



Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Clerk: Mrs. C. Crane

Chairman: Mr T Graham

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of Redenhall with Harleston Town Council held in the Social Room at the Leisure Centre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 18th May 2022.

Present: Councillors – Trevor Graham (Chairman), Matt Scade (Vice Chair) Clive Digby, Michael Hardy, Russ Wilkins, Jeremy Savage (District Councillor), Martin Wilby (County Councillor)

Also, present: Clare Crane (Town Clerk) & Emma Chandler (Deputy Clerk)

Members of the Public – 19 members of the public in attendance

1. To consider accepting apologies for absence.

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Eddy due to ill health

2. To approve and sign the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 14th April 2021 and discuss matters arising

Minutes were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman

3. Chairman's Welcome and Report

Cllr Graham welcomed everyone to the meeting and read his report.

(See Appendix 1)

In brief the following subjects were covered

- **Councillors and Staff**
- **Economic Situation**
- **Neighbourhood Plan**
- **Town Centre Project**
- **Communications**
- **Engagement with the Community**
- **The Foundation of Team Harleston**
- **Recognition of the towns various groups fantastic work**

4. To receive reports on matters of interest to the town from District and County Councillors.

Cllr Savage read his report detailing South Norfolk District Councils achievements for the year and projects to come in the next year. (See Appendix 2)

Cllr Wilby read his report detailing subjects around the Infrastructure, Environment, Covid 19 and the Ukraine Crisis. (See Appendix 3)

5. To receive reports from the various council committees on their activities during the preceding year

a. Amenities Committee

Cllr Scade read from notes about the work of the Amenities Committee this included

- **Free market pitches leading to an increase from 2 to 7 regular stalls Wednesday**
- **New Saturday market and the intention to build and increase number of stalls.**
- **Vandalism in toilets decreasing**
- **Fully accessible disabled parking spaces on bullock fair car park now in place**
- **Jubilee woods at the cemetery**
- **The planting of the Mayflower tree at the cemetery**
- **More dog bins and grit bins installed**
- **Starting work on renovating and cleaning the clocktower**

b. Leisure Centre Management Committee

Cllr Wilkins read a report detailing the challenges and achievements of the last year. (See Appendix 4)

c. Finance Committee

Cllr Graham highlighted the financial challenges of the previous year and gave special thanks to Tracey Betts (Finance Officer) for her continued diligent work in supporting the council in this area

d. Planning and Development Committee

Cllr Hardy spoke for the Committee, in the absence of Cllr Eddy.

He explained how the meetings for Planning take place on an ad-hoc basis dependent on when planning applications come through. He confirmed that the council is a statutory consultee in the planning process, but SNC make the final decisions. He made reference to the council website explaining that all planning applications are posted here and that comments could be made to either the town council or through the planning portal directly.

Cllr Hardy advised that the planning committee were especially interested in the protection of listed buildings and applications made within the conservation area and makes comments accordingly through the correct channels.

He also touched on the new developments currently in the planning process namely Briar Farm and Lidl giving details on the amount of documents that come with projects of this size.

e. Neighbourhood Plan Committee

Cllr Hardy gave a briefing on the Neighbourhood Plan explaining the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) and that there were no additional allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan.

He explained that the Committee had been a group consisting of both councillors and residents working together with the aid of professional advisors. The advisors were paid for via grants and therefore no extra cost to the taxpayer.

6. To receive reports from organisations and groups active in Harleston

Reports were received from the following organisations and groups in Harleston and a number were read at the time of the meeting.

- **Citizens Advise Bureau (See Appendix 5)**
- **The Historical Society (See Appendix 6)**
- **Waveney Foodbank (See Appendix 7)**
- **Kindness Help Hub (See Appendix 8)**
- **Harleston Information Plus (See Appendix 9)**
- **Norfolk Constabulary (See Appendix 10)**
- **Archbishop Sancroft High School (See Appendix 11)**
- **Harleston Future (See Appendix 12)**
- **Royal British Legion (See Appendix 13)**
- **The Jubilee Committee (See Appendix 14)**
- **River Waveney Trust (See Appendix 15)**

7. Issues raised by electors (Q&A)

The following are questions raised by residents and answers from both Town, District and County Councils

General Questions

Question: Will there be an election for Town Councillors? It might give greater ethos to Councillors if they have actually been elected rather than self-appointed.

Response: Elections for Town Councils are held every four years, the next one being next year. A contested election will be held should sufficient people put their name forward.

Question: The potential for a Business Park by the by-pass has been with us for possibly a decade now and it does seem that there has been very little progress made. Is it possible for you to give us an update on that situation?

Response: There is no reference to a Business Park in the GNLP as something under consideration. However, there is land identified as 'employment uses B1 and B2 – offices, industrial use north of Spirketts Lane.' A business park would require a suitable plot of land to be identified, and an economic case made to encourage the investment.

Question: Has the Town Council made any representation to the powers that be about the street lighting in Briar Road? In contrast to the rest of Harleston, Briar Road does seem to be very poorly served by its streetlights, it is in excess of 200yards from the first light on the corner of Mendham Lane and Briar Road to the next light. Is there anything being done to improve them?

Response: The Town Council has 305 lamps the location of which you can find on the website. I would recommend a Councillor raises this with our County Cllr at a Town Council meeting.

Question: How are the plans for the development of Briar farm proceeding. Also for the proposed Lidle.

Response: The Town council are an important consultee on planning applications. All planning applications are decided by South Norfolk Council. Progress on specific applications can be found on the planning portal to the South Norfolk Council website. Both the applications in the question still await a decision.

Question: I also here that a PA employed by South Norfolk Council is on a salary of £120k a year? Would like to know if this is true

Response: This is a question for South Norfolk Council and cannot be addressed by this Council.

Questions relating to the Town Centre Project

Councillor Wilby and Councillor Savage helped answer the questions.

Question: Are the Harleston Town Council 'satisfied' that a full 'Risk Assessment' covering the effects of the proposed road changes, and orientation and location of street car parking changes have been carried out by Norfolk Council (including South Norfolk) in meeting their Health and Safety legal obligations applicable to the residents of Harleston?

Response: We have been informed by South Norfolk Council, with email confirmation, that Risk Assessments for such schemes are not carried out. However, a Safety Audit has been carried out, which is the normal accepted practice by Norfolk County Council.

