



Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Clerk: Mrs. C. Crane

Chairman: Mr P. MBA

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 Tuesday 23rd May 2023.

Present: Councillors – Paul MBA, Matt Scade, Keith Harrison, Clive Digby, Adrian Brownsea.

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

Members of the Public – District Councillor Trevor Graham, Jeremy Savage, Caroline Savage, Rosie Riches, Lynda Ling, Jackie Glennie, Lesley Lamoureu, Trevor Howling, Ian Carstairs, Stephanie Woollam, Robin Twigge, Rob Connelly, Terry Pegg, Dave Meekings, Norman Hart, Ian Hunter, Jim Collins and two further members of the public.

1. Chairman to welcome all those present.

Cllr MBA welcomed all those present.

2. To consider accepting apologies for absence.

Jon Duckworth RBL

Cllr Attwood

3. To approve and sign the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 18th May 2022

Minutes were approved by those present and signed by Cllr MBA

4. Matters arising from previous minutes.

No matters arising.

5. Annual Report from the Town Council provided by the preceding Chairman.

See appendix A

6. To record the Town's thanks to those councillors that have stood down.

Thanks were given to Trevor Graham and James Eddy for their work over the last four years and wished them well in their new roles as District Councillors for Harleston.

Trevor Graham gave thanks to Cllr Jeremy Savage for his years of commitment and hard work as the Towns District Councillor. He presented a gift on behalf of the Town Council. Lynda Ling then presented a gift from all of the staff and councillors and Norman Hart then presented a gift on behalf of the town. Jeremy gave thanks and wished the community of Harleston all the best for the future.

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

No further reports had been received.

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

a. Amenities Committee

Cllr Scade reported that the survey for the clocktower still in process and will commence when building works in the neighbouring property is finalised. The market now has more regular stalls with more suppliers being targets for specific goods and services. The planters well maintained and thanks were given to the volunteers who tend to them. Thanks were also given to all the team at the council for their hard work and commitment.

b. Leisure Centre Management Committee

Cllr Digby reported that new safety surfaces had been laid in some sections of the play area this year which has greatly improved the look of the park. Whilst we have suffered from bouts of vandalism, which have all be reported to the Police, he gave thanks to the Maintenance Team for their hard work in keeping as much of the equipment as possible useable for the community. Continuing outside the main car park has also been resurfaced and the maintenance team are currently replacing the fencing around this area.

Tennis courts have been cleaned and the MUGA has also been cleaned and relined.

Additional CCTV cameras have been fitted around the recreation ground improving the security.

The LCMC committee extends congratulations to Harleston Town Football Club in achieving third place in the Thurlow Nunn Premier Division. The Football Club have also installed a new stand providing additional covered space for spectators. The wood from the old stand has been donated to the maintenance team who have built a car port and shelving for plants in the compound and have further plans for the remaining wood.

Inside the Leisure Centre the Gym team have exceeded expectation in attracting new customers and more groups are using the various rooms that are now available for hire.

c. Finance Committee

Trevor Graham reported as the outgoing Chairman of the Finance committee. It has been a very challenging year, he highlighted the reforecasting every three months and how much detail is included in the monthly reporting providing a clear picture throughout the year.

d. Planning and Development Committee

No updates at present

**9. To receive reports from organisations and groups active in Harleston
(If your organisation would like to submit a report, please send to the
Deputy Clerk at deputy-clerk@harleston-tc.gov.uk by Friday 19th May 2023)**

Ian Carstairs – Nature Recovery Initiative – Bring back our butterflies – See appendix B

Robin Twigge – Harleston Future – See appendix C

Norman Hart – HIP – See appendix D

Terry Pegg – Harleston Branch Royal British Legion – See appendix E

Matt Scade – Waveney Foodbank – matt to send in report – See appendix F

Rob Connelly – Sancroft – Update

The two schools in Harleston have now become one school over two sites providing education from nursery through to the age of 16

The pandemic has had a profound effect on the mental health of the youth of today. Schools are not the same as they were before and are now being asked to do so much more. There are many financial challenges, even with the secondary phase being oversubscribed.

The schools have embraced the cradle to career concept and aspire to give many opportunities for young people.

Ian Hunter – U3A - Update

Pre-covid over 200 members now 130 with 60-70 people attending each event
The new Chair and Vice Chair and are looking to find new ways to get more people involved

Further reports have been provided to the council but were not represented at the meeting. These include The Brownies (appendix G) and Harleston Historical Society(appendix H)

10. Electors have the opportunity to raise questions (Q&A)

One member of the public raised that there looks to be water damage on some of the new planters in the town.

11. Any Other Business

Jeremy Savage gave a final thanks to everyone.

Meeting ended 20.19

Signed P.Mba

Date 13th March 2024

HARLESTON AND REDENHALL TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2023

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This is a time to be positive as we share our achievements and look back over the last twelve months.

