding the District Council Ward Boundaries. Subject to Parliamentary approval their recommendations will result in 26 Wards in South Norfolk with 46 Councillors, there will be more multi-member Wards including some in the Waveney Valley; it is likely that the 2019 elections will be fought on these new boundaries.

Business Rates Review – There has been a lot of distress among local businesses, apparently in Harleston a typical shop with a rateable value of say £5,000 per annum has seen a reduction of about £200, but this can be misleading as single shops not part of a chain with rateable values of less than £12,000 may pay nothing at all and on a discretionary basis if a shop, pub or garage in a village is the last, then we exempt the rates. Where the most distress about rises has been is places like Southwold where there have been sharp rises.

The Next Local Plan – Councils are currently canvassing land owners to suggest land to be considered for building, this is a preliminary to decisions about where new homes are to be built in the future, but at the same time we must consider the infrastructure, for example in Harleston the Primary School is getting close to capacity as are also the Doctor's Surgery, we would like to see more smaller developments allowing local builders to take part which would lead to better designed homes as some of the larger sites are so tightly packed that I fear we are developing slums for the future.

I would again like to congratulate the Flags Committee in Harleston for the way they keep Harleston a colourful place to shop.

There are concerns about the extent of road side advertising, I particularly wonder why we need such a huge campaign for the Peterborough Antiques Fair, I very much doubt if the attendance from South Norfolk with equal the number of posters I have seen.

Devolution – It was disappointing that Councils in Norfolk voted against Devolution which allowed Cambridgeshire to gain an advantage, I still feel that if Suffolk are going ahead South Norfolk should join in otherwise the Waveney Valley will be divided.

Policing – Lorne Green has been very active since he was elected and is emphasising in particular rural policing issues, it is deeply concerning the number of local churches who have had lead stolen. Lorne is very good at listening and we should advise him of any problems we have.

The Harleston toilet issue is being resolved and has gone very quiet, it does seem likely that a few people have imposed their view on the larger community, although of course there were issues with the French design.

Brian and I look forward to working with the Harleston Community in the next year to deal with any issues that may be raised, one of which I am certain is the review of transport and parking within Harleston.

Harleston 2016/ 17

We saw 133 clients with a Harleston postcode during the year. The majority of these were seen at outreach (93) and the remainder seen at the bureau in Diss. Clients with a full range of advice issues were seen – i.e. debts, benefits, housing, family and relationships, legal issues, employment, consumer, energy and travel and transport.

The outreach is generally staffed by the same volunteer adviser, Laurie Vanner, although other volunteers cover the session when Laurie is not available. Laurie notes that clients establish trust over a period of time and tend to seek help from him as a first resort. This means that they only have to explain their circumstances once and hopefully can avoid having to explain multiple times to different individuals. All advisers can also access our client management system 'Petra', meaning that they can access the notes of their colleagues and pick up where someone else has left off.

Many of the Harleston clients are elderly and have disabilities. They like the convenience of being able to access the service close to home and for many, they would struggle to get to Diss or another information source. For those in receipt of benefits, having information and advice close to home reduces the amount our clients have to spend on travel. In addition, clients needing our specialist advice services such as employment advice can arrange appointments to come in to the Diss office if required. On one date in 2016/2017, a client was seen at Harleston as the first appointment at 9.30 a.m. It immediately became apparent to the adviser that specialist employment advice was required. The adviser was able to phone Diss and book an appointment with an employment adviser who happened to be present on that day. The client's problem was able to be speedily resolved on the same day, thus reducing his anxiety about his employment situation. Similarly, the volunteer advisers can contact the office in Diss if they are unsure about any aspect of the work during the session, to receive support from an Advice Session Supervisor.

In terms of the work carried out, as well as the face to face appointments, clients are able to bring paperwork to discuss with the adviser. In return, the adviser will often help the client to write a letter or make a phone call to a relevant individual or organisation. To this extent, the advisor acts as an advocate, supporting the clients so that they can take action and gain confidence in doing so.