Question: New entrance to Bullock Fair car park

On 17 March 2021 at a regular meeting of the Town Council, South Norfolk Councillor Mr. Jeremy Savage reported that he had "attended a meeting at which it was confirmed that the rear entrance from Paddock Road will be improved, this is part of pre-covid plans to enable Bullock Fair Close to be accessed should The Thoroughfare be closed and is not part of on-going discussions regarding traffic circulation in Harleston".

On the 21 April 2021 the Chairman reported that "rear access to Bullock Fair car park has now been completed for emergency use and providing access whilst the temporary measures are in place".

At what point did Councillors realise that this was not true, and that the new entrance to the car park was to be an integral component of the proposed Traffic Orders for the town centre?

Response: The installation of a new access point to the car park from Paddock Road was provided for temporary access while events were held in the town centre and for emergency access, as stated in the Chairmans report of 21 April 2021. It was not related to any discussions regarding traffic circulation in Harleston and is in accordance with the statement from Cllr Savage on 17 March 2021. Both statements are true.

The access point, once in place, provided a convenient way to help ease traffic flow through the town centre and provide better social distancing as part of the Covid safety measures. It has since been considered for permanent use. The detailed proposals are under review, awaiting the outcome of the TRO consultation.

Question: Have members of the Town Council seen the actual responses to either consultation regarding the Town centre improvement scheme, and when do they expect to do so?

Response: Both consultations were not under the control of the Town Council. The consultation on the proposed changes was undertaken by South Norfolk Council. The current Traffic Order is still under review by Norfolk County Council.

Question: Who made the decision not to reinstate the parking after Covid restrictions were lifted?

Response: The Temporary Traffic Regulation Order restricting parking is still in force until the new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is decided. The Project Board saw no benefit in asking for the temporary restrictions to be removed as the TRO if approved, would reinstate restrictions. It was decided sensible to await the outcome of the TRO rather than create even more confusion.

8. Any Other Business

Cllr Graham took the opportunity to thank the Office Administrator, Rosie Riches, for her fantastic work over the last four years and wished her well for her retirement.

Rev Nigel Tuffnell had the final word to give thanks to the Town Council for its continued work and support in the community.

Meeting Ended at 8.45pm

Signed P Mba

Date 23rd May 2023

Appendix 1

HARLESTON AND REDENHALL TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2022 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This is not a Council meeting, it is a meeting for the electorate of the town arranged by the Town Council. These meetings date back to the medieval times, before the creation of local Councils. They are for the community to come together, share their news and ask questions.

Beginning the year

The last council year began with social distancing restraints, designed to constrain the spread of Covid. It seems such a long time ago, but the council initially operated with a continuation of virtual meetings, using temporary and greatly appreciated, powers allowed under Government Legislation. These powers ended, at which point we resumed in person meetings. While it was welcomed to again meet face to face, we have continued to use remote meeting facilities for office meetings where permissible to aid efficiency.

Councillors and Staff

During the year there have been further changes to the composition of the council. We welcomed Councillors Wilkins and Sumner to the Council, but also accepted the resignations of Councillors Pegg, Malinowski and Sumner. I would like to thank the outgoing Councillors for their contributions, express appreciation to those joining the team and significantly, to applaud those who have remained throughout the year.

At our last meeting we saw the departure of our previous clerk Lynda Ling and this time we see the departure of Rosie Riches, our Office Administrator who retires following over four years of loyal service. However, we have welcomed Clare Crane as our current Town Clerk, and Emma Chandler as our Deputy Clerk. This has been a year of transition. A very exciting time where great strides have been made in building on the existing foundations and moving the council forwards.

Economic Situation

The pandemic impacted many businesses. This was recognised by the Town Council, and we worked with Norfolk Constabulary and South Norfolk District Council to help businesses open and expand their operations onto the streets with the easing of restrictions.

We did not ask for business contributions towards the cost of keeping our car parks free at time of use, and we have been offering free pitches for stall holders to our regular markets. They may be small gestures, but we are trying to help our businesses recover from the effects of the pandemic.

The social distancing restrictions had an impact on our own business, the council operated leisure centre. During the restrictions, the gym could not function as normal, and the gym team took imaginative steps such as loaning equipment to help retain members. Following the reopening, our Deputy Clerk and the gym staff have been rebuilding the business with initiatives to boost membership. It is a great credit to all involved that membership numbers are again rising as we rebuild our business.

I note that the gym staff arranged a volunteer Train for Ukraine Bootcamp training day to raise money for the Ukraine crisis appeal.

It would be a long list to mention everyone by name so I will thank our Centre Manager - Natasha Ives-Styman and Duty Manager - Christie Rose and ask them to pass on our gratitude to the team.

Due to the economic outlook, we have been obliged to increase the precept for 2022-23. While we were able to hold the precept stable in the previous year, it would not be prudent to ignore rising costs, their impact, and budget accordingly. This morning it was announced that inflation has risen to 9%, the highest level for 40 years, and Bank of England forecasts suggest we are not yet at the peak. This will be a year with challenges at a time when the precept payer, indeed everyone is suffering from the rising cost of living.

Neighbourhood Plan

Development of our Neighbourhood Plan has progressed well, and will be covered in a separate report later in this meeting.

Town Centre Project

There has been much conversation surrounding proposals for an investment of £750,000 in changes to the town centre with the aim to make Harleston a more pleasant place to visit and shop. The funding comes predominantly from South Norfolk Council and Norfolk County Council, with a contribution of £30,000 from the Town Council. This is a very small local payment towards such a significant inward investment. It was very much time for Harleston to receive some additional funding and we have already received a new zebra crossing on Wilderness Lane.

Should the town centre project go ahead, it will be wonderful to work with both the district and county councils on the delivery of such significant and exciting change. I hope that we can continue our working relationship for the delivery of even more projects in the future.

The project is managed by South Norfolk Council and delivered by Norfolk County Council. The Town Council will be involved in the project and will take the lead on the selection and positioning of the new street furniture as a very visible element of the design.

The current temporary planters were refreshed by local groups late last year. This kind gesture has kept the planters alive over the winter and spring months. I would like to give a special mention to the local schools who replanted the ones in the Market Place.