It has been a very eventful twelve months with the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, her sad passing away and the subsequent coronation of King Charles III. The continued war in Ukraine with an impact on the whole world. There have been political shenanigans in Westminster resulting in three Prime Ministers. But today is a celebration of all things Harleston.

Town Councillors

While this is not a meeting of the Town Council, I *will* start with our Town Councillors. We should all remember that this is a voluntary role to be discharged with the best interests of the *overall* community. As with other years, there were further changes to the composition of the members. The Council welcomed Councillor Mba (whom I would like to congratulate on being voted as the new Chairman), but sadly accepted the resignation of Councillor Hardy. I would like to thank Councillor Hardy for his contributions and personal support during four years as a Councillor, and his continued support, along with that of Carolyn Malinowski, another ex-Councillor, on the planning committee. This was, and will be, especially important in contributing their valuable knowledge of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan

Implementation of the afore mentioned Neighbourhood Plan was a significant achievement during the year. It was put to a public referendum with a staggering 87% voting in favour, and was adopted by South Norfolk Council in October 2022. This now forms part of the planning application process of South Norfolk.

As we have a Neighbourhood Plan the community will now receive a greater portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy which is paid by developers. This will be very important with the forthcoming expansion in housing. The Town Council will need to work closely with South Norfolk Council to secure upfront payment and fund matching in the delivery of any proposals.

I will reiterate and emphasis that the Plan was commended by the South Norfolk Cabinet as providing a really good, well considered policy. Hearty congratulations were given to the people from Harleston who were involved. The Cabinet were specifically pleased that the Plan is not just about the physical infrastructure and buildings, but also that there was a lot of work on the sense of the place, green environment, as worded 'those benefits which make a livable place'.

My thanks and appreciation go out to all those who contributed towards this very important Plan.

Nature Recovery

The Neighbourhood Plan included a 'green environmental' aspiration to define the entire parish as a nature recovery area. The town council rose to the challenge and set up a working party to deliver the aspiration. This has been reported in press releases far outside of East Anglia and has provided good publicity for our town.

A launch of 'Nature Recovery in Harleston' was held in St John's church on 11 March with about 100 people in attendance. Guest speakers gave topical, informative and entertaining presentations as butterfly mobiles, created by children from the Primary Phase of Sancroft Academy, floated from the ceiling. The pupils have also created a wildflower meadow area, planted buddleia for our butterflies, and will soon be restoring an old pond. I recently presented a certificate from the Earth Society in America for their work and witnessed their butterfly wave to the world.

Pupils from the Secondary Phase repainted the wall in the Recreation Ground with a nature theme, and a local business painted the bus shelter with butterfly motifs. There is a page on the Council website and a dedicated nature recovery website and logo.

Many thanks go to Ian Carstairs who is a driving force behind the initiative.

The Town Council itself have prepared an area of the cemetery at St Mary's church in Redenhall for a new wildflower meadow area leading up to the Jubilee woodlands.

Hopefully the example set by Redenhall with Harleston town council can provide a model for other parishes to follow. I hope that this good work can be replicated throughout the South Norfolk area and even further.

Jubilee Woodlands and Mayflower Apple Tree

Rev. Nigel Tuffnell named, blessed, and opened the previously mentioned 'Jubilee Woodlands'. John Stirland, horticulturist and BBC correspondent, the man behind creation of a special Mayflower Pilgrim 400 Apple Tree planted one of these trees which had been kindly donated from Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council. This was in recognition of the role of the Fuller family from Harleston in the Mayflower story of 1620.

The Mayflower link provides a wonderful opportunity to promote our town to a wider audience and encourage more visitors. Hopefully this can be progressed.

Tourism Opportunities

On the theme of visitors. The Town Council have developed a new website, 'visitharleston' to promote Harleston as a tourist destination. I would like to thank Harleston's Future for releasing the domain name as this had previously been used by them. The 'visit' website forms part of a plan by the District Council to create a wider tourist proposition involving five other towns across South Norfolk and Broadlands. Harleston Town Council are the pioneers for the programme and can hopefully use the successful delivery of the website to be at the forefront of other initiatives. This is one step in raising the visibility of Harleston to a wider audience.

Communications

Some of the administration such as the tourism and council websites go unrecognised and without appreciation for the work that has been undertaken. There have been many initiatives one of which is communication with the community. This has been a focus for the Town Council since I became Chairman. Some people may not remember the level of communication before the Council of 2019, those who can, will hopefully recognise the significant progress that has been made. During the last year there were further enhancements to the website, and further improvements in engagement with the community. There were 375 published website posts with 186 news, agenda and traffic order messages emailed to subscribers. On average the Town Council sent a message every two days. This level of engagement is not always recognised or understood.

All involved in the huge improvements in communications should take pride in the greater visibility and transparency. Hopefully the new Council can complete the steps needed to fully implement the transparency code and move towards being a model Council.

