

# Harbury & Ladbroke News



JANUARY 2026



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19 Jan	F - R - G	F
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2 Feb	F - R - G	F
9 Feb	F	F - R - G

F = Food caddy - R = Recycling (blue bin) W = Waste (black bin) G = Garden (green bin)  
Wednesday Collection - Parts of Ladbroke - Thursday Collection - Harbury  
Friday Collection - Deppers Bridge and Parts of Ladbroke

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# HARBURY & LADBROKE News

Published monthly to reflect all aspects of local life

**JANUARY 2026**

**No. 622**

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the Distribution Manager

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*The views of contributors are not necessarily those of the Editorial Team.  
The Editors reserve the right to amend articles as they see fit.*

## February Edition Deadlines



**Adverts to:** 36 Manor Orchard, Harbury or e-mail to  
[advertising@hlnews.co.uk](mailto:advertising@hlnews.co.uk) by Monday 19th January



**Articles to:**  
Harbury Pharmacy, High Street or e-mail to  
[articles@hlnews.co.uk](mailto:articles@hlnews.co.uk) by 5.30pm, Monday 19th January

**Cover Photo: South Parade/Park Lane by Martin Randall**



## EDITORIAL

*A round up of local news*

We hope that you all enjoyed the Christmas and New Year celebrations and managed to steer clear of the many colds, flu and viruses that were going around.

Harbury Christmas Fair and the Senior Citizens Christmas party held in Harbury Village Hall were as usual well attended and enjoyed by all; we feature photos of the seniors' party in this edition.

Once again Harbury and Ladbroke have had a lovely display of Christmas lights and in Harbury we have even longer to enjoy them as many will not be taken down until Saturday 7th February.



*Festive displays in Frances Road*

Two film nights to enjoy this month. Harbury Village Cinema will be showing the film 'Naked Gun' on Saturday 17th January, do buy your tickets in advance from the library. The Ladbroke Matters Team will be holding their film night on 30th January, more details about the evening will be available soon!

We wish all our readers, article contributors and advertisers a very happy 2026!



# HARBURY DIARY

For local events

## JANUARY 2026

Sat 10 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Open The Book Repair Café, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library

### Sun 11 1ST AFTER EPIPHANY

Sung Holy Communion, 10.30am, Church  
Messy Church, 3.00 - 5.00pm, Tom Hauley Room  
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall

Mon 12 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall  
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall

Tue 13 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall

Wed 14 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - Norton Lindsey (4½ miles)  
Quiet Space, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room  
Knitwits and Pleasant Pastimes, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library  
Tickets for Harbury WI Village Cinema to be purchased by today from Village Library - film showing on Sat 17th January  
Spellbound Dance Classes, 1.30 - 2.30pm & 4.00 - 6.30pm, Village Hall  
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 15 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951  
Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room  
Harbury Hurricanes Ladies Touch Rugby Training, 7.00 - 8.30pm, Village Hall  
Classic Book Group, 7.30pm, Village Library  
Harbury Theatre Group's business meeting, 7.30pm, Village Club

Fri 16 Ben & Soph's Jazz New Year Special, doors open 6.30pm, show 7.00pm - [www.ticketsource.co.uk/bsjazz](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/bsjazz) Tel: 07515 275655  
'Mettle', Live and Local performance by Nicholas Collett, 7.30 - 10.00pm, Village Library

Sat 17 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Overseas Mission Harbury WI Village Cinema presents, "Naked Gun" doors open 6.15pm, film begins 7.00pm, Village Hall

### Sun 18 2ND AFTER EPIPHANY

Said Communion, 8.00am, Church  
All Age Service, 10.30am, Church  
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall  
Harbury Heritage Centre open, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Harbury School (Park Lane entrance)

Mon 19 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall  
**New!** Tom's Teas. Free - Tea, Cake, Friendship and Chat, 2.30 - 4.00pm, Tom Hauley Room

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Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall

- Tue 20 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall  
Harbury Society Members' Social evening, 6.30 for 7.00pm, The Shakespeare Inn  
(Reserved in advance places only).
- Wed 21 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - Hampton Lucy (3½ miles)  
Connections: A Carers' Support Group, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Tom Hauley Room  
Spellbound Dance Classes, 1.30 - 2.30pm & 4.00 - 6.30pm, Village Hall  
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall
- Thu 22 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951  
Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room  
Harbury Parish Council, 7.30pm, Tom Hauley Room
- Fri 23 Harbury WIs Winter Party, Jess Henderson - The First Lady Bus Driver in the 1970s,  
7.00 for 7.30pm
- Sat 24 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Multiple Sclerosis

### **Sun 25 3RD AFTER EPIPHANY**

- Sung Holy Communion, 10.30am, Church  
Informal Evening Service, 7.00pm, Tom Hauley Room  
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall
- Mon 26 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall  
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall
- Tue 27 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall  
Ponder in the Pub "You must have imagined it!" 6.45 for 7.00pm, the Crown Inn
- Wed 28 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall – Rowington (4 miles) followed  
by lunch  
Knitwits and Pleasant Pastimes, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library  
Spellbound Dance Classes, 1.30 - 2.30pm & 4.00 - 6.30pm, Village Hall  
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall
- Thu 29 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951  
Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room  
Harbury Hurricanes Ladies Touch Rugby Training, 7.00 - 8.30pm, Village Hall
- Sat 31 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Senior Citizens

## **FEBRUARY**

### **Sun 1 4TH AFTER EPIPHANY**

- Said Holy Communion, 9.00am, Church  
Muddy Church, 3.00pm, start in Tom Hauley Room  
Youth Group, 5.00 - 7.00pm, Tom Hauley Room  
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall
- Mon 2 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall  
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall
- Tue 3 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall  
Poems and a Pint, 7.00pm, The Crown Inn

- Wed 4 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - Wolston (4 miles)  
 Mothers' Union, communion service 2.00pm, meeting starts 2.30pm - "Let us Flourish" by Jenny Dean, Tom Hauley Room  
 Spellbound Dance Classes, 4.30 - 7.00pm, Village Hall  
 Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall
- Thu 5 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951  
 Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room  
 Harbury Hurricanes Ladies Touch Rugby Training, 7.00 - 9.00pm, Village Hall  
 Folk Club, 8.00pm, Village Library
- Fri 6 Meeting Point, 12.30pm, The Crown Inn
- Sat 7 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Harbury WI  
 The Carl Lewis Foundation Charity Fundraiser, Games and Activities  
 (carllewisfoundation.org), 10.00am - 3.30pm, Village Hall

**The Refuse Rota can be found on the inside of the front cover.**

**Dates for inclusion in the Harbury Diary please to:**

The Editorial Office, 31 Binswood End. Tel: 612155 or email [articles@hlnews.co.uk](mailto:articles@hlnews.co.uk)



**All Saints  
HARBURY**

## FROM THE RECTOR

*Rev Andy Batchelor*

The Rectory, Vicarage Lane, Harbury ☎ 01926 714295 ✉ [rev.andyb@gmail.com](mailto:rev.andyb@gmail.com)

As we stand at the dawn of 2026, we find ourselves in that uncertain place between what has been and what is yet to be. In the secular world, this month is often defined by the "New Year, New You" narrative - a frantic push for self-improvement and the heavy burden of resolutions. But for the follower of Jesus, the New Year is not about the pressure to reinvent ourselves; it is about the security of being known by the One who makes all things new.