As a member of a large national advice-giving organisation, we also have access to a range of specialist services. We have a comprehensive information system, covering all the key advice areas. In addition, we have a Specialist Support Unit, staffed primarily by people with legal expertise, who are able to provide detailed advice on housing, employment, benefits and debt. We are able to refer people to the Citizens Advice Money Advice Team, who will help clients navigate their way around available services and where appropriate, guide them through insolvency proceedings. The national consumer helpline also now falls within the services that the organisation provides and clients can receive expert consumer advice by phone or e-mail.

We have a rota of volunteer solicitors fortnightly at Diss, who are able to provide up to 30 minutes free legal advice for clients who need it. With the demise of legal aid, we find that this service is increasingly busy and of course, we can refer our Harleston clients in to this service too.

Since July 2016, we have had an Advice Champion in post. This is a worker who can pick up clients who are in crisis for a range of reasons, but who generally tend to be people who have no income, who are vulnerable through ill health, or who risk losing their home. The Advice Champion is able to work with our clients on a longer term basis than is usually possible, helping them to engage with partner agencies to ensure that they get the breadth of help and advice that they need. Mid Norfolk Citizens Advice are funded for this project through the Big Lottery and we are key partners. Other

partners include specialist housing agencies, social housing providers, domestic violence advice agencies, NHS Health and Wellbeing Services, the local foodbank and Norfolk Recovery Partnership. In addition, we are able to access legal advice through our partners at Norfolk Community Law Service and have recently been trialling using Skype to enable our clients to access free legal advice from locations outside Norwich, where NCLS are based.

We are part of the Energy Best Deal network and have helped hundreds of clients with energy matters this year, including switching suppliers, smart meters and pre-payment meters. We are also able to help vulnerable clients to be registered on the Priority Services Register for gas, electricity and water. This means that for those with certain medical conditions or issues of vulnerability for any other reason, those clients are registered with suppliers as being in priority need should there be a failure of gas, electricity or water supplies. In the event of a failure of these, clients are prioritised to receive emergency help, for example by the supply of a room space heater or portable cooking facilities. Similarly, water companies will arrange for an alternative supply of clean drinking water in the event of a supply failure, ensuring that clients with e.g. needs for dialysis are adequately provided for.

All of these services are available to our Harleston clients and we are acutely aware that many of these are vulnerable and often geographically isolated. We work closely with the staff at Harleston Information Plus to ensure that we can provide as broad a service as possible and are pleased to report that the service has been well used over the past year. Although the number of unique clients seen in the year is 133, this represents roughly a tenth of all South Norfolk clients seen in that period. In addition, it is common for an individual client to have numerous visits to us and for each unique client, the number of visits for each area of advice can be as many as six. Where clients need to follow complex procedures, such as benefit appeals or attempts to gain redress for consumer issues, we will follow the issue through with the client to ensure that they get the best possible outcome.

Also at Diss itself we offer our free and impartial Pension Wise Guidance service. This is available to anybody aged over 50 and with a Defined Contribution pension. The service gives a 45 minute session to explain the six options open to somebody wanting to take their pension which is normally available from age 55. Pension Wise can be contacted at www.pensionwise.gov.uk or by calling 0800 138 3944.

Finally, we are involved in Research and Campaigning work. We gather anonymised evidence which is submitted to Citizens Advice to arrive at a national picture of the impact of policies as they emerge. Where there are changes to, for example, benefit rules, we monitor how these changes are being administered and are engaged in constant dialogue with government about what works well and what does not work. This helps government to shape policy and challenge injustice. The work that we do in Harleston all contributes to this enterprise and helps to ensure fair treatment for all our clients.

**Unit 9b, Airfield Industrial Estate, Brome.
Eye. Suffolk.
IP23 7HN**

info@waveney.foodbank.org.uk

0845 269 1078 (calls charged at 5ppm plus your operators access charge)

Jul April 2017

Activity report for Waveney Foodbank in the Harleston area, April 2016 to March 2017.