The Town Council recruited Luci Waters as a Marketing Officer who has done a fantastic job in promoting the town. The Wednesday market is more vibrant, there are regular Facebook posts, and the Town Council has taken the lead in community events. The recent coronation is a great example of what Luci has brought to the Council. I particularly liked the dog show. Maybe next up is 'Harleston's Children Have Talent'?

Finance

While this has undoubtedly been a challenging year as the country recovered from the impact of Covid and then faced increasing costs exacerbated by actions in Ukraine, the Town Council have been able to remain very close to the original budget figures. There are now quarterly reforecasts which are published on the website. I very much hope that this continues and that there are even further improvements to transparency.

Town Centre Project

If there is an elephant in the room, this is it. There has been considerable investment in the town by South Norfolk and Norfolk District Councils amounting to a reported total of just under £1m. The Town Council contributed £30,000 towards the project which was approved and used to buy new environmentally friendly street furniture. Picnic tables have been positioned on the Market Place and seating benches in Union Street, with planters throughout the town.

The planters have been enthusiastically received. A working party has been created, under the guidance of Councillor Digby, with community volunteers who are working with local businesses to maintain the planters. I am very pleased to be part of the volunteer group. These will be refreshed throughout the year to provide a colourful and cheerful seasonal display.

The unpopular metal toilet block was finally removed from the Bullock Fair Car Park. None of the remaining Councillors at the end of the previous Council, were involved in the installation, but they can claim to have been involved in their removal.

The town centre project has been a wonderful example of the town, district and county councils working together. It shows that Harleston is able to adapt and can deliver. Success breeds success. Continued, good relations will be very important in the coming years as the Town Council looks to obtain, and use, significant CIL money from new developments.

Continuation of Team Harleston

The Platinum jubilee celebrations took place between 2 – 5 June, starting with presentations at St Johns Church, by various groups and organisations from across the town and culminating with the Party on the Park. I was honored to give the message of thanks at St Johns Church, to everyone involved in the programme, however large or small the contribution, this was a collective event. A true demonstration of the 'Team Harleston' community spirit with people working together. There is a dedicated page on the Council website to capture the celebrations.

There were further celebrations for the coronation of King Charles III.

We installed a smart meter in our house, and I am sure like many others were horrified at how much it cost to cook a meal and heat our home. We seem to have returned to the days of the 1960s and 1970s as we just put on another layer of clothes to keep warm. It was wonderful that the community came together in offering Warm Rooms during the colder months. The Town Council itself opened this room as part of the programme.

I reported last year that 'Team Harleston' is the banner under which to demonstrate collectivism. A banner under which we should all be proud to march together. Collective events do not need to be arranged by the Town Council. It was wonderful to see the concept of 'Team Harleston' in action as Harleston Information Plus arranged a meeting of groups and organisations across the town to seek ideas for services and activities which could benefit the town. 'Team Harleston' is simply a common badge under which people can work together, and show their commitment to be part of a much larger community wide group. The HIP meeting demonstrated that the initiative and concept is alive and working.

The Town is not just a Council

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

The 2019 Council term came to an end, and a new Council began last week. I hope that the class of 2023 Councillors are able to further progress the achievements of the last Council and implement even more new initiatives. There are many new Councillors in the new group, I hope that they are able to contribute, feel valued and enjoy their time on the Council.

I will thank our office staff Clare Crane – Clerk, Emma Chandler – Deputy Clerk and Tracey Betts – Finance Administrator. It would be a long list to mention everyone by name so I will thank our Leisure Centre Duty Managers - Christie Rose and Ross Lomax, Operations Manager – Steve Cox and ask them to pass on our gratitude to their teams.

I would like to end by thanking all of the 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.

I now look forward to hearing from local groups and organisations here this evening.

Trevor Graham,
Past Chairman (2020-2023),
Redenhall with Harleston Town Council

Jeremy

On behalf of the Town Council, I would like to pay tribute to someone who has served the community for almost 50 years. Firstly, as a Town Councillor and since 2007 as one of our District Councillors. I am sure that you will guess who I am talking about.

Yes it's Jeremy Savage, previously Councillor Jeremy Savage. For most of my time on the Town Council Jeremy was not only the *most* visible District Councillor, he was the *only* visible District Councillor. He carried out the work of two people by himself. Jeremy is also another ex-Chairman of the Town Council. I know something about that role, he has, along with *all* other previous Chairmen, my respect and appreciation.

I would also like to thank Jeremy's wife, Caroline, for her patience and support of Jeremy over such a long time in his public service. I think my partner Chris would add her words to mine. No recognition, no credit, but essential in providing the support required.

With that I would like to present Jeremy with a gift as a symbol of our gratitude for almost 50 years of public service. Hoping that every time it is used, that there will be a smile and fond memories.

At the end of the meeting

I would like to thank everyone for giving up their time to come along to the Town Meeting this evening.