In the Book of Revelation, Jesus declares, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end". This is the cornerstone of our hope as we look toward the next twelve months. We may not know what 2026 holds, the joys that will take our breath away, or the challenges that will bring us to our knees, but we know the One who holds time itself in his hands. Whatever the future brings he will be there with us.

The turn of the year is a physical reminder of a spiritual truth found in Lamentations: "His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning"

Epiphany, celebrated on 6th January, marks the end of the twelve days of Christmas. While Christmas is the story of God's quiet arrival in a stable, Epiphany is the story of that light breaking out into the wider world. Epiphany reminds us that God's love has no borders. In a world that often builds barriers between people, the star of Bethlehem shines over everyone, inviting all to come and see

So as the decorations come down and we settle into our familiar routines may the light of the Epiphany star continue to guide you as you journey into this new year.



# FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

Bez & Andy

Over the Christmas period, All Saints had many people and families attend services and events. One consistent comment was people felt warmly welcomed. So if you haven't popped in, please do!

January will see the start of a new group – Tom's Teas in the Tom Hauley Room, all are welcome to come along, enjoy a cuppa and cake. Read more in the specific article.

In order to beat the blues, join us for Ponder in the Pub on 27th January in the Crown at 7.30pm. A great opportunity to discuss topics and meet people.

The new informal service in the Tom Hauley room continues on the fourth Sunday of the month. Hot drinks available from 7pm.

Whatever you are hoping for in 2026 a warm welcome is at All Saints.

We look forward to welcoming you soon!

## Looking back to 2025

We held our Christmas Fayre at the start of December. It was lovely to see so many people enjoying mulled wine and other refreshments, shopping at the stalls, visiting Father Christmas, and supporting the raffle. We're pleased to say that we raised around £1,200 for the *Stonework, Sound and Visual Appeal* – thank you to Liz and all those involved in organising and those of you that came along to support.

If you've visited the church recently, you'll have seen how beautifully it's been decorated. Thank you, as always, to Gillian and her team for the stunning floral displays.

We were delighted to welcome Harbury School into church recently for their carol service. It was a joy to hear the children singing and sharing how the Posada bags had travelled to different homes during Advent.

It was great to welcome so many people to various services over the Christmas period – thanks as ever to Revs Andy, Ann and all those involved in organising and supporting services.

If you have any questions, you can email us at [warden@allsaintsharbury.org](mailto:warden@allsaintsharbury.org) or call **Andy Dean on 07753 497967**.



## MOTHERS' UNION

Gillian Hare

When you read this, we shall have enjoyed our New Year celebration with fun, food and chat, and now look forward to the year ahead.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 4th February at 2pm for communion. After this we have Jenny Dean, our churchwarden's wife, telling us about "Let us Flourish" - a project to support teenage girls. This promises to be of great interest, and again we welcome anyone who would like to hear her.

Last month we gave toiletries to a refuge in Coventry for abused women and presents for children with a father in prison.

Our leader, Chris, has produced some beautiful and thoughtful prayer cards, for anyone to use or take away as they find helpful. Find them on the lady altar.

And, to look forward to, on Friday 13th February, at 12.00, a bread and broth lunch at which all are welcome.

We wish all who read this a peaceful and happy new year.



## LADBROKE NEWS & DIARY

### JANUARY 2026

#### Sun 11 EPIPHANY 1

Holy Communion, 9.00am

Tue 13 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall

Wed 14 Parish Council, 7.45pm, Village Hall

#### Sun 18 EPIPHANY 2

Holy Communion 9.00am (BCP)

Mon 19 ARTICLES FOR NEXT ISSUE TO: HARBURY PHARMACY, HIGH ST OR EMAIL TO ARTICLES@HLNEWS.CO.UK BY 5.30PM

ADVERTS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE TO 36 MANOR ORCHARD, HARBURY OR EMAIL ADVERTISING@HLNEWS.CO.UK

Tues 20 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall

#### Sun 25 EPIPHANY 3

Holy Communion, 9.00am

Tue 27 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall

Fri 30 Film Night, 7.00pm, Village Hall

### FEBRUARY

#### Sun 1 CANDLEMAS

Family Communion, 10.30am followed by refreshments

Tue 3 Photography Club, 7.30pm, **Kineton** Village Hall

Wed 4 Heritage & Friendship Group, 10.30am - noon, The Old School

Thu 5 WI, 7.30pm, Village Hall



# LADBROKE CHURCH NEWS

Peter Rigby

[www.ladbrokechurch.org.uk](http://www.ladbrokechurch.org.uk)

We welcomed the Spa Chorale back to Ladbroke at the beginning of December and again enjoyed a varied programme of seasonal song and verse. I am always impressed by the standards our local choir achieves and this year was no exception.

Continuing on a musical note, we held the village carol service on the Sunday before Christmas. This year the programme was compiled from church members' requests and it was well appreciated by a congregation of around 75. A big thank you to Jackie for putting the programme together.

Our Christmas celebrations were completed with our Crib Service on Christmas Eve followed by a communion service on Christmas Day to celebrate our Saviour's birth. Thank you to all who have supported these events; the numbers attending show how important they are to a small village like Ladbroke.

As we move into 2026, may we wish you a very happy new year.

## From the Registers:

### Funeral

Wednesday 17th December     Joan Perry

### Services in January:

Sunday 11th January	9.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 18th January	9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Sunday 25th January	9.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 1st February	10.30am	Family Communion

[www.ladbrokechurch.org.uk](http://www.ladbrokechurch.org.uk)     [ladbrokechurch@gmail.com](mailto:ladbrokechurch@gmail.com)



## LADBROKE & DEPPERS BRIDGE WI

Dianne Surgey

A good number of our members enjoyed the annual outing for a Christmas celebration meal in Southam. As usual in such convivial company the chat was good and we didn't leave until well into the afternoon. We had a delicious meal and the cracker jokes kept us amused: "What do you call a man with jelly in one ear and sponge in the other? "A trifle deaf!" We all had a dip into the secret Santa sack so everyone took a little gift home.