Waveney Foodbank is well established in Harleston with two Distribution Centres, local people are enabled to redeem vouchers on Tuesdays and Fridays, in the parish church and the Methodist chapel. Teams of volunteers distribute food boxes giving at least three days supply of food. They offer a cuppa and support as appropriate.

Food boxes are made up in our warehouse and contain a balanced diet of 'in date' food, which is dried, in tins, jars or cartons. We are indebted to the generosity of the public who supply all our stocks, much of which comes from the Harleston area. People are thoughtful givers so that we also have stocks of other essential items such as nappies, pet food, toiletries.

In the last year activity levels have increased by at least 25%. For instance the number of vouchers redeemed in Harleston between 4/15 and 3/16 is 71, made up of 105 adults and 101 children. We anticipate no reduction in activity, since financial restraint continues to bring pressure on lower paid people.

The figures for 2016/17 are as follows:

Food vouchers redeemed	100
Adult clients	146
Children clients	89
Total clients	235

Adult age ranges:

17 - 24	36
25 - 64	40
65+	24

Categories:

Singles	21
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Couples	30
Families	49

Out of 100 vouchers, 56 included someone in paid employment.

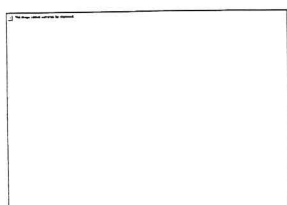
Reasons stated for the issuing of a voucher:

Low income	58
Benefit changes	12
Domestic violence	5
Debt	9
Children holiday meals	16

Graham Reardon

Manager

Waveney Foodbank





Promoting business in Harleston
and surrounding areas

Email: info@hdbf.org.uk Web: www.hdbf.org.uk

5 Minute Talk - Harleston Town Council

- We meet for Breakfast once a month, usually at 'The Swan' although we have been to the 'Farmer's Kitchen'. We may well go to the 'Pennoyer's Centre' in the near future.
- Highlights were the organisation of the ' Harleston & District 2040, WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?' session at St John's Church on the 18th March last year. Where we had our local MP Richard Bacon, Ian Carstairs, Gordon Lascelles and the Right Reverend Graham James Bishop of Norwich, talking about their hopes and fears for Harleston in the next 25 years.
- Various speakers in the last twelve months have been Debbie Lorimer from South Norfolk Council talking about big sky developments. We had an impromptu debate and it was about the EU, 'IN OR OUT' which was surprisingly well supported. We had Brian Vale give a talk on the Budget, We had a conversation/Interview with Danny Ward a Prominent Property Developer from Diss. We've had Sandra Dinneen come down to give us a chat.
- We had a joint trip to the Houses of Parliament organised by Diss Business Forum. We missed the tragedy there by TWO days!!
- Car Parking.

I've been going now for 5 years still having between 25-35 people meet at 7.30 in the morning. There is a variety of members who meet from County Councillor's, South Norfolk District Council members, Employees, our local Reverend.



**Harleston Information Plus report
for Redenhall with Harleston
Annual Town Meeting April 2017
(for the period 1/4/16-31/3/17)**

It has been another busy year for Harleston Information Plus (HIP), this report has allowed us to look back and reflect on just how much we have done in twelve months.

We would like to begin the report by thanking Redenhall with Harleston Town council for their financial support which makes a significant contribution towards enabling us to help local people through our services. Management Board's aim is to improve the quality of life for local residents by bringing services to the town that would not otherwise be available. Our work this year included:

- A 6 day a week community information centre
- Jobs Club
- Work related skills training
- Beginners IT
- Information events
- Stitch and Chatter and other social activities
- Providing a home in the town for Citizen's Advice and the NHS Wellbeing service

During 2016, our wonderful team of volunteers gave 3656 hours to HIP, helping to provide our services. Currently we have 37 volunteers with nine Management Board members.