Stilt-walkers

WELL, it's all over the media. We are in the 'last chance saloon' to right the wrongs that threaten the planet, the plants and animals that live here and ultimately the natural systems on which we all depend. The gauntlet has been thrown down firmly for nature recovery and for the moment at least increasingly picked up in a multitude of ways, not overlooking the fact that many throughout society have been quietly trying, unsung, to make a difference for years.

The RSPB encourages us to send £10 so that they can help fix the problems. The National Trust and Wildlife Trusts are gearing up too. And, of course, the Government has its schemes for landowners and farmers. But these are all 'top-down' initiatives. Good and worthy as they might be, they are inevitably dependent on the mechanics and processes of the organisations promoting them to deliver the desired outcomes. Their practical effects are thus often driven remotely from the ordinary person in their everyday lives.

Of course, these initiatives by organisations have their critically important place. But what really interests me is the degree to which society in general can be influenced and encouraged to meet the challenge in a very 'bottom-up' sort of way. How, realistically, can the necessary shift in attitude be achieved and fostered in an enduring way when we have heard the same messages so many times before over the last 50 years? Such cultural change requires a seismic shift in the way we all see the world, demanding that we seek more simply to satisfy our needs and limit our self-interest wants. Alongside this taking the pressure off nature has to gain wide acceptance, giving it the space and the 'break' it so desperately requires if we are to reverse catastrophic loss. This is a given.

As Sir David Attenborough so clearly emphasises at the end of many of his programmes, it is "up to every one of us" - a message which bears repeating time and time again.

Taking Sir David's lead, in his Foreword to this edition of 'Voice', our Chair Adrian Leaman touches on this very issue, going to the heart of our attitudes and need for cultural change

Coincidentally his sentiments have been given a topical focus for me through the example my Town Council, here in Harleston, Norfolk, has set. Based on an aspiration in its adopted Neighbourhood Plan, Harleston Town Council, with the support of County and District Councillors, has adventurously declared the parish to be a local Nature Recovery area.

At first this raised confused eyebrows as to what would be involved, whether there was such a thing and how it would be organised. But once established that there is no organisation, only the concept of nature recovery as a 'badge' under which everyone - be they farmers, developers, organisations and individuals - who takes any positive action can rally with a sense of collective common purpose, the initial response has been amazing. Importantly, it is drawing out imaginative support with enthusiasm and skills from diverse quarters to get the ball rolling, centred on 'Bring Back our Butterflies' as the initial theme, and so far initiatives have included re-seeding of grassland with butterfly-friendly species, a huge butterfly mobile made by schoolchildren and hung in the parish church, and an inspirational launch event - complete with stilt-walkers dressed as butterflies.

The Town Council has sparked a chain reaction through its very simple, non-bureaucratic approach. As such it has been asked: could the formula be replicated elsewhere?

The answer to the question is both 'No' and 'Yes'. 'No' because the momentum so far is driven by spontaneous actions of many different residents who have emerged to take on the mantle in ways that suit themselves. It follows that it cannot be the same in any two places as this depends on the individuals in the community, and the very structure and geography of the parishes. But the answer about the overall approach is most definitely: YES.

To this end NYMA's Council is exploring ways in which this approach could work to support parishes over wider areas in and around the Moors in parallel with the potential for a similar initiative in the vicinity of the York, Selby, and Pocklington area. Will it work? Maintaining momentum is always the hard part. It is very early days; we can only try and see.

IAN CARSTAIRS

Schoolchildren with seeds



HARLESTON'S FUTURE REPORT ON ACTIVITIES APRIL 2022 -MARCH 2023

Harleston's Future, a constituted voluntary organisation, was established in 2013, (our tenth anniversary, this year)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.

Harleston's Future's Flag Force have done another amazing job over the past 12 months with keep are amazing 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.A success, the numbers are rising....

Harleston's Cinema restarted in September 2021 with a film screened on the last Thursday of the month. We have not yet quite reached pre-lockdown audience figures, particularly for matinee performances. However, recently numbers have now much improved.

Events group, had a catch up year and only did the Food & Drink Festival + Christmas Switch on which were both a success for the town. Harleston Future organised the Christmas Market on 26th November and joined with the Town Council and Harleston Information Plus to provide the "Christmas Festivities" leading up to the Christmas lights switch by Park Radio.Thanks again to the Town Councils maintance team.. for the support of the lights.

The Harleston and Waveney Festival has also been a casualty of the uncertainty generated by covid, with no Festival for the last three years. We are looking forward to the return of the Festival this year.

We supported the **Platinum Jubilee** (June)celebrations, with the town council. Tea Hut, music, games, stalls, and the parade from the town centre. A success...

Harleston's Future contributed to the "**Launch of Harleston**" event on 11th of March, which again, was a great success. We, Harleston Future, also helped launch Nature Recovery, on the same day.

We gave up "**Visit Harleston**" website to SNC and look forward to its new success, under the management of the town council.