We were reminded about the Christmas concert in Ladbroke church held on Friday 5th December and the WI annual carol service which we hosted in Ladbroke Church on Tuesday 9th December.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 8th January when we look forward to an evening of kurling. Please note that this will be held at Southam Bowling club. As ever, new members



are assured of a very warm welcome to our friendly WI. Please contact Carole on 07890 965504 for more information.



## LADBROKE MATTERS

*David Wright*

### **Our Website**

Our website [www.ladbrokevillagehall.org.uk](http://www.ladbrokevillagehall.org.uk) contains photos of the interior and exterior of our village hall and general information. Please use the contact form on the website to get in touch with us for any reason.

### **Film Night and Supper**

To celebrate the start of 2026, we are delighted to announce that our next supper and film night will be on Friday 30th January in the Village Hall. The film title and other details will be available soon - so keep an eye open for Nicky's email. Contact her on [nicolalewis1958@gmail.com](mailto:nicolalewis1958@gmail.com) if you would like to be added to the circulation email list.

### **The Millennium Green Play Area**

Phase two of the upgrade to the play area involving replacing the trim trail and the large swings, both of which are suffering from rotting timber, will commence later this year. Regretfully, we had a disappointing response to our questionnaire seeking views on how we replace the trim trail. However, you can still make your suggestions by contacting us via our website.

## Upcoming Events

Some events we are considering for this year include a 60/70s themed soiree; a race night; and a murder mystery evening. Let us know through the website if you have any other ideas.

## Hall Bookings

Our hall has a small kitchen, and a stage area with sound and lighting. It can accommodate up to eighty people. So to book your special celebration, or if you wish to hold regular classes or meetings, telephone Debs on 07779 225105 or contact her through the village hall website which has more details about our facilities. Due to an unfortunate incident last year we have revised our booking terms and conditions for parties.

Our winter booking rates are £16 per hour, or £13 for Ladbroke residents - applicable from October to March inclusive. Non-residents may be asked to pay a deposit on booking.

## Can you help?

The village hall and Millennium Green are separate registered charities whose admin and finance are overseen by a group of trustees. However, because the upkeep of the village hall and Millennium Green is the responsibility of all who live in Ladbroke we have a larger Ladbroke Matters team which takes care of maintenance and organises fundraising events. We also have a dedicated team of volunteers who bake and supply tasty food for our film nights.

The more you support us with your skills, time, and/or money, the more we can continue to maintain these facilities for the benefit of us all. We are always on the lookout for new team members, so if you would like to join us get in touch via our website, or have a word with one of our team.

## Ladbroke Village Hall Millennium Draw for November 2025

£50	Pauline Long	£25	Scott and Siobhan Roberson
£50	John Herriott	£10	Richard Smith
£25	Colin and Kay Constable	£10	Steve Morten
£25	Steve Palmer	£10	Avril Court

Thank you all for your continued support.

We hope you had a joyful Christmas and all very best wishes for 2026.

**Margaret Bosworth**



## LADBROKE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

*Nicky Lewis*

Our club meeting in December was on the theme of Action, Reaction and In the Moment. Members were invited to submit images for both a phototopic and competition. The phototopic images are shown on the screen in our village hall, and the images for the competition printed out and displayed. Members then choose their favourite images from the competition.

This month's winner was Graham Gee, for his superb image of a surfer catching the perfect wave. We also liked images from Steve Gale, of cyclists as they whizzed past him at high speed on a corner in Wellesbourne. Both are included in this article. Other images were of

starlings squabbling, birds in flight, taking off and landing, horses jumping over fences, children playing, a fleeting rare butterfly and more. Some were nearly 50 years old, of times and people long gone, others from holidays, family visits, concerts.



This topic allowed for wide interpretation, and members enjoyed revisiting, selecting and showing their photos. Discussion of these interesting images, often with a backstory, was very positive and often light-hearted. A very convivial evening with our usual refreshments of tea, coffee and cake!

Next month we will start the New Year with a meal in a local pub, then on 3rd February we have an opportunity to visit Kineton Camera Club for a talk by Colin Hales. He will talk about his experiences of building his own light aeroplane and flying it across Russia (before the Ukraine war). This will be in Kineton Village Hall at 7.30pm. Small charge for visitors.

We are a small, friendly club and welcome new members. You don't have to be a superb

photographer or have a fancy camera to join. Some members use only their mobile phones. An interest in photography and a willingness to share and discuss is all it takes.

For more details or to join, email [ladbroke.photoclub@btinternet.com](mailto:ladbroke.photoclub@btinternet.com)



## LADBROKE GENERAL NEWS



### LADBROKE HERITAGE

Jackie West

A Happy New Year to you all. It's not too late to make a new year's resolution and this might suit some readers: learn more about the history of our village and help us share it with other people. This year, 2026, is the sequicentenary (150th anniversary) of the opening of Ladbroke School and the restoration of Ladbroke Church by Sir George Gilbert Scott so we would like to celebrate both during the year.

With help from others, especially the late Linda Doyle, I have accumulated lots of basic information, and would greatly appreciate help using this to inspire a celebration that people will enjoy. Please get in touch if you would like to be involved. Also, occasional requests for tours of the church and village continue and many of our original team of volunteer guides are no longer with us so we are looking for replacements. As a first step come along to a 1-1.5hr tour walking around the village to discover more about Ladbroke's history and then decide if you would like a bit of training to become a volunteer guide yourself.

If you are interested in that first step - the guided tour - drop me an email during January on [ladbrokechurch89@btinternet.com](mailto:ladbrokechurch89@btinternet.com) and we can set up a time that suits everyone.

Last year the **Heritage and Friendship Group** lost a number of its regulars but we are still going strong and would welcome others joining us. We meet on the first Wednesday morning of the month in a warm and comfortable location to chat and share memories over a cuppa and cake. It's a very friendly group of mainly older folk, but age (or lack of it) is no barrier, neither is a preference to listen rather than talk; it's calm, respectful and dementia friendly too.

There is usually a theme and sometimes people bring along photos or objects to show everyone. Back in November we chatted about our Desert Island Discs. Everyone found it so hard just to choose one and, as Geoff aptly described it, it wasn't really the actual music that was important, rather the memories or stories the music invoked. I had chosen a modern hymn (My peace I give unto You) recorded at our wedding because through the crackles I could hear my husband's cousin playing the organ, two of our friends singing solo and finally everyone joining in. Dianne had Spotify on her phone so we heard the beautiful Ashokan Farewell and some of the other choices.