Communications

During the last year we continued to enhance our website and improve engagement with the community. We released 118 email updates and now have over 50 businesses registered on our Shops Forum. We have a central listing of local shops, groups and organisations, and a consolidated Town Calendar of events. The town council website can provide a central reference and reduce duplication of effort.

We have made very good progress with implementing recommendations within the Transparency Code. There has been positive feedback on the improved presentation, and ease of use of our website. We are making good progress and now have a solid platform to go forwards and become a reference point for other councils.

Engagement with the Community

Our Councillors have attended meetings with the Business Forum, local police and sports clubs, participated on various local community groups, given updates on Park Radio and attended events across the county to represent our Town. Our Clerk and Deputy Clerk opened dialogue with Archbishop Sancroft High School through a session asking pupils for their views on how they would like to work with the council and support the community.

We signed an Armed Forces Covenant in November last year, to pledge support to our armed forces community. We appointed a designated Armed Forces Champion who's role is to liaise between parties and help sure that we deliver our commitments.

The town council have increased our engagement with the local community. Here again, we have a sound basis on which to take things forwards. Small steps in the right direction.

The Foundation of Team Harleston

'Team Harleston' is a name which arose as a suggestion during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation process. We took this forward as a concept to bring together a collective of interested groups and organisations from across our town. This provides a common badge under which people can work together, and show their commitment to be part of a much larger community wide group.

Utilising this concept, the town council took the lead on a collective event to celebrate 'Towards Tomorrow' and the reopening of the town centre as Covid restrictions were eased. Twenty groups and organisations came onboard as a series of flags were designed and printed to demonstrate the collective commitment.

Since the inception of 'Team Harleston', the Council have led collective events for the Remembrance Day parade, the annual Christmas lights switch on, the delivery of an audio trail in St Mary's church and the upcoming Jubilee celebrations.

However, collective events do not need to be arranged by the Town Council, 'Team Harleston' is the banner to demonstrate collectivism. A banner under which we should all be proud to march together.

The Town is not just a Council

This meeting is a recognition of the work, efforts and contributions from the whole community and not just the Town Council. Local volunteers have created a series of events and activities for children and parents or carers. The U3A, Harleston's Future and the Harleston Historical Society are back into life providing events for residents and visitors alike. The hockey club and bowls teams are back, and the football team has won promotion.

The Harleston Kindness Help Hub of volunteers established during the Covid lockdowns to assist the vulnerable continues to this day. This is a wonderful example of our community supporting each other.

This is a time for us all to appreciate the contributions of each other and look to the future. We will be hearing from some of our local groups later in this meeting.

Conclusion

There remains only another twelve months of this council to run. There are to be elections in 2023. This provides an opportunity for more people to put their name forwards to stand as a Councillor and help their local community. If we can finally encourage enthusiasm for sufficient candidates to step forwards, we may hold the first election in over years. This is something that we should all work towards. A situation where we will have raised the profile of the Town Council, explained the role of a Town Councillor, and encouraged participation.

I would like to end by thanking all of the staff, organisations, business and above all the people who have supported the Council over the last year. This would not be complete without gratitude to the unpaid Councillors, who selflessly give up their time to help the community.

Trevor Graham,
Chairman,
Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Appendix 2

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT – 26th APRIL 2022 REDENHALL WITH HARLESTON TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

Your local District Council helped many people during the pandemic, in addition to every bin being collected, the needy were helped and during lockdown we distributed over £1 million per week to thousands of local businesses to sustain and keep them alive to the point of recovery. We especially helped hospitality businesses and also helped some of those who fell through the gaps in national schemes, for example beauticians and dentists, this means our local economy is well placed to recover.

Our plan now is focused in every parish in South Norfolk with opportunities for towns and villages to invest in infrastructure while caring for our environment, helping everyone to enjoy our open spaces. During the pandemic many of our staff helped our refuse crews ensuring no bins were missed and other staff were seconded to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital working as orderlies.

Our help hub went much further than elsewhere to ensure those in most need were supported. As Covid recedes the cost of living is becoming more difficult, so we have set-aside hundreds of thousands of pounds for families who find themselves in unexpected crisis, this is over and above our normal financial support via housing benefit and Council Tax support, this includes one off help with rental deposits, fuel payments and other expenses for those in severe financial distress. If you become aware of someone really struggling; we can help.

South Norfolk families represent about a third of all the offers of help in Norfolk in the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. We have a responsibility to provide security for their women, children and the elderly whilst their men fight to defend our way of life in Ukraine. Meanwhile we are spending £100K on refurbishment of our short-term accommodation for families who find themselves in a muddle or the victims of domestic violence.

In our support for the economy in enhancing our environment we have a plan to support community and parish groups to reinvigorate infrastructure in our towns and villages.

Our Community Action Fund provides one off capital grants to community groups to enhance community facilities or projects. Up to £15K can be awarded to any one scheme, £5K is the more normal, the budget for this has been tripled to £150K and we will shortly be inviting bids, if you are aware of capital proposals from local organisations, please contact us.

Larger parishes have or will be receiving tens of thousands of pounds from developers paying an infrastructure levy for homes built in their area, this money is often paid over several years, but as this is very drawn out we have started a process where we will lend nearly all the expected amount CIL to be received by the parish up front so improvements can be started immediately rather than waiting for years, details will be announced in June 2022.

In our larger areas we will also be inviting proposals for larger schemes over £100K where we will match the Parish Council's CIL with our own money as a grant to improve local facilities. We plan a conference in June 2022 to explain how parishes can get started. We estimate our £6 million scheme should be able to at least double that with CIL money received by our parishes to create a £12 million infrastructure boost. We will be explaining what sort of ambitious proposals will qualify for co-funding in June 2022.

And finally, our popular scheme of Ward Member Grants provides £46K to be spent on micro projects across the district, each Councillor has £1K per annum to award to schemes with minimal paperwork and instant payment to support smaller activities, I have recently supported the Park Run, and separately the Running Club in Harleston.

With energy prices rising reducing energy consumption and planning for a post carbon world is both good for our environment and business, we are ensuring that our Council is playing its part in the post carbon world.