Community Information centre activity

- ❖ ***3805 of the 5285 enquiries received at the information centre were from Harleston or Redenhall residents. (72%)***

The volunteer team have dealt with a range of enquiries through the year, from directions to the Redenhall War Memorial, local befriending services, the Sale of Goods Act, dealing with troublesome neighbours, information on home schooling, sourcing replacement birth certificates and much more.

We have also seen people facing homelessness, feeling suicidal and two individual residents afraid due to the threat of physical violence.

- ❖ **Stitch and Chatter group** met weekly during the year with an average attendance between 8 -12 local residents. Monthly 'Tea and Chat' relaunched in May 2017.

❖ **203 people have received free information, advice and guidance at 13 sessions organised by HIP over the year**

- Jackaman's legal advice surgery
- Citizen's Advice Best Energy Deals workshops x 2
- Citizens Advice Pre-Paid Energy advice
- Open morning with Citizen's Advice to launch new self help kiosk
- Why have Powers of Attorney? workshop
- Dementia Awareness (Dementia Friends) –part of our Dementia Awareness week
- Introduction to the NHS Wellbeing Service
- South Norfolk Council Conservation area exhibition
- The Really Useful information event at the Swan hotel
- HIP Local Children's Summer Activities promotion
- Carers Information session
- Social media for Business

The **Really Useful Information event, held at the Swan hotel, brought the following organisations into the town:** Norfolk Carers, Citizens Advice, South Norfolk Early Help Hub, Jakamans Solicitors, Alzheimer's Society Norfolk, Arthritis Care, Bordahoppa, Contact Care Lifeline, Dementia Friendly Harleston, NHS Wellbeing Service

We also held a fundraising Greek evening.

❖ **IT Training**

39 Harleston residents took part in IT sessions held at the Information Centre. Courses held have been varied, from complete beginner sessions to more in-depth training, courses, including:

- Computers for Beginners
- Internet for Beginners
- Email for Beginners
- Email for Jobseekers
- iPads, Tablets and Smartphones
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Online Safety
- Staying in Touch with Friends and Family (Skype etc)
- Instagram for Beginners
- Facebook for Beginners
- Twitter for Beginners
- Using your Mobile Phone

We were able to offer the majority of these training courses for free, after securing a grant from Santander Development Fund. Four jobseeker volunteers offer a mentoring service

during these courses. To help with HIP's sustainability, we are offering follow on training at £10 per two hour session but, despite excellent feedback from satisfied customers, there has been a poor take up. Eleven people have paid for training since January 2017.

Harleston Jobs Club Activity

We have seen ***90 jobseekers attend the Jobs Club from Harleston and Redenhall during April 2016 – March 2017.*** 54 of these members were new to the club whilst the other 36 were existing members.

During the above period, ***49 Harleston Jobs Club members secured employment and 9 gained skills from volunteering.***

At the Jobs Club, five volunteers help jobseekers to

- search and apply for jobs
- create an email address
- register on job searching websites
- write a CV
- write covering letters
- complete online and paper application forms

We also provide:

- free access to the internet to search for work
- interview tips and advice
- monthly 1:1 appointments with a professional Careers Adviser
- courses in Harleston
- business start-up information
- information on volunteering in order to gain work related skills

We have also helped jobseekers with welfare issues such as:

- debt
- housing
- domestic abuse
- physical violence
- wellbeing
- foodbank
- mental health concerns

Training via Jobs Club

Jobs Club has offered 48 employment search training places:

- Digital Job Searching workshop (24 places)
- Interview Skills workshop (24 places)

66 work skills training places were offered to jobseekers:

- CIEH Level 2 Food Safety (10 places)
- Skills Awareness workshop (12 places)

- Employability Skills workshop (12 places)
- Customer Service (8 places)
- Internet for Beginners (6 places)
- Email for Beginners (6 places)
- Microsoft Word (6 places)
- Microsoft Excel (6 places)

In addition to this, we have also held information sessions for our jobseekers with the NHS Wellbeing Service, Citizens Advice and the Children's Centre. We also actively engage with employers and over 550 jobseekers via our Facebook page. Many jobseekers receive our online support without registering with the Jobs Club.