Don chose a song from Oklahoma as it brought back memories of going to the Festival of Britain in 1951: lunch in the Festival Hall, tea at a Lyons Corner House, seeing the show in the evening and returning to Southam Harbury Road station on the milk train. Similarly Carol would take a piece from Les Miserables because Geoff had taken her to that show during a surprise weekend in London; his own choice was "anything by Mozart". We wonder what you, HLNews readers, would take to your desert island? Our December meeting didn't follow

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the usual pattern, rather we had been invited to join our host, Carol, for a birthday lunch cooked by her and two other ladies. It was delicious and those who had the steak and kidney pie really appreciated the effort the cook had taken to scour Warwickshire to source that once common ingredient, ox-kidney.

By the time you read this we will have met again in January but if you would like to join us on 4th February we shall be at The Old School 10.30am - 12 noon and you would be most welcome. For more information or to let us know you are coming please contact Carol on 814715.



## JOAN PERRY OBITUARY

---

*Jackie West*

Joan had told us years ago that she wanted to have "Away in a Manger" at her funeral, whatever time of year it was. At that time we thought it an unusual choice but it was very fitting as her friends and relatives gathered to remember her on 17th December. We heard how she had one older brother but as the oldest daughter of parents who worked, was often left in charge of her younger sister and brother and was sent to the local Salvation Army Sunday school where she played triangle in their band. Joan and her husband, Ken, ran a successful engineering company; Joan could discuss the technical details as well as entertain business associates at their lovely home in Lillington. Family and friends were entertained too, with her Domestic College training Joan cooked meals with ease and was a perfect hostess. She was also renowned for decorating her home inside and out at Christmas.

Joan had a good sense of humour and a positive spirit. She and her sister Carole went on a trip to Ascot on Ladies Day. They were not gamblers, just went for the experience. They knew nothing about horses or racing and could not read the race card as neither of them had taken their glasses. They chose the horses by the colour of the livery or if the jockey had an Irish name and managed to pick winners including the favourite of the day. Having had their slice of beginners' luck they never went back to Ascot again.

Carole also told us about Joan's royal pardon. It happened at a Charity Ball given by Princess Diana at the Royal Albert Hall. As the royal couple danced across the floor, Prince Charles stepped back and onto Joan's foot. "I do beg your pardon" said the Prince, so Joan received a "royal pardon". Gentle teasing other people sometimes appealed to Joan, she had more than a passing resemblance to Petula Clark and, while on holiday with Ken in Tenerife, Joan was mistaken for the singer. Fans were so sure Joan was their idol she signed autographs, thankfully they did not ask her to sing! More recently people would ask her if she knew she looked like TV cook, Mary Berry; this happened too often so Joan just kept them guessing.

Joan was a loyal friend to individuals and to groups and organisations. After Ken died in Myton Hospice, Joan spent 12 years in their Leamington shop, mostly behind the till. When she moved to Ladbroke in 2012 she adopted village life and the village adopted her. Joan was keen to get involved in things; she was the secretary of the WI for a number of years and a strong supporter of WI events, especially if there was a cream tea involved. Joan missed her husband Ken greatly and felt reunited with him in spirit when her faith was confirmed with others at a ceremony in Coventry Cathedral. Arriving in Ladbroke she joined All Saints Church at Ladbroke, where she had many roles - member of the cleaning team, PCC secretary, regular host of our Home Group and bric-a-brac queen at Tom Hauley Room coffee mornings.

However, most villagers will remember her as the friendly, kind lady looking after Fifi, a beautiful black labrador and mother to 45 puppies for Guide Dogs for the Blind. One puppy became quite famous locally when his diary of life in our village was published in HLNews (you can still read in the June 2014 (p18) and July 2014 (p13) editions located in the back issues on the hlnews.co.uk website). When Fifi retired Joan was able to buy her for £1 and she continued to be her faithful companion and friend.

Joan had such a kind, caring and happy outlook on life, with many friends in Ladbroke and beyond. She will be much missed by us all.



## READERS' LETTERS

### **Dear Editors**

*I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to all who supported myself and family following the loss of my lovely sister Joan (Perry). Her sudden illness and demise were devastating, though she lives on in the hearts and minds of the many who loved her. Joan's funeral services on the 17th December 2025 were well-attended at Oakley Wood Crematorium and at All Saints Parish Church, Ladbroke. The Rev. Andy Batchelor supported us and led both services in a way for which we shall always be grateful.*

*We thought Joan's friends may like to know that in the funeral donation box the sum of £356.00 pounds was raised, and has been split evenly between Galanos House and Cancer Research UK.*

*Thanks again.*

**Carole and Brian Henderson**



## HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Nicola Thompson – H&L News Correspondent

**Official minutes can be viewed on the Parish Council website [www.harbury-pc.gov.uk](http://www.harbury-pc.gov.uk) or obtained from the Parish Clerk, Tel: 01926 614646**

### **Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council – 27th November 2025**

#### **Public Participation**

Amanda Randall, on behalf of Harbury Swift Village, updated councillors on the long-term goal of increasing the swift population within the village. It is now two years since the original swift nesting boxes were installed and, whilst many of the boxes are being used, it is proposed that installing devices that mimic swift calls next to empty boxes would encourage more birds to use them. This method has been proven to increase the number of nesting swifts. Amanda demonstrated one of the devices and explained that they should only be played at the same volume level as normal birdsong so should not be obtrusive. Harbury WI has donated grant money to enable the group to purchase the callers and Amanda wished to ask

for PC support and also for the village handyman (employed by the council) to install the devices. This was agreed.

### Harbury Library

Long term café manager and trustee, Jill Credland will retire from the role at Christmas although she will still be involved in volunteering at the café. Jill was instrumental in setting up and running the café and has been involved since the library became volunteer-led. Her absence will be greatly missed; the library steering committee is now seeking a new manager to take over the role.

### Warwickshire County Cllr

Members reported to Cllr Kettle that, despite remedial work, the corner of Church Terrace and Hall Lane was once again flooded during recent heavy rain. Cllr Kettle said that the budget process at WCC was progressing; one ongoing concern is the heavy overspend on Special Education Needs. Two complaints have been received by him on the width and state of the footpath running from the newly opened Great Western to Harbury. The footpath in most places is only 1 metre wide but Cllr Kettle explained that to upgrade it to the width of the footpaths in Deppers Bridge – 1.5m – would be prohibitively expensive. Cllr Kettle also reported that HS2 building works will close the B4451 to Southam, probably during May for around six weeks. At differing times the A423 will also be closed. Cllr Kettle will meet with HS2 representatives and our MP shortly to discuss the impact of this on Harbury.