We have lost Jill Tan, (Company Secretary and Secretary) who was the back bone to us all over the last five years. Thank you Jill.

We are pleased to give thanks to the Town Council, for their support and working with us, Harleston Future.(as part of team 'Harleston').

Our success, are OUR volunteers and may I publicly thank them.

Robin Twigge
May 2023

Harleston Information Plus
 8 Exchange Street
 Harleston
 Norfolk
 IP20 9AB
 Tel: 01379 851917
www.harleston-norfolk.org.uk
 Email: hip-admin@harleston-norfolk.org.uk



HIP Report to Annual Town Meeting

May 2023

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. In 2022/23 normal service post-Covid was resumed and the Town Council contribution allowed us to avoid a loss.

Information Centre

In October 2022 Lucy Marjoram assumed responsibility for running the Information Centre and is now confirmed as Centre Manager.

This has enabled us to expand our Befriending Service, fully reopen our weekly Jobs Club and launch a new Online Form Filling service. As a result of this, we have seen an increase in new volunteers join the Information Centre across all our services and have reinstated full volunteer inductions along with regular team meetings and ongoing training opportunities.

The statistics attached show a breakdown of enquiries received at the Information Centre from Jan-Dec 2022, by number, age and nature of enquiry. Total enquiries increased 25% to 5,781 in 2022, the majority (73.7%) being in the 65+ age group. We have found that many visits to the Information Centre are as much about people wanting to maintain human contact as well as seeking information.

Jobs Club

The LIFT grants (European funding distributed by Norfolk County Council), funding the Jobs Club ceased in 2022/23. However, we have re-opened group activity as well as offering 1:1 appointments with funding received from small grants and our own reserves. 51 jobseekers were supported during 2022, 39 of these were new to the Jobs Club and 12 were existing members.

Befriending

Initially Lottery funded, we obtained small grants to allow us to develop this valued service in 2022/23. To date over 20 volunteer befrienders have been trained and we have supported over 40 service users, mostly identified and referred by South Norfolk Help Hub. A total of 47 referrals were received during 2022, all of whom had contact from HIP. Not all referrals concluded in weekly befriending visits due to individuals change of circumstances or being referred without fully understanding what was involved.

Better Together

Our contract with Voluntary Norfolk for supporting their Better Together Project (aimed at social isolation) concluded in April 2023. This project resulted in innovative activities often trialled locally before being rolled out much more widely by Voluntary Norfolk, and we may well carry forward some of the ideas developed during the last few years.

Last year our aims included:

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

2022/2023 key achievements:

- **Re-opening of the weekly Jobs Club**

Although support and 1:1 appointments were available to jobseekers throughout the pandemic, we felt very strongly that our weekly club was very much needed to offer peer support, confidence building and IT help for those looking for work. Since reopening the Wednesday drop in, we have seen an increase in jobseekers accessing our support and on average, help 15 jobseekers monthly.

- **Implemented new Online Form Filling service**

With many services only being available online, we identified a need to assist local residents without IT access or knowledge. Our service helps individuals with online forms such as attendance allowance, blue badge applications and concessionary bus passes and has supported over 20 individuals from Harleston.

- **Set up and running of Warm Rooms at HIP and The Swan**

We were successful in receiving small grants from South Norfolk Council and Norfolk Community Foundation to fund the Warm Rooms at the Information Centre and The Swan. Both venues provided warm spaces with free tea, coffee, soup and biscuits, 7 days a week. Whilst these were aimed at those struggling to heat their homes due to the rising energy costs, numbers were low, and we found that they were primarily used by those experiencing social isolation.

- **Developed new website**

We have a new website developed in cooperation with the Town Council. As well as providing information about Harleston Information Plus, it provides a wealth of information on the town's clubs, activities and services.

- **First Aid at Work training**

We organised 5 Emergency First Aid at Work courses in 2022, with 48 delegates from local organisations, businesses and voluntary groups receiving this essential qualification, including 4 members of HIP volunteers/staff.

- **Lottery Reaching Communities consultation**

As a result of our review of activities, we have decided to apply to the Lottery Reaching Communities for a large grant over several years for 2024/25 onwards to support our running costs and further develop our services, rather than relying on small one-off grants. Unfortunately, that means we will be running a deficit budget this year.

The Lottery application requires consultation with the local the community and we recently commenced this process by inviting local groups and organisations to join us at one of two HIP presentations delivered at The Swan Hotel. 32 organisations attended and we are now reviewing all suggestions made with a view to submit an initial proposal for 2024/25 onwards.