We will shortly be inviting every parish or town that wants to install electric charging points to have one, called off from a bulk contract that we are currently negotiating. At the moment only residents with off street parking in their gardens can benefit from an electric charging point, that is unfair on people living in terraces, flats or apartments, we will be seeking to work with parishes or possibly village hall committees to host charging points, the details around insurance, billing and maintenance will shortly be explained. We are also increasing the number of points in our own public car parks and leisure centres.

The environment is not just about being low carbon. We are spending some of the CIL money raised to improve the Wherryman's footpath along the river Yare between Norwich and Reedham Ferry, we are repairing the banks of the Chet River and the foot bridges between Norwich and Loddon, improvements are being made at Pyes Mill in Loddon and a number of other circular walks in a green project dedicated to Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

Elsewhere on the Broads new electric hook-ups are being established so boats do not have to run engines to charge their batteries.

We will be investing on solar panels in all our council buildings, including leisure centres, we are entering into a contract to monitor air quality across the district. Our refuse vehicles are now trialling new low carbon fuels based on recycled oils. Our recycling rates are improving.

We are in the 5th year of close cooperation with Broadland Council, this joint working saves South Norfolk taxpayers £1.2 million per year, equal to 15% of Council Tax. Bringing the two Councils under one roof will save a further £700K per year and will reduce our energy consumption by 84%. We realise that some will be further away with the new planned office at Broadland Business Park so we are opening an outreach office in Diss and also equipping a mobile office with computer links.

When interest rates were at their lowest and inflation became a problem, the Council borrowed £20 million at fixed rates for up to 25 years to invest in projects to boost our economy, this deal already looks to be the deal of the century. We will be investing in new commercial premises to rent to growing companies close to the University and in Wymondham, we are building a new GP surgery in Hethersett which the doctors will rent. We are planning improvements that will shortly commence in Harleston to improve The Thoroughfare and Market Place while maintaining the number of on street parking spaces. Significant improvements are also being planned in Long Stratton and Diss.

The majority of the new local plan will be received from the Inspectors in a few months. In the 100 or more small settlements in South Norfolk, we expect to publish detailed small scale development proposals in August/September 2022 for final consultation. When we asked for views last Autumn, we received over 1,000 responses so this takes time to finalise into a detailed plan. Development proposals will be focused on 47 village clusters which means about 75 sites will contain about 1200 homes, clusters are groupings of villages loosely based on primary school catchment, trying to maintain the social connections but make village life. The object is to provide choice for those not wishing to live in the larger towns and to help local tradesmen.

I am proud to have served Harleston for 15 years and in that time South Norfolk has been a leading District Council in the country and amongst those with the lowest council tax for a District Council in the country

Jeremy P Savage

26th April 2022

Norfolk County Council Annual Report 2022

There are 84 councillors representing all of Norfolk on the County Council. The numbers are made up of 57 Conservatives, 12 Labour, 9 Liberals and 3 Independent and 3 Greens. I am currently the Cabinet member for Highways, Transport and Infrastructure.

NCC has been working with all districts and agencies to help with bringing Ukrainian refugees to Norfolk, many of our residents have come forward in offering homes and accommodation to meet their need. So far over 200 refugees have come to Norfolk, there will be many more and we will continue to support them over the coming years. We are proudly flying the Ukrainian Flag in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time.

We seem to be getting back to some sort of normal after the last two years of Covid, with its lockdowns and restrictions being lifted. I would like to thank all of the volunteers that have helped others and continue to do so over these difficult times. At NCC we are having more face to face meetings but there will always be certain meetings that can be done online, this saves a lot of journeys, travelling time and also helps the environment. We have spare office space at County Hall because of different working behaviours so we have let the top floor to the NHS which brings in an income for us.

I am involved in major infrastructure projects which are the priorities for NCC. We are making good progress on the Gt Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing, being halfway through the construction and planning to open to traffic in the spring of 2023. Long Stratton Bypass is progressing well, we have secured the major part of the funding from the Department of Transport with an aim to start construction early 2024 with completion in 2025, this new road will improve journey times for the A140 users and improve the environment for the residents of Long Stratton. The Norwich Western Link will join up the Broadland Northway (NDR) north of Norwich to the A47 in the south which will deliver an orbital route around the city. This new road will bring many benefits to Norfolk's economy, improve journey times, improve safety and improve the quality of life for those living to the west of Norwich. We are currently waiting to hear on our funding bid to DfT.

It's not only about major infrastructure as we support many local projects through our popular Parish Partnership schemes where projects are funded 50 – 50 by NCC and Town and Parish Councils. We also spend around £40m per year on maintaining our 6,200 miles of roads by resurfacing, repairing potholes, improved signage and of course our Winter maintenance programme of gritting the roads in frosty conditions.

The County Council's environmental policy agreed by full council commits the authority to an ambitious target of achieving net zero carbon by 2030. We have been working on a wide range of carbon cutting and environmentally friendly improvements including progress towards decarbonising council owned buildings, installation of a further 44 electric vehicle charge-points at County Hall and developing strategies countywide to boost cycling and walking. Also more roadside nature reserves will be created and a Pollinator Action Plan has seen a new pollinator-friendly verge cutting approach adopted as part of the countywide Natural Norfolk programme. Good progress has been made with our planting of 1 million trees and many of our local towns and villages have been involved with planting a wide variety of trees. Our Norfolk Fire and Rescue service is planning to move parts of its fleet across to electric and hybrid vehicles this year as part of NCC's commitment to reduce carbon emissions. They will be leasing 35 plug-in hybrid vehicles for officer emergency response vehicles and they are planning for 6 full electric vehicles and 15 fully electric vans to their fleet.

I'm sure that we are all looking forward to the Jubilee celebrations coming up.
Best Wishes Martin

Appendix 4

Leisure Centre Management Committee Report for the Annual Town Meeting

The last year has seen lots of changes in both the Leisure Centre Management Committee and the Leisure Centre Team. New Leisure Centre Chairman come, a new Deputy Clerk, helping to run the Centre, losing one member of the operational team but gained two fantastic new additions.

At the beginning of the year, we were just coming out of the third COVID lockdown, all activities still governed by many restrictions. The team was very quick to adapt, moving classes outside, managed social distancing without reducing facilities or equipment. A testament to the team that during the year they have all pulled together to ensure that the centre remained open throughout.