### Planning

**33 Mill Street, 25/02653/FUL** – replacement of existing roof on rear side extension with a flat roof, rendering to all elevations, addition of new window and door to the rear, replacement of all existing windows with dark gray units and relocation of the chimney – the council agreed to make no representation on this application.

**One item of note under planning applications which the council has responded to under delegated powers i.e. outside of a meeting is Planning Ref 25/02654/FUL: 21 Bush Heath Lane** - Demolition of existing single storey extension to the rear of the existing house, construction of a two storey extension to the rear of the existing house and new window to the front of the house. The council agreed to object to this application on the grounds of overdevelopment of the site and significant impact on neighbouring properties.

### Properties

Hall Lane Allotments: Following an objection from WCC Highways on the proposed new entrance to the allotments, a decision on the planning application is still pending and the clerk has tried and failed to make contact with the planning officer. It was agreed to contact the District Cllr regarding this. A group of cllrs visited the allotments recently and noted they were very overgrown. There is currently no water on site and the plot sizes need to be standardized.

### Bonfire Night

Members noted that there had been very little damage to the field during the construction of the bonfire. Cllr Balch suggested that next year it would be good to meet with GASS the day before the actual event to achieve a better level of consultation.

### Environment

Stile Replacements: The clerk is currently consulting with local farmers with regard to the new stiles.

### Streetlighting

The new annual streetlighting contract was approved.

## Climate Change

The working party has met twice and are mainly focussing on helping the Earthworms group at the school revitalise the pond and small wooded area. It is hoped that the parish council can apply for a grant from Stratford District Council on behalf of Earthworms.

**Finance** The council agreed a payment of £360pa for an increased IT support package from Edge IT.

## Christmas Lights

The lights will be installed by a team of volunteers on Saturday 29th November. All of the PAT testing has been completed.

## Cllr Appointment

Newly co-opted Cllr Mike Goodman was appointed to the Properties and Environment working parties.

## Exclusion of Public

The council excluded the public in order to discuss a matter relating to tree works.

The next meeting of the parish council will be on **22nd January, 7.30pm in Harbury Village Hall.**

### Current Parish Council members contactable via the Parish Office are:

Tim Lockley (Chairman), Julie Balch (Vice-Chair), Samantha Allen, Kate Gard, Michael Goodman, Alan Knowles, Ed Mulley, Robert Stockdale, Ashley Sylvester, Keith Thompson.



## HARBURY SOCIETY

David Turner

## An Overview of the Heart of England Co-operative Society

Catherine Evans, the Community and Charity Adviser for the Heart of England Co-operative Society came to talk to us on Tuesday 18th November to give an Overview of the Heart of England Co-op.

To go with our pre-meeting refreshments, she generously brought enough mince pies for everyone to enjoy.

She commenced by telling us about her career to date. She had worked for the Co-op for 23 years, which is unusual these days, but she said a colleague had just celebrated working for them for 40 years.



Catherine Evans

She studied Home Economics at University College Birmingham, and her first job was testing recipes for Padley's in Grantham, who supplied many companies with chicken products. She stayed there for two years before moving to Panasonic as a Senior Sales Trainer, responsible for teams of trainers covering the whole country, giving cookery presentations and working in a development kitchen. After twelve years Catherine decided it was time to work locally to where she lived and applied for a role as Training Manager with the Heart of England Co-operative Society. The role included training colleagues in food, non-food and funerals. Three years ago, she became a Community and Charity Adviser, and this role includes giving talks to schools, scouts, guides and engaging with the local community.

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She asked if any of us remembered the 'divi' – the dividend that was paid to everyone who was a member. The Heart of England Co-op is based in Coventry and dates back 193 years when nine men launched the first shop in Foleshill in 1832. It merged with the Coventry and District Co-operative Society in 1967, and, in 1992, it merged with the East Mercia Co-operative Society before adopting the Heart of England name in 2000.

Operating in the West Midlands, Warwickshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, the Heart of England Co-op has 38 food stores, 16 funeral homes and 3 Bewitched coffee shops.

The first Harbury Co-op was opened in 1863 by the Bustin brothers and Catherine showed a photo of what is believed to be them with their delivery wagon, outside the shop on the High Street which they had moved to in 1869 and is still their location.



*A late 19th century photograph of a delivery cart outside the Co-op High Street shop*

In 1948 the first self-service shops started operating. Prior to that, everyone was served and, initially, people found self-service quite stressful.

We were asked whether we remembered Santa's sledge. Santa's sledge commenced 70 years ago in the rooms at Coventry, Corporation Street. Children would sit on the wooden seats and were given the impression it was moving by virtue of a rolling decorated backdrop together with the motion of the reindeer at the front. When that part of the business closed there was a petition to keep it and it moved to its new home in 2015 to the Coventry Car Museum where you can still see Santa in his Winter Wonderland.

A colleague of Catherine's was asked at her interview what she knew about the Heart of England Co-op to which she replied, 'Santa's Sledge'!

Apparently, there are 7,000 different Co-operative businesses in the UK – they are run for the benefit of its members, not just for making profit.

Catherine said that part of her role is what they call the 'Helping Hearts Award Scheme' which helps a lot of different groups. For example, for a group, such as the Scouts or Guides holding an event, they will consider donating raffle prizes. Established in the year 2000 the 'Helping Hearts Award Scheme' has given £1.3 million to local good causes and has supported many youth sports clubs with their kit. Food banks, including the increasing amount of pop-up ones are supported, with donations of goods.

The Co-operative was the first to introduce Fairtrade products. Fairtrade is now 30 years old and is now supported by most supermarkets, but the Co-op was an early supporter because of the help it gives to poorer countries with projects such as sanitation and education.

There is also a Heart of England Co-operative Orchestra which is over 180 years old and meets each Tuesday at Central Hall in Coventry. The Society hosts an annual concert each year which Catherine says is absolutely wonderful.

A couple of years ago the Co-op launched a mascot – Cooper the bear, who kids love, as well as some adults! He makes an appearance at store openings, fetes, switching on Christmas lights etc. Colleagues of Catherine's don the large teddy bear outfit for these events. From 2012 to 2014 the Society phased out Post Offices because, unfortunately, they were no longer

bringing in a lot of revenue. Two travel branches closed also. These closures were necessary in order to keep the Society profitable.

Throughout 2015 and 2016 the Non-Food Divisions ceased trading which included electrical and furniture items, as people now shop on-line.

Catherine listed some of the Co-op's 'firsts'. In 2001 they introduced the first Fairtrade wine in the UK, adding chocolate, bananas and tomatoes. In 2008 they were the first to change all their branded hot drinks; coffee, tea, chocolate to Fairtrade and, since 2017, all of their own brand meat sold in their stores, is British.