Our aims for 2023/24 include:

- Minimise losses
- Complete and submit Lottery application
- Continue to develop present services

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2022

Information Centre Visitors - Statistical Breakdown

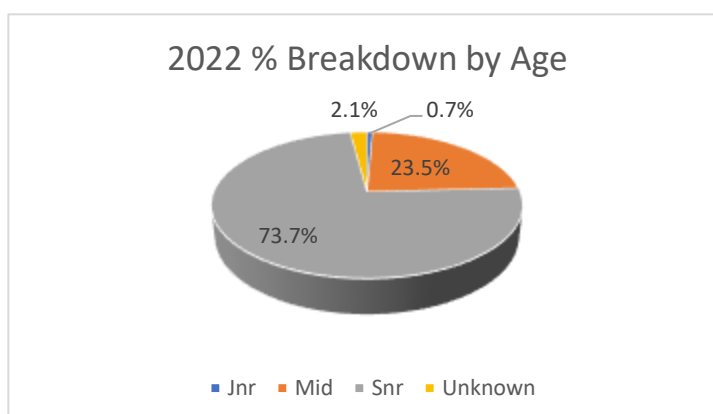
The chart below shows a breakdown of visitors to the Centre in 2022. There was a noticeable reduction from August 2022 which can be attributed in the main to two factors:

- Diss Mercury – many residents of the town used to pop in each week to collect their copy of the newspaper, which ceased printed publication
- Blister pack recycling – we collected on average three black sacks full per week and took them to Superdrug for recycling. Sadly this very popular service was a victim of its own success as we were obliged to stop the service when Superdrug could not cope with the quantities.



	2021	2022
Average monthly visitors	361.83	481.75
Total visitors	4,342	5,781
% up or down over previous year	↑69.6%	↑25%

HIP Customers Age Profile	2021	2022
65+ (Snr)	69.4%	73.7%
18-64 (Mid)	23.2%	23.5%
17 and under (Jnr)	0.9%	0.7%
Unknown	6.5%	2.1%



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 from a drop-in service to appointments only.

	2021	2022	Change ± 1.5%
Community Hub	61.7%	63%	
Local Information	12.5%	14.9%	↑
Special Enquiry/Welfare	5.7%	2.5%	↓
Travel	3.6%	3.3%	
Tourism	3.4%	1.2%	↓
HIP Services	3.4%	1.2%	↓
Council/Statutory	1.9%	0.8%	
Citizens Advice	1.3%	2.9%	↑
Volunteering	0.2%	0.3%	



Redenhall with Harleston Town Council Annual Meeting



Harleston & District Branch Royal British Legion Agenda Submission

May 2022 – May 2023

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

There has always been a close relationship 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 this relationship has continued to flourish, and our relatively small but steadfast membership continue to enjoy regular meetings in the Memorial Hall Community room.

- June 2022 saw the town come together for the Queens Platinum Jubilee celebrations and the RBL were strongly represented at the celebration events in St John's Church, Jubilee parade and Party in the Park.
- 14th of June marked the 40th anniversary of the Falklands Campaign and along with a poignant service at the Town War Memorial.
- The town reacted magnificently to the call to 'Salute our Forces'. The shop keepers, Fire Service, school crossing patrol (Daphne), Harleston Town FC, organisers, and participants of the Harleston Beer Festival, amongst others made a highly visible demonstration of support which was supported and encouraged by the TC.
- The Branch Vice Chair and Standard bearer joined the TC vice Chair at the Norfolk County RBL rededication service in Norwich RC Cathedral.
- The annual Poppy Appeal was greatly enhanced by having the use of the marketplace and a magnificent £7950 was raised by the generous people of Harleston.
- The Harleston branch was represented at the National Memorial Arboretum service for Armistice Day.
- The annual team effort to stage the Remembrance Day Parade was a testimony to good communication, cooperation and collaboration as the parade route was affected by the significant street scape works.

- The archaeological investigation works on Briars Farm development site uncovered an amount of .303 ammunition left in situ from a Wellington Bomber that crashed in the vicinity. It is our sincere wish that the TC will endorse and actively influence the request to have the Wellington Bomber and the 6 deceased crew-members commemorated permanently at the site in due course.
- The Branch Secretary (Terry Pegg) has been the custodian of a relic from the Great War in the form of an autographed tablecloth. We are extremely pleased that the TC have facilitated giving this unique historical record a permanent and prominent home in the Community Room
- As part of our bi-monthly social programme. The Branch hosted local ex national servicemen as the nation reflects on last 'DeMob' from NS 60 years ago.

The RBL's 'Live on' remit is to reach out to members of the community who have had an association with the military or uniformed public services. We are extremely pleased and grateful that the facilities of the Memorial Hall have been provided for our membership to meet for social and administrative gatherings. Tangible demonstration of the TC commitment to support the work of the Branch in our community are obvious and when coupled with the notifications of activity and achievements on the TC and 'Visit Harleston' website it is a very rewarding collaboration

In Summary the Harleston and District Branch of the RBL are pleased closer relations with the TC have continued to flourish over this period and wish to support the TC and the AF champion in their endeavours.