As did many Leisure Centres and Gyms, we lost a number of members during the lockdown; despite this we have maintained and grown our membership base, currently topping 400 members. We are not quite where we want to be, but the team continues to come up with new ideas and initiatives to promote health and wellbeing in the community. We remain on course to both get back to and improve on pre pandemic targets.

The gym changing rooms have been fully refurbished. The changing rooms now cater for both the squash club and gym members placing the refurbishment of the squash changing rooms on hold, whilst we look to potentially re develop this, as well as some other areas of the building for future renewed/rejuvenated use, to try and ensure we can positively respond to customers wants and wishes.

The team have introduced classes every morning at 9.30 giving consistency and variety, meeting the demands of increased interest.

Continuing to work with the local community, including the Create Play and Learn co-ordinator Michelle Ward introducing pop up sessions for toddlers and children, *I understand the parents and guardians are also allowed to join in!*

We assisted the Exchange 2 group to get up and running following the pandemic by providing temporary accommodation at a minimal cost. This provides a much needed drop-in centre for the youngsters in our community.

We continue to work with other groups within the community to provide both accommodation and activities for all ages.

Understanding the technical needs of our members we are looking to commission an all singing all dancing 'App' based booking and reception system later this year.

Continuing to support Harleston Town Football Club, delighted that they have been victorious this season resulting in promotion and look forward to working with them in the future on new and exciting projects.

Now looking forward to the coming year embracing some fantastic improvement ideas and new developments. These include the resurfacing of the play area due shortly. The introduction of a new indoor cycling room. The potential introduction of new classes in the gym for targeted groups such as the more senior among us.

While it has been a year of challenges, we look to the forth coming year and beyond with enthusiasm, commitment, and focused resolve.

Appendix 5

Citizens Advice Diss and Thetford

Redenhall with Harleston Town Council Grant

Since reopening for appointments to clients at Harleston Information Point in October 2021 until March 2022 our volunteer adviser has seen 25 clients and helped them with 48 different issues. The main issues have been Benefits, Debt and Employment. Although we have not seen as many clients as pre-pandemic levels, our capacity has been reduced due providing a safe appointment system during this time. However, we have seen 81 Harleston clients at our Diss office from April 2021 to March 2022 and helped them with 390 different issues, the top being Benefits and Debt.

We're acutely aware that many people currently face a cost-of-living crisis and we're so relieved that we are now once again more accessible to the most vulnerable in our society when they are most in need. Your grant has allowed us to continue to support our community with free, confidential, impartial, quality which we're incredibly grateful for.

Appendix 6

Historical Society Annual Report to the Town Meeting

2022

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

Unfortunately, the recent pandemic brought chaos. We were unable to meet at all. The museum which was set up for the new season in 2020 was not able to be opened. However, the rent still has to be paid.

The intention is that the Society will attempt a restart this month with a change of day and time. We have a good speaker, speaking on a local historical happening, and books for sale.

The Museum is ready to open with some new displays and we're hoping to take part in the County wide extravaganza heritage weekend in September.

Despite the Covid restrictions, we were able to take possession of some very valuable items:-

- A further one thousand glass photographic plates plus some other items. The glass plates have been photographed (thanks to Ian Carstairs) and deposited in the Norwich Archive.

We still have the Harleston fire engine (1765) looking for a permanent home. It seems that, due to a total lack of local interest, this item will be heading elsewhere.

We are very grateful to the Town Council for their financial assistance which enables us to keep the Museum running.

Appendix 7

Report from Waveney Foodbank

This year we were humbled to be awarded a blue plaque for service during covid 19, presented by HM Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk Rev Matthew Hutton.

Since its inception in 2012 we would like to thank RwHTC for the financial help we have received and luckily, we haven't needed to apply for a grant in past few years.

Just to bring you up to date with the work we are doing locally, this may give you some idea of the level of need.

in the last 9 years...

We have given out the following to Harleston residents.

- From London Road church we have supplied 6,900 meals
- From St Johns, the church we have supplied 8,999 meals
- we've also delivered food equating to 3,781 meals
- During the first lockdown with the help of Harleston Kindness and the Swan Hotel every Saturday morning around easter we gave out over 38,000 meals over 10 weeks.

We continue to work alongside Harleston's Kindness who help deliver food parcels to those unable to leave their home for various reasons.

We also welcome working with HIP and Pam Spicer with Norfolk Better together and their team of volunteers to provide a free community cafe on a Tuesday afternoon in St Johns church.

We would also like to thank the many people and organisations that have helped us over the years including (sorry if I've missed any out)

- HIP for donating slow cookers
- Pauline Shadbolt's charities fund for donating slow cookers
- Harleston and District Rotary
- Harleston Round Table
- Robin and Vikki at the Swan
- The team at East of England Coop
- Harleston scouting and guiding groups including beavers
- All Harleston churches.
- and every single person that volunteers for us or who donates to us.

Thank you all

from the Project manager and the trustees at Waveney Foodbank

Appendix 8

Kindness Help Hub Annual Town Meeting Report

Harleston Kindness Help Hub currently has a team of around 30 volunteers working with South Norfolk District Council help hub.

We continue to help with shopping, prescription pickups, and sample collection and pickup with GPs.

We are also assisting with the delivery of foodbank boxes on behalf of Waveney Food Bank

Over Easter and Christmas we put on events and competitions for local children.

We have also set up a school uniform bank

The Kindness Help Hub arranged the Yard sale event in 2020 and 2021 with 170 households taking part last year over 2 days. This event is free for those selling and those wanting a map of the sales.

We have another planned for August 2022, so watch this space

Appendix 9

Harleston Information Plus Annual Report 2022

Vice Chairman Norman Hart attended the Annual Town Meeting and gave following verbal report

In 2021/2022 we did not apply for a grant from the Town Council because as a result of COVID our income was up and our expenditure reduced. However, we still wish to give you an annual report.

It has been good to return to a more 'normal' service.

Information Centre

It is remarkable how visitor numbers have recovered and surpassed pre-pandemic levels.

- 2019 – Just under 400 per month
- 2021/22 – 500+

See accompanying charts and graphs.