In 2020, encouraged by the government, they replaced plastic bags with bio-degradable ones.

In 2018 the Co-op moved its Head Office from their Victorian building in Nuneaton and went back to their roots in Coventry. Catherine now works out of a modern office.

We were shown photos of stores, and she said wherever possible they promote Fairtrade and sustainability. As an example all the chiller units now have doors to reduce energy.

In 2020 they introduced their first self-scanning device, and all of the Co-op stores now have these.

Funerals are a service the Co-op also offers and this service has evolved too. The Co-op can arrange different vehicles to carry the coffin. For instance, the 'Only Fools and Horses' three-wheeler was hired for a funeral. Lots of options are available such as Memorial jewellery, for example - bracelets and necklaces that can contain some ashes of a loved one.



*The Only Fools and Horses three-wheeler being used at a funeral*

We looked at a picture of one of the three Bewitched coffee shops. They are very modern, clean and welcoming. They also have their own mascot which kids love. Dogs are welcome too.

Another of Catherine's responsibilities is to support store launches and she recalled opening the Bishops Itchington store a couple of years ago and they had a company called 'Top of the Rocks' who played a bucket as though it was a drum – the day had a real carnival feel to it. They encouraged local school children to 'cut the ribbon' and will donate £500 to the school to support them.

Catherine looks after the corporate charity. The current charity partner is MacMillan Cancer Support which will run until February 2026. To date they have raised over £37,000. Fundraising events have included car washes, coffee mornings, sponsored walks, half marathons, raffles and book sales.

The Society launched Meaningful Membership in February. The benefits include everyday



*Cooper the bear at a car wash*

products which are cheaper for anyone who is a member and members also benefit from promotions.

Catherine concluded her overview by answering questions after which she was warmly thanked by Chair Ed Wilson and was given a donation by the Harbury Society for the corporate charity.

### Harbury Society Programme

**Tuesday 20th January** – Members' social evening.

**Tuesday 17th February** – A presentation by Steve Dean, Senior Historic Environment Advisor, on the subject of the Staffordshire Hoard.

**Tuesday 17th March** – Annual General Meeting followed by 'Medical Detection Dogs', a talk by Dr. Fiona Baskett.

**Tuesday 21st April** – Butterfly Conservation. A presentation by Mike Slater, Chair of Butterfly Conservation, Warwickshire branch.

All talks are held in the Tom Hauley Room. Doors open 7.30pm with the presentation starting at 7.45pm. Free to Harbury Society members – guests £3 (pay at the door – subject to availability).

If you would like further information about the Harbury Society or would like to become a member, please contact Sue Turner, Secretary, on 07917 055920, email [sue@turners.co.uk](mailto:sue@turners.co.uk) or visit the website [www.harburysociety.org](http://www.harburysociety.org)



**HARBURY WI**

Mary Thompson

Members had a busy time as we approached the festive season.

At the end of November, 13 members attended a Christmas Craft afternoon; thanks to Lin and Judith for organising an enjoyable afternoon.

15 members joined ladies from local WIs for a Carol Service at Ladbroke Church on 9th December.

At our meeting on 11th December, we welcomed Jo Golby who entertained us with tales of a Victorian Christmas. Jo has worked as a re-enactment maid at Warwick Castle and she outlined how Daisy Warwick set the style for Christmas at the castle. Princess Charlotte had introduced the Christmas tree into England before she died in 1817 but it was Prince Albert who made the tree popular in 1848. The Warwick Castle tree was 40ft high. At first it was lit by candles but by 1898 it had electric lights. The tree was decorated on Christmas Eve.

A ladies maid would act as Father Christmas. Each child would have a knitted stocking filled with fruit, sugar mice, coins etc. A food parcel would be delivered to the families on the estate. Girls might receive a doll or a dolls house and



boys toy soldiers painted with lead paint. Presents were always beautifully wrapped – no Sellotape of course, so they used ribbons, wire or stitches.

The Christmas table in the castle was beautifully dressed always with a pineapple in the middle. There was a marble table to keep puddings cold. Wild boar, venison, pheasant, duck, salmon, goose, peacock and swan were regularly served. Rabbit was very popular with country folk.

Breakfast was followed by attendance at the Chapel. The son of the earl would give gifts to less fortunate children. Dinner would last from 1pm to 4pm and the children would perform plays.

It would be Boxing Day when servants would receive presents in boxes.

This was a fascinating talk and we were able to look at the books, dolls, toys etc which Jo had on display.



The evening concluded with mulled wine or soft drinks. Fiona, our new committee member, organised a tasting session of four different mince pies to see which one members preferred. Instead of our usual Secret Santa, each member was invited to Christmas wrap a book which they thought another member would enjoy. It will be interesting to hear results!

At our meeting on 8th January we shall welcome Ian Malins from the Warwickshire Search and Rescue team.

Our winter party will be held in the Village Hall on Friday 23rd January 7.00 for 7.30pm when the speaker will be Jess Henderson who was the first Lady Bus driver in the 1970s. Members are welcome to bring a guest and are asked to provide a savoury or sweet dish for eight people; if you haven't already done so, please let Lin know exactly which dish you are providing to avoid duplication. Remember your own drink and glasses.

The next Cinema will be held in the Village Hall on Saturday 17th January – doors open at 6.15 for a 7pm start. The film will be a 2025 comedy "Naked Gun" starring Liam Neeson and Pamela Anderson. Tickets should be purchased from the library by Wednesday 14th January.



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## HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL

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open to the public.

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# HARBURY THEATRE GROUP

Deborah Ellis



On a cold and wet November night I made my way to the Harbury Village Hall to see Harbury Theatre Group's Panto, 'Dick Whittington' by Alan P Frayn. It was here where I was transported to the world of panto. The panto opened with King Rat (Ben Milligan) creating a fabulous air of evil and menace from the back of the hall. His costume, make up and demeanour causing the younger members of the audience to respond immediately with hisses and boos. Then Fairy Bowbells (Louise Stanley) appeared with an air of comfort and magic. She was all pink and glittery. What I loved was that each of these characters had their own lighting and magic wand and mace (that had a 3D printed skull on its tip).

Then the chorus arrived onto the stage where there was a wonderful back drop painted by Andrew Lawrence. They sang and danced and prepared us for the arrival of Alderman Fitzwarren (Keith Hayes) and Idle Jack (Wendy Lewin). This was where the audience was instructed to tell Idle Jack that whenever he came onto the stage we were to tell him to 'pull your socks up Jack'. Now this is where if you are a member of a panto audience there is an expectation for you to join in. I was invited to go to the dress rehearsal on Tuesday night and found myself needing to train myself up for the Thursday night. After singing 'Busy Doing Nothing' there was the hilarious rowdy entrance of Captain Cuttlefish (Chris Beaton) and Scupper (Matt Beaton) in their boat the 'Unsinkable 2'. Throughout the play these two created the most hilarious asides in the background that, if not scripted, were genius.