Harleston website and other social media

During the period 15,295 users accessed the website, they accessed the site 20,248 times and looked at 41,121 pages, The HIP site was visited 43 times via direct referral from the Harleston Town Council website.

Most popular pages viewed include events (5396), tourist overview (2481), where to eat or drink (1586) Accommodation (1289). 47% people used a mobile or tablet to view the site. We have made further improvements over the last twelve months including more photographs and higher profile for our short promotional video about the town.

As there were over 1100 views of 'market' web pages we intend to enhance these with more photos and descriptive text.

The Information Centre Facebook page has 257 'Likes', on average our Facebook posts are seen by 1590 people each month, a high number of those people are based in the town or in the hinterland.

Harleston Information Plus has 584 Twitter followers, these are a more diverse range of local people and businesses, plus a number of larger organisations such as the County Council and the Press.

What the £6000 grant covered

The grant went towards paying the rent and running costs of 8 Exchange Street.

It is most welcome as it is very hard to secure overhead costs, funders currently prefer to offer grants for smaller individual projects such as our IT training programme, youth engagement or support groups.

Julie Helsby

Community Support Manager

11th April 2017

I have now been in post as Headteacher of Harleston Primary School for a year and what a busy year it has been. Last summer saw the change in testing for our children in Year 2 and Year 6. We were proud with the way they dealt with a significant leap in the expected standards and as a school we met at least expected national standards in all areas.

In the summer, we were taken over by pirates! As part of our Oceans and Seas whole school project, Pirate Day was a huge success. Everyone entered the spirit of the high seas and dressed up as pirates for the day with the flag of the Jolly Roger flying high over the playground. All pupils were involved in activities during the day including story writing, face painting, cooking, treasure hunts in the woods, craft activities, drama and poetry.

Eagerly awaited auditions have just taken place for parts for cast and backstage crew in our this year's play of "Robin and the Sherwood Hoodies". This promises to be a fun-filled production, packed with catchy songs and terrible jokes.....as usual!

We welcomed Amy Dickson to our school. As a professional classical saxophonist, Amy is a twice Grammy Award nominee and 2013 Classical Brit Award winner. She has been developing close links with our school sharing her 'Take a Breath Campaign' with our children. This helps to equip young children in their formative years with simple, yet invaluable, techniques to encourage them how to breathe properly. Our pupils have been learning this 'Elephant Breath' technique to help them remain calm in stressful situations, such as before taking a test.

In October, Year 5 donned their cloaks and walked in the footsteps of the Anglo Saxons as they visited the ancient Anglo Saxon village of West Stow! Even the bad weather couldn't dampen their spirits as they explored the different Anglo Saxon buildings and had the opportunity to practise their weaving and perform the play of Beowulf in the Great Hall.

Our Harvest Festival was in aid of Farm Africa and the children all played their part in telling the story of a family who had received help from the charity. The charity works with families and communities in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania and Kenya.

Year 6 children had an amazing visit to London in October, enjoying a guided tour of The Globe Theatre on London's Southbank, an incredible drama workshop led by Globe Theatre actors, a boat ride on the Thames which took them to Tate Britain where they viewed world famous works of art. The day was rounded off with a fantastic guided tour by coach of London's famous landmarks.

Year 6 pupils put on both a moving and hilarious performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream to a packed audience of more than 200 people! Every pupil in the year group starred in some way in this magical comedy. All performances were greatly influenced by the drama workshop the pupils were lucky enough to experience in London, led by a true-life Globe Theatre actor.

A wet Thursday saw over 150 primary school children descend on Archbishop Sancroft High School to compete in a cross-country event. The children, all from schools in the Harleston Cluster, were competing for places in the South Norfolk Schools Sport Partnership event.

In November, we were invaded by an army of patterned pupils! Once again, the children did not disappoint in their fundraising efforts for Children in Need, based on our theme of 'Patterns for Pudsey'. This year, a whopping total of £718.49 was raised!