Jobs Club

Face to face has resumed but by individual appointments rather than the group as pre-Covid. Training for job seekers, especially in I.T. has been financed by LIFT (European funding distributed) by Norfolk County Council. We have received four grants from this source.

Befriending

This is a new service which is just one year old. So far just over a dozen 'befrienders' have been trained (four new ones yesterday, including me!). We had about two dozen 'befriendees', mostly identified by SNDC Help Hub. Initially this was Lottery funded.

Better Together

Our contract with Voluntary Norfolk for supporting their Better Together Project (aimed at social isolation and homelessness) has been increased to 21 hours per week, (originally 10hrs).

This has resulted in innovative projects often trialled locally before being rolled out much more widely by Voluntary Norfolk.

Regular tea parties in Harleston and Brockdish, contacts with people in care homes, twinning of care homes with the Hebredier, art groups, dialect colouring books, activity packs for children etc.

Last year our aims included:

- Resuming a full service (face to face)
- Develop befriending service
- Increase video, I.T. support and training

The opportunity for people to participate in video attendance at funerals etc did happen but not in the numbers we hoped.

Otherwise, we achieved our aims.

We have asked for and received a grant for 2022/23 from the Town Council – has been requested and granted. This should enable us to “break even” in this financial year.

Our aims for this year include:

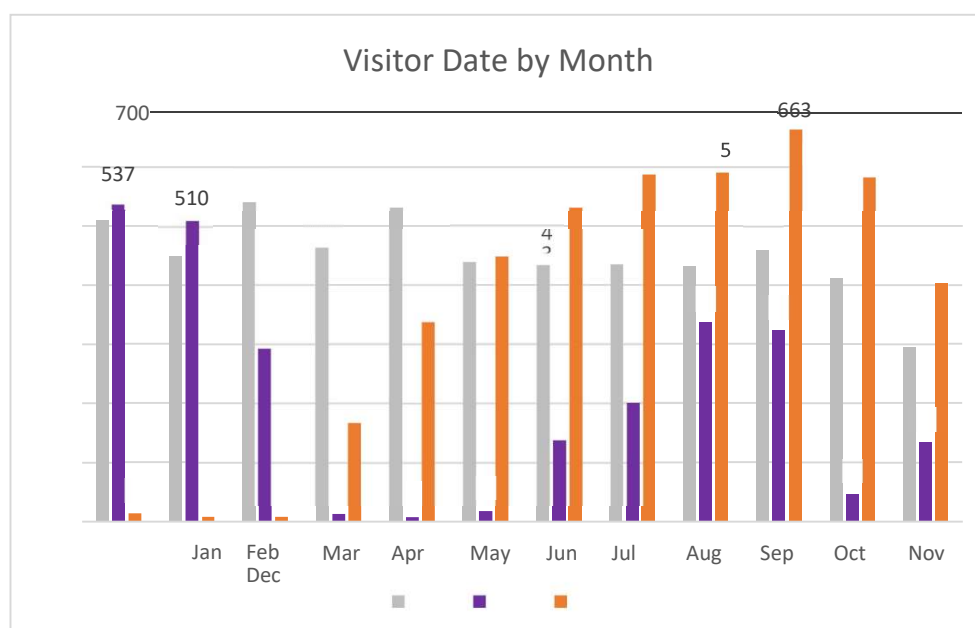
- Continue to develop present services
- Update/replace our website
- Review our activities after 20 years as part of planning for the future.

1. HARLESTON INFORMATION PLUS

2019 - 2021

Information Centre Visitors - Statistical Breakdown 2019 -2021

The chart below shows a breakdown of visitors to the Centre between 2019, 2020 and 2021 and clearly illustrates the effect of the Covid lockdown lockdowns.



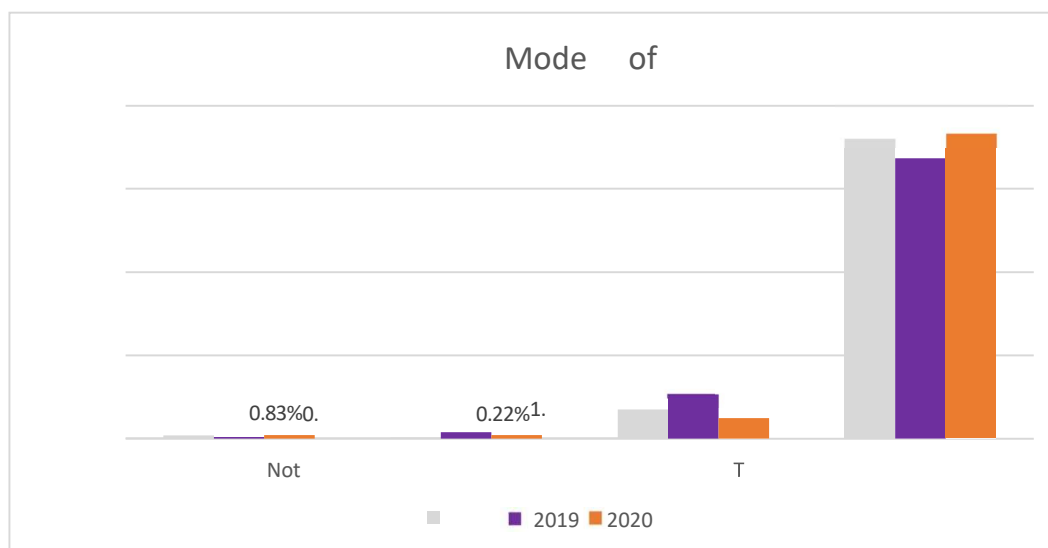
Lockdown dates: (1) 19 Mar – 28 Jun 2020 (2) 5 Nov – 2 Dec 2020 (3) 4 Jan – 9 Apr 2021

	2019	2020	2021
Average monthly visitors	391.33	213.33	361.83
Total visitors	4692	2560	4342
% up or down over previous year	n/a	↓ 45.5%	↑ 69.6%

HIP Customers Age Profile	2019	2020	2021
65+	72.5%	68.8%	69.4%
25-64	24.7%	25.4%	23.2%
24 and under	0.7%	0.7%	0.9%
Unknown	2%	5%	6.5%

Mode of Contact

Mode of contact is primarily through visitors to the Information Centre at 8 Exchange Street, however we also record contact via email and telephone :



Nature of Enquiry

The Nature of enquiries has remained remarkably consistent with the Centre primarily being used as a Community Hub, followed by a source for local information. Citizens Advice has changed a drop-in service to appointments only.