Then came the rear entrance of Dolly Dumpling (Andy Hunt) and what an entrance! The hair, make up and costume were simply divine. Her shock frock was magnificent. Then she sang 'Sex Bomb' with the chorus. From this point onwards the panto took on a different energy and the connection with the audience was truly exceptional. The interaction was amazing and the uniformed village groups attending gave back as much as they got. It was a joy to hear.

Then it was time for Dick Whittington (Becci Denny) to appear on the stage. Her confidence and charm was excellent. Her cat Tom (Nikki Holt) joined her and what a cat she was too. The cat never stopped being in character by being fun, playful and flirtatious. The seven miles from London joke was executed wonderfully. The chorus appeared with Idle Jack and sang

'Let's go to the Shop'. And this is where the theatre group are inclusive. Anna Harper is wheelchair bound and speaking can be difficult for her at times. Anna danced and reacted to the chorus sections plus had a line to say too. Many of the characters had direction from Ali to ensure that Anna had presence within the panto.

It was the tongue twister from Alderman that was well received. The script required him to say it again and that was met with applause. When Dick arrived in London he met Alice (Brittany Bain) and they sang 'The Greatest Days of our Lives' by Take That. The harmonies were really good and you could hear it. I spoke to the Musical Director Simon Stenner after the dress rehearsal and he informed me that this was the first production where every cast member had a microphone. He also found that during singing rehearsals he felt they could do harmonies so he added those in. This meant the music could be played louder.

The sound and lighting effects when King Rat came on to the stage were sublime. You could hear the dripping water sounds and that added wonderfully to the sewer lighting effects. Here he sang 'Bad Rats' where the lyrics had been rewritten from Wham's 'Bad Boys'. The two ratlings (Elle and Millie Lynam) were superb. They constantly stayed in rat mode throughout. In fact the costumes and make up for the cat and ratlings were very good.

Throughout the panto during scene changes there were some ace jokes between different characters. They were funny and a lot of them were changed to relate to current affairs and the surrounding villages. I liked the use of the bottle of milk from the local milk shed being used too, so the cat and other characters could be 'poisoned'. I loved the hypnotising effects on Dick. Then the necklace that was to be Alice's birthday present was 'stolen' by Dick! The use of the Eastenders 'dub dubs' was brilliant. Then we heard the song 'A Million Dreams' and Dick had become the Lord Major. Then it was the interval.

The second half began with the song 'In The Navy' and another good set design. Dolly Dumpling and Idle Jack had some very good jokes here. King Rat wouldn't let Dick clear his name and so he had to come up with a plan to stop the ship from getting to Morocco. (Alderman was going to make his fortune selling the Sultan of Morocco (Ted Coupe) some rat poison to deal with his rat population.) Then we had the physical comedy of Dolly Dumpling and Idle Jack making some pastry. This had to be seen. It left Dolly with a rather soggy bottom!

The chorus sang 'Dancing on the Deck' which was a song obtained from AI and there was some good dancing here again. The hi Jack joke was hilarious. The drill practice went very badly in every good way possible. Dick had been hiding on the ship and he was discovered. Here the chorus sang 'Surfin' in the USA' with plenty of good dancing too. The ship is then taken over by King Rat and he creates a massive storm and chaos ensues. This was a masterpiece of stage direction, lighting and sound.

We then get treated to a glow in the dark scene of glowing fish and other sea creatures. I loved this. This was used in Jack and the Beanstalk in the last panto and it really was breath taking. We then get greeted by a broken Unsinkable 2 boat being manoeuvred by Captain Cuttlefish and all the characters are searching for each other.

We find Alice in jail. The Sultan flirts with Dolly who desperately wants to be woo'ed! The set again designed with great effect and simplicity. Guard 1 and 2 come on (Sue Harris and Martin Barr) and we were treated to another great double act. Martin was very keen to get his part right and his enthusiasm was great to see. Dick promises to get rid of all the rats and the King Rat has hidden under the hostess trolley. A fight breaks out between King Rat and Dick. Then King Rat loses his magic mace. It ends with Dick and Alice getting married.

Then the panto comes to an end with the cast singing 'We Go Together' from Grease. And what a panto it was too. The set design, the costumes, the make up, the choreography, the technology, the behind the scenes and front of house all came together to create a very magical experience. The comments after curtain down were so positive. The confidence of the cast just kept growing and the audience couldn't get enough. This was the best panto I have ever seen from Harbury Theatre Group. Well done Ali Hodge.



## JOINING HARBURY THEATRE GROUP

*Elle & Millie Lynam - 'The Ratlings'*

My family and I moved in to the village late last year, and my eldest daughter and I were both delighted to join the Harbury Theatre Group in September.

Right from the first rehearsal everyone was incredibly welcoming, friendly and encouraging. Joining the group has given both of us the opportunity to meet new people and have lots of fun!

We thoroughly enjoyed playing the parts of 'Ratlings', trying to capture ideal rat mannerisms and facial expressions in the Dick Whittington pantomime.

Performing with people of all ages, who come together with a shared love of performance, creates that instant common interest. Rehearsing and fun social meetings has turned strangers in to great friends.

It's so nice to connect with others in the community and feel included so quickly.

The group has also rekindled our passion for acting. We're both looking forward to performing again on stage soon!



## FOLK CLUB

*Michael Luntley*

### 4th December 2025

I chose 'gift' as the theme for December - appropriate for those wanting to mark the season and open-ended enough for those minded to take a more cavalier approach to themes. As it turned out, it was an evening of gifts...in many ways.

I opened with a song about the gift of a guitar and the gift of friendship that it represented. A sad tale, but true one, told to the tune of The Banks of the Bann which is, I have to say, a gift of a tune to write to. More fine tunes and stories followed. There was much to enjoy and many names to remember for your MC, who expended a surfeit of data storage to

# Senior Citizens Ch



# Christmas Party 2025



remembering who was due to sing next hereby leaving too little processing power to note down all the songs played! But cheers all round to Bob, Sue & Maureen, Rik, Peter, Dave and Mike who navigated us through to the interval.