Jon Duckworth

Branch Vice Chair

December 2022

Hot off the press!! The total raised at this year's Poppy Appeal for the Harleston & District Branch was an amazing £7863.65. The competition to see which static stand collected the most money was easily won by **Chris Lown & Tim Shields** at their stand outside the Co-op. Although they had a distinct advantage with the help of Carla's Sausage Rolls to keep them going all day.

Christmas message from the Branch Chairman:

I would like to thank everyone for all their efforts this year and I wish you and all your families a very happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

Best wishes Jimmy Keywood



This magnificent WW1 Tommy Christmas Tree was designed by Vice Chairman Jon Duckworth
It will be on display at the Christmas Tree Festival on Sat & Sun 10th & 11th Dec at
All Saints Church, Alburgh IP20 ODB

Vice -Chairman's reflection of 2022

As we have come to expect Terry has captured the essence of the year and you can see what a busy and varied year it has been. We have remembered, celebrated, mourned and played a leading and supporting role in many other community ventures.

We have a great deal to be thankful for and the list is topped by our energetic and dedicated people, who seem determined to buck trends and go above and beyond. The impressive and most unexpected Poppy Appeal total didn't come about by happenstance, but it was a thoroughly orchestrated and well executed campaign, that is a credit to our Poppy Appeal Organiser **Mandy Carter**, our Secretary **Terry Pegg, Claire Prest**, Harleston Troop of **The Army Cadet Force**, the branch members who helped on the static stands and the close cooperation of the Town council, shopkeepers and generosity of our community.

We are also going against the tide of what most other RBL branches and organisations are experiencing with a significant uplift in our membership. Assisted greatly a 'press gang' approach but it is vital for us to fulfil our aims, that we stay relevant and vibrant. The introduction of social activity is gaining momentum and the Community Café in St John's has become a popular venue for tea and banter. **Sam Carter** led and marshalled our Remembrance Parade and pulled off an excellent Remembrance Sunday lunch and although plagued by circumstances beyond his control is commended for pushing on regardless.

Looking forward to next year seems daunting and exciting in equal measure. It is the 70th anniversary of the Armistice of the Korean War and the 20th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq (Op Telic). We have set a high bar in terms of raising our profile and supporting the Poppy Appeal but we have **Carla's** sausage rolls to sustain us and **Sean Fairfield** is determined to bring off the 'Waterloo Dinner'. We have a Coronation and possibly a town carnival to support and we have the opportunity to build a closer relationship with our most impressive ACF detachment and help them discharge their community mandate.

Clare and I visited the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) on Armistice Day (you may have seen us on Sky News!!), it is a remarkable and poignant place that deserves to be on our calendar to visit. Not strictly RBL business but I would like to see more interaction with the Harleston Shed and Armed Forces Covenant, I am sure there is funding and benefits to be taken advantage of for the organisations in Harleston and District. There may be mileage in forming a breakfast or supper club at one of the eateries in town but any suggestions for providing social and well-being interaction for our community would be most welcome.

Clare & I wish you good health and everything you hope for the festive season and 2023, it has been a pleasure. Onwards and upwards.

Jon Duckworth
Certa Cito

A photographic look back at just some of the events we were involved in during 2022:

March 2022

On the 9th March 2022 a service was held for the 80th Anniversary of an RAF Wellington Bomber that crashed at Briar Farm, Harleston on 9th March 1942. All 6 of the aircrew were killed.



June 2022

HM Queen Elizabeth II – Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Our Branch Vice Chairman's Union Flag Jacket made the front page of the Diss Express:
Modelled by the Branch Secretary Terry:



Falklands 40th Anniversary – 14th June 2022

An 'Act of Remembrance' commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the ending of the Falklands conflict was held at The War Memorial on Broad Street commencing at 3.00pm on Tues 14th June 2022. The service was held at 3.00pm to coincide with the Act of Remembrance taking place at the 1982 Cemetery in Port Stanley (11.00 Falklands local time).



Armed Forces Day – Sat 25th June 2022

Lots of shops and organisations got involved with the ‘Salute our Forces’ campaign:



Some of the Branch Members also took advantage of the Forces Discount kindly given by the organisers of The Harleston Beer Festival (Harleston Round Table). Hopefully same again next year.

Death of HM Queen Elizabeth II

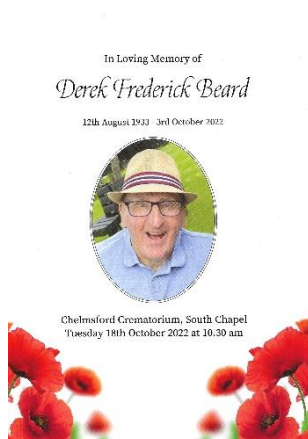
The Royal British Legion marked the death of our Sovereign and Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II who died at Balmoral on 8th September 2022.

We have been hugely privileged to have Queen Elizabeth serve as Patron of the Royal British Legion since her ascension to the throne on 6th February 1952. We are immensely thankful for her lifetime of faithful service and we joined the entire Armed Forces community and Country in mourning her loss.