	2019	2020	Change ± 1.5%	2021	Change ± 1.5%
Community Hub	55.8%	54.9%		61.7%	↑
Local Information	13.5%	13.8%		12.5%	
Special Enquiry/Welfare	2.7%	7.2%	↑	5.7%	
Travel	6.8%	4.5%	↓	3.6%	
Tourism	3.8%	2%	↓	3.4%	
HIP Services	3.8%	2%	↓	3.4%	
Council/Statutory	1.2%	1.2%		1.9%	
Citizens Advice	4%	3.5%	↓	1.3%	↓
Volunteering	0.2%	0.4%		0.2%	

Appendix 10

Report from Steven Phillips – South Norfolk Police

From a policing point of view, the ASB issues that we were having have dropped significantly over the last 6-8 weeks.

We are looking at the issue around boy racers as there are a few going round, although reports to the police have almost stopped.

I have recently been told that there may have been damage to some equipment over at the rec. but when I've looked nothing has been reported. If this is the case please can it be reported via the link [6. Report It | Norfolk Constabulary](#)

Appendix 11

Report from ASHS

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS

May 2022

*The Harleston Federation is a community that flourishes, through God's love, to live 'Life in All its Fullness'. (John 10:10 and John 13:34). We are a foundation of **Hope**; a family of **Love**; a school of nurture guided by **Faith**; promoting a unique, personalised journey towards excellence.*

The Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body would like to thank Councillors for their continued interest and support of the school(s). We are incredibly proud of our school communities where our number one priority is to provide an excellent standard of education, and a wide range of experiences that prepare our young people for a successful and fulfilled life beyond school.

In August 2018, ASHS was a founder school as part of the St. Benet's Multi Academy Trust (MAT). St. Benet's is the second MAT within the Diocese of Norwich and currently comprises 8 schools (soon to be 11) including Garboldisham, Newton Flotman, Harleston Primary Academy, Dickleburgh, Diss Infant and Junior, St. Mary's Long Stratton. In addition, Alburgh with Denton is an Associate Member. The Trust has enabled excellent opportunities for collaboration between the schools as we learn from each other and develop a consistent, joined up approach to learning from age 3-16.

I was appointed as Head of School upon Academy conversion in 2018 and more recently as Executive Headteacher of the Harleston Federation, which comprises ASHS and Harleston Primary Academy. In September 2022 we see the closure of these 2 schools and the opening of a brand-new school, The Harleston Sancroft Academy. For further information regarding this, please see the recent press release (<https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/education/new-name-confirmed-for-merged-harleston-schools-8947042>). This represents a significant milestone in the history of education for Harleston, where we will be providing education from ages 3-16. In practical terms, we will continue to operate across the current 2 sites (School Lane and Wilderness lane). However, we have already developed a team that works across both sites and phases, delivering a curriculum that builds from ages 3-16. This year has also seen the introduction of a shared vision ([see above](#)) with a clear focus on the Christian values of Love, Respect, Faith, Hope, Perseverance, and Wisdom. Relationships are at the heart of this very special community and as we look ahead, we continue our journey towards a transformational educational experience for our community.

We always welcome visitors to the school and would be delighted to take Councillors on a tour. Should you wish to take us up on this offer, please contact the school office.



Rob Connelly
Executive Headteacher
Appendix 12

Report for Harleston Future

HARLESTON'S FUTURE REPORT ON ACTIVITIES APRIL 2021- MARCH 2022

Harleston's Future, a constituted voluntary organisation, was established in 2013 with the primary objective of "ensuring the continued prosperity and well-being of Harleston, for the benefit of local businesses, the local economy, residents and visitors".

Like many other organisations, our activities over the last year have been impacted by the continuing challenge of covid 19. This in turn has affected our ability to fund raise. We have used our reserves to weather the storm and are looking forward to celebrating our 10th anniversary next year.

Throughout almost all of the assorted lockdowns, Harleston's Future's Flag Force has managed to keep the flags flying in Harleston. Our volunteers have also ensured that the lovely colourful bunting went up in summer as normal. We know this has made so much difference to morale in the town, cheering up residents and visitors alike.

The Environment group continues its work to help address issues in and around the town by improving awareness and generating a better environment wildlife including through the Swift Action Group.

Harleston's Cinema restarted in September 2021 with a film screened on the last Thursday of the month. We have not yet reached pre-lockdown audience figures, particularly for matinee performances. Hopefully numbers will improve as we all learn to live with covid.

Most of the planned Mayflower 400 anniversary celebrations that had been postponed from 2020, had to be cancelled. This included the visit of the Fuller family descendants, but we were able to complete Mayflower lecture programme using zoom. We were very pleased that Harleston Players were finally able to go ahead with the "Living History" events and the Mayflower play "1620 New World Odyssey" staged as an open-air production on the Recreation Ground. Harleston's Future was proud to support Harleston Players application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and to donate £500 towards the costs of the project. Whilst the 400th anniversary has passed, we hope that we will be able to work with other organisations to keep Mayflower legacy alive in Harleston.

Harleston's Future joined forces with the Gardening Club to run the biennial "Open Gardens" event over the weekend of the 31 July/1 August. This was a successful event enjoyed by many people. As well as raising funds for Harleston's Future and the Gardening Club, many of those who opened their gardens also sold cakes/plants to raise funds for their chosen charities.

Harleston's Future contributed to the "Towards Tomorrow" event on 7 August and also purchased a set of 21 Town Team flags for the different organisations in Harleston.

The "Food and Drink Festival" was on 9 October. The skies were grey, but the weather held, and the market was well attended with a really good atmosphere. Many of the food and drink outlets in town also got involved and offered "Festival Specials" which were well received and helped increase footfall in the Town.

Christmas is always a special time of year. In 2021 Harleston's Future ran its second themed shop window competition. It was really good to see so many shops joining in with their own very original takes on the "Twelve Days of Christmas" theme. As in previous years, Harleston Future organised the Christmas Market on 4 December and joined with the Town Council and Harleston

Information Plus to provide the “Christmas Festivities” leading up to the Christmas lights switch on. Lee Vasey proved a popular choice for the entertainment.