Having bought our raffle tickets, folks gave their voices to the chorus of my 'The cocktail hour has been and gone' before being entertained by the Folk Choir. Hot on the choir's heels there followed Three Wise Men, who sang 'Three Wise Men'. Cheryl put down her guitar for her second song and treated us to a lovely a capella, reminding us all of the treasure of the unaccompanied voice. Richard gave us a couple, including 'Gift of a brand new day' followed by Peter McDonald doing a fine impression of Mike Oldfield - 'Second Mandolin' - as he layered up with his multi-tracked 'Tune for Ruth'. Peter and Liz followed with 'She practised the organ'. It was left to Keith Donnelly to close the night down. His first was 'The Gift', the second an emotionally potent (both in content and delivery) brand new song: 'You're gonna miss Christmases like this.'

The final gift of a fine evening was the raffle tally - £84 for the Trussell Trust.

Thank you one and all.



## HARBURY HERITAGE CENTRE

*Bill Timson*

The pamphlet that came through letter boxes of Harbury and Deppers Bridge properties in September last year (2025), outline proposals by Bloor Homes to build another 150 homes in Harbury. The site identified for the homes was off Butt Lane on the Eastern edge of the village.

Part of the proposal was to create a 'new and generous public open space', within which there would be 'a memorial garden to mark the location of a World War II event.'

Wishing to find out more, Harbury resident Jill Winter researched 'the event' and discovered the following:

On the 8th November 1942 a Vickers Wellington III Bomber, Serial number DF 742. DD-Q of 22OTU stalled during a turn following engine failure having only just taken off from Gaydon and crashed at Harbury, the site being in the field at the corner of Butt Lane and the B4452 to Depper's Bridge. PO D.T. Withington RCAF (Royal Canadian Air Force) and Sargeant C.T. Milton RCAF were both killed.

Pilot Officer Withington had served with 108 Squadron in the Middle East and was aged 28. He was from Kitchener Ontario and left a wife Majorie. Thomas David Withington was the recipient of the DFM, (Distinguished Flying Medal). Sargeant Carl William Milton was the son of Charles William and Eladda Jane Milton, of Edgett's Landing, Albert Co., New Brunswick, Canada. The inscription on his grave stone is 'PEACE REST AND SLEEP SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS'. He was aged just 19 years old.



Both men are buried in the Stratford on Avon Cemetery on Evesham Road. There are 98 Canadians buried there all but one of them from the RCAF. Altogether there are 22 First World War servicemen and 137 Second World War service personnel, most of whom are Canadian Airmen who died whilst serving with 22 Operational Training Unit which was stationed nearby at Wellesbourne Mountford Airfield.

The Wellington Bomber was a frequent entry in these records; many accidents and crashes having been recorded during training even before they went on active service. However, it appears that the Wellington was an 'incredibly tough and reliable' airplane.



Jill used the [www.aviationarchaeology.org.uk](http://www.aviationarchaeology.org.uk) website to research this information and [www.losses.internationalbcc.co.uk](http://www.losses.internationalbcc.co.uk) to aid her further.

## Other News

### BBC CWR Radio at the Great Western Pub - December 2025

On the morning of Friday 5th the Vic Minett show was broadcast live from the Great Western Pub near Depper's Bridge. The pub opened early, 10am, to accommodate the show and Siobhan Dodd, the pub's 'Creative Director' was on hand to ensure that things ran smoothly. I was invited to talk about the 'blue plaques' on the outside of the building and to give some background to the Harbury Heritage Group. It was a lovely experience with a mixture of music, interviews and Christmas singing from the residents and staff of Galanos House.



Following up the interview, I would like to appeal to the people of Harbury who had a relative in either World War and who was lucky enough to come home. We are trying to create a 'Roll of Honour' to acknowledge all of the service men and women who fought for their country in the last century and who lived in Harbury. Please get in touch via our website if you know of anyone who should be included – [www.harburyheritage.org.uk](http://www.harburyheritage.org.uk)



## Open Days

Our next open day is Sunday 18th January 2 – 4pm – come along for tea and biscuits and view the archives of Harbury. Hundreds of photographs and documents to look at. Entrance via Park Lane.



# GUIDES AND SCOUTS SUPPORT

David Browne - GASS Committee Chairperson

Happy New Year to all readers from GASS! It has been a great 2025 and we are looking forward to continuing to work hard to support our guides and scouts in 2026.

A few thank you's to begin a brand new year of guiding and scouting.

Thank you to all of you who have used our Christmas postal service around Harbury. Your donations were greatly appreciated and I imagine we offered excellent value compared to Royal Mail's current cost of stamps. We delivered a huge number of cards and raised just over £500. Of course, this wouldn't be possible without the work of our sections managing the sorting and the volunteers who run our deliveries across the village, braving rain (no snow) and sometimes puzzling addresses to ensure all post is delivered!

A little update on our scout hut development project (as many of you will have spotted the yellow sheeting covering our extension and no doubt wondered what our plans were). Thank you to all who have supported us thus far including the Parish Council who kindly funded the windows which have just been installed and the team of volunteers who have assisted in cladding one side of the building so far. Thank you also to anyone who has supported our fundraising work as these funds are poured straight into our equipment and hut developments.

I also wish to thank all of our section leaders across guides and scouts. We couldn't operate without them giving of their time week in, week out, and finally my fellow committee members who have worked constantly to deliver the best we can for our sections and section leaders in terms of facilities and administration.

Looking ahead, we aim to continue the hut development project in 2026. We will be holding some working party days in January to progress the wall cladding further and are working on further fundraising and support to complete the first floor extension fully. Volunteers are welcomed for work parties (contact Paul Quinney at [harburygs1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:harburygs1@hotmail.co.uk)) or for any fundraising ideas or support (contact David Browne at [g.a.s.s.harbury@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:g.a.s.s.harbury@hotmail.co.uk)).

We've got another full year of activities planned, including a county camp 'Get in Camp' for all scout sections at Ragley Hall which many are already looking forward to.

We continue to depend on volunteers to run both the GASS Committee responsibilities and our sections. If anyone is interested in getting involved with GASS, guides or scouts, please do get in touch.



**HARBURY PRE-SCHOOL**

*Staff and Committee*



## Pre-School Nativity

On Wednesday, we held our traditional Pre-School Nativity at the Church. The children dressed as Mary, Joseph, an Innkeeper, Kings, Shepherds, a Star, Angels, Sheep, Cows and a Donkey.

Watched by a church full of parents, carers and relatives, the children were absolutely brilliant. As a staff team, we are incredibly proud of them! Not only for their work on the day but also

for their commitment to practicing the songs and actions in Pre-School beforehand.

Some of the songs were new to the staff but the children picked it up quicker than we did and frequently corrected us for singing the wrong line!

The children hadn't performed as a whole group before yesterday so standing up in a church in front of an audience is a quite a daunting experience at the best of times. However, they rose to the occasion, dressing up, singing beautifully and acting out the signs and actions.