The children celebrated World Book Day by dressing up as their favourite children's book characters. There were Horrid Henrys, a varied selection of Harry Potter characters (including a very impressive Hagrid) and even a Dennis the Menace, to name but a few! Over the course of the day, the children

took part in various fun book-related activities, including sharing their favourite book with friends and using the text 'How Many Jelly Beans?' to learn more about numbers.

Last term, over 50 children from across the school braved the weather to walk to school together with their teachers. It was great to see so many people keen to take part - children and teachers alike. Each child who walked 'on the bus' received a luminous snap wrist band for their efforts.

These exciting events, to name but a few, have enhanced our curriculum during the past year and happened on top of the high-quality teaching that goes on daily in our classrooms. This is down to the hard work of a very dedicated team of staff and governors who work tirelessly to constantly strive to provide the very best we can for the children of Harleston.

Borderhoppa Report for Harleston Town Council

The Borderhoppa continues to help passengers within the town as well as surrounding villages to reach vital facilities they may otherwise be unable to get to such as the doctors, dentist, hair appointments and basic food shopping.

On Mondays we continue to transport people to the Harleston Lunch Club at Jays Green as well as being available for any other journeys into the town. In the afternoon we also bring Dickleburgh Primary School pupils to use the swimming facilities at ASHS.

On Wednesdays we transport 3 bus loads of passengers coming into the town from various surrounding villages to visit the market and other shops and facilities within the town.

On Fridays we continue to support passengers from Harleston and surrounding villages to reach the shops and facilities in Diss with a bus journey in both the morning and afternoon.

On other days we support passengers from Harleston to attend appointments in other locations such as Fressingfield Doctors. We also take our passengers to visit loved ones in various care homes around the area such as Oaklands in Scole and Culrose in Dickleburgh.

The Borderhoppa continues to be available for community groups to hire as well as offering special outings to our existing members to locations all over the region whether it be for lunch, shopping or a leisurely trip to the seaside.

Transport is also provided to the ASHS and Harleston Primary School when required.

Our Big Lottery Funding ended in August and as well as no longer receiving funding from Suffolk County Council we still strive to help as many people in the area as possible. We have slightly downsized in terms of vehicles and staff but without allowing it to have a major impact on the service we provide to passengers looking to reach Harleston from the surrounding villages, covering 56 parishes in total.

We currently have 5 mini buses and an accessible car, 3 drivers, a Scheduler, a marketing/promotions & admin assistant and a manager. We do however now have the ability to call on a few volunteer drivers to supplement our existing drivers when multiple vehicles are required on an outing or group hire.

In the last 12 months we have been able to conduct over 1600 passenger journeys into Harleston Town Centre from surrounding villages and over 1100 from Harleston and surrounding villages to Diss on Fridays.

With the end of the Big Lottery Funding we now rely heavily on our funding from Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk County Council and are greatly appreciative of any other grants or donations offered to us so that we may continue to support as many people as possible in reaching vital facilities and continuing to live independently.

Harleston & District Historical Society

Annual Report to the Town Meeting

2017

The aim of the Society is to research and promote the heritage of the town. Through monthly talks, it also covers a wide range of topics of historical interest for East Anglia.

For the town, we run a small museum which is situated next to the main entrance of King George Hall. As part of the displays, each year we put on a small exhibition covering a specific aspect of the town's history. This year, it's on Harleston schools through the ages. Did you know that, in 1433, Harleston had its own grammar school?

In September, we will take part in a county wide heritage weekend when the topic will be Harleston's Industrial Heritage.

The Society frequently receives requests for assistance in family history research. The requests are often from far-flung places.

We are also in possession of an old fire engine dated 1765. At the moment, it's in mothballs awaiting renovation and plans for its long term housing.

We are very grateful to the Town Council for the financial assistance they give, without which, much of this would not happen.

This assistance enables us to keep the museum running and keeps alive the possibility of a permanent home for the engine (which the town bought in 1765)