The Harleston and Waveney Festival has also been a casualty of the uncertainty generated by covid, with no Festival for the last two years. So, I would like to finish with some exciting news. After resolving various legal issues, the Harleston and Waveney Festival has now been formally incorporated into Harleston’s Future. Whilst there will be no Festival this year, as our efforts have gone into supporting the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, we are looking forward to the return of the Festival in 2023.

Harleston’s Future

May 2022

Appendix 13

Redenhall with Harleston Town Council Annual Meeting Harleston & District Branch Royal British Legion Submission

Whilst not in receipt of a grant or public funds this year, the Harleston and District Branch has enjoyed several mutually beneficial collaborations, which we believe are worthy of note and inclusion in the public record.

There has always been a close relationship with the Town Council regarding the planning and execution of the annual acts of remembrance but the regular, reserve, retired and veteran community in Harleston and the local area were pleased that the Town Council became signatories to the Armed Forces Covenant in Nov 2021 and that this was cemented by the appointment of an Armed forces Champion. We hope that this relationship will continue to develop and flourish. Located close to major military establishments, Harleston is a popular location for service families and the town could benefit from developing Harleston as a Service Family friendly town in the light of pending population growth.

As the guardian of the memory of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, it was most gratifying to see the community turn out to address a long-standing oversight. On the 9th March 1942 two separate RAF aircraft crashed in the fields surrounding Harleston and for some reason this tragic event has never been remembered formally. The 6 crew from Wellington Bomber X3643 and the Royal Australian Air Force pilot of the Hurricane perished that day and on the 9th of March 2022 the community came together to honour their sacrifice – Lest we forget.

Another part of the RBL remit is to reach out to members of the community who have had an association with the military or uniformed public services. We are both pleased and grateful that the facilities of the Memorial Hall have been provided for our membership to meet for social and administrative gatherings. This is a tangible demonstration of the TC commitment to the AF Covenant and when coupled with the notification of the TC website and free use of the Market Place and TC Gazebo makes it possible to conduct the Poppy Appeal and Armed Forces Day fundraising and awareness campaigns.

In Summary the Harleston and District Branch of the RBL are pleased that a closer more informed relationship with the TC have developed over this period and wish to support the TC and specifically the AF champion in their future endeavours.

Lt Col (Retd) Jon Duckworth

Harleston and District Branch Vice Chair

Appendix 14

Jubilee Report for Annual Town Meeting – 18th May 2022

Back in December 2021, the first meetings took place via Zoom with local organisations and groups of Harleston in attendance. The Town Council had agreed to ringfence £3,500 towards the organisation of some events in the town to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Once the Jubilee Committee was formed, work began on putting together a programme of events to make them as inclusive as possible and to cover all ages for not only the Jubilee weekend, but also for the preceding days in the lead up to the Party in the Park and Picnic in the Park, which were the main events organised as a finale for the Jubilee.

Given the shortness of time available to formulate ideas, organise, book stalls, identify and engage live bands, the Committee members pulled together to utilise individual's expertise and knowledge and the formation of a programme began to take shape, it must be said that every individual on the committee has worked tirelessly throughout and continue to do so, what a fantastic group of people.

It was also agreed that if at all possible, a Jubilee publication would be produced which would be focussed on the Queen's 70 year reign, to include any Royal items and events which would be of special interest to the residents of Harleston.

Thanks must go to the following for sponsorship and cash donations:-

- An Awards for All Community Fund grant was applied for to help pay for the cost of producing such a big programme, and fortunately we were granted £5000 to help with a broad range of costs to put on a 2 day event. With this funding and careful budgeting, it is envisaged that the Jubilee celebrations will be cost neutral and any money made i.e. stalls and tea tent, will be put towards the cost of running the events Special Thanks to Lynda and Clare for securing it).
- East of England Co-op awarded the Jubilee committee £50 in vouchers,
- South Norfolk Council awarded £300
- Fishers on the Industrial Estate donating all the material for new bunting,
- Robin Twigge for sponsoring the material for the flag makers,
- Hi-Rel on the Industrial Estate donated £250
- The Grapevine gave £100
- Kindness Help Hub sponsored some Jubilee Wildflower Seeds and a children's face painter for the pop up event on the Market Place on 28th May
- Waveney Foodbank for the donation of tea and coffee
- Apologises for any one I have not identified or has yet to contribute.

Thanks must also go to all the volunteers across a wide range of Harleston organisations, members of the committee, Jean Wills from One Press Publishing for her patience and forbearance in getting the Jubilee publication ready and published in a very short space of time, businesses in the town and industrial estate, Harleston Town Council, the ladies who have spent hours sewing bunting and swags and Robin Twigge for all his help in hosting the Committee meetings at The Swan (and the many cups of coffee and tea he's provided) – a list of acknowledgements is on the back page of the Jubilee publication. A comprehensive programme of events is in the publication which has been delivered to every household in town by a whole host of willing volunteers, we are very grateful for all the help given.

Still in the pipeline

- New activities being added all the time, that were too late for inclusion in the commemorative brochure souvenir.

Saturday 28 May - Pop-up event on the Market Place from 10.00am to 2.00pm.

Monday 30 May - The First Elizabethans - 12.00 noon at the Swan Hotel -

Tuesday 31 May - Candid Photography with Nils Jorgenson - at the Swan Hotel -

Wednesday 1 June - Jubilee Fun Afternoon at Harleston Library – 2pm – 4pm – something for everyone ages 0 – 100 welcome. Variety of crafts with both indoor and outdoor activities on offer and Just a Cuppa session.

Wednesday 1 June - Rotary Club Quiz 6.15 pm at the Swan Hotel

Thursday 2 June - Wednesday 8 June - Photographic exhibition "Shopping in Harleston - 1950's to the Present Day"- organised by Harleston's Future. at the Swan Hotel

Thursday 2 June At 2.00pm join Gordon Lascelles for a themed walk "Whatever happened to Saffron's and other shops.

Thursday 2 June At 6.00pm - Celebration Evening St John Church in honour of our Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Friday 3 June A Norwich based Gospel Choir - 7.00pm in the Methodist Church, London Road

River Waveney Trust Annual Report