Funeral of Derek 'Del Boy' Beard

It was with great sadness that we heard of the passing of a very popular former member of the Branch. Derek passed away on 3rd October 2022. **Terry Pegg & Claire Prest** travelled down to Essex to attend his funeral.



October 2022

Our Branch Vice Chairman **Jon Duckworth** and Standard Bearer **Chris Lown** attended the Norfolk County RBL Rededication Service at St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich on Sunday 9th October 2022.



Remembrance 2022



Terry, Sean & Jon at the Market Place



Amazing display of wreaths (Photo credit Pauline Shadbolt)

Armistice Day also known as Remembrance Day 11th Nov 2022: (Photos credit Pauline Shadbolt)



The town centre workmen paid their respects



Our spiritual leaders Revd Nigel Tuffnell and Revd Gerald Epps



Silence at 11.00 am on 11th Nov



The Last Post



Great to see Royal Marine Rob Andrews

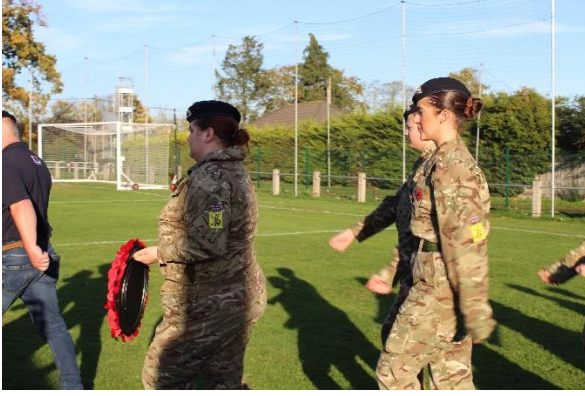
Harleston Remembers: (Photos credit Sarah-Marie Betts)



Ready to March on the Football Pitch



Even Tim Shields was in step



Credit to all the cadets, they were brilliant



That's not an officer out of step is it?



Thank you Harleston Town Football Club for your support to The Royal British Legion and the Armed Forces Community



Well done also to our very own 'Norfolk Boy Walking' Chris Lown for his magnificent fundraising achievements in 2022

Waveney Food Bank Report for the Annual Town Meeting

1,100 Harleston residents were given a 3 day food pack

We also opened a Saturday foodbank at St John and is available by appointment:
130 people have used this centre on a weekend,

Community café, although on a 1 month break, is still very active and popular with 40 to 60 visitors weekly every Tuesday, unlimited drinks and pudding or cake, pay what you can afford.

Warm room event took place for 11 weeks Nov to Feb again around 40 visitors a week serving homemade soup, roll, toasted sandwiches quizzes and bingo even a spot of line dancing.

Working with kindness help hub we held a free family funday at the high school, which had over 1800 visitors, an Easter egg hunt and another successful yard sale and Halloween event tent this year with free hot chocolate and sweets for children.

We have also assisted with the free school uniforms events alongside Fiona Hope and her team at Just ask Harleston,

And not forgetting finding a home for over 200kgs of fresh food over Christmas and new year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Members of the public have donated 6431 kgs of food equivalent to 10,000 meals to the foodbank in the last year.



Girlguiding exists to help girls and young women find their voice, and build skills and confidence – inspiring them to discover the best in themselves and empower them to make a positive difference in their community. Our Girlguiding community is made up of 320,000 girls, young women and volunteers – as well as parents and staff colleagues from every corner of the UK and beyond. Over the last two years, 50,000 people in the Girlguiding community told us what matters to them today and what they want for Girlguiding in the future. We've heard what changes we need to make and together we've made Girlguiding's Strategy, today, tomorrow, together.

In Harleston we want to help those girls and young women to achieve the best they can. One of those skills is to learn to be able to survive outside and to do this we take them all camping and give them that outdoor experience. When attending international camps this equipment helps to provide the girls with substantial healthy food on a large scale. On these big joint events it helps to have good solid equipment for central catering. As most of our equipment has grown old and faulty we needed some new equipment and we applied for a grant.

With this grant we purchased 3 double iron gas boiling rings with hose and regulator, an extra gas regulator with 2m hoses and 2 clips, a Y 3 way hose connector/splitter and 3 large bbq refillable gas fire lighters. This will really help next time we take the girls camping.

Unfortunately due to the covid pandemic Girlguiding closed all activity centres and camping sites and for the first time in the history of Girlguiding all meetings were stopped. Eventually zoom meetings were introduced. The Activity centres and camp sites have now in the last few months started to reopen along with our International centres. So next year we can actually get to use this equipment.

Harleston Girlguiding would like to thank Harleston Town Council for giving us this grant to enable us to give these girls and young women the opportunity to learn these new skills, gain confidence and to discover the best in themselves.

Many thanks

Harleston District Leadership Team

Harleston & District 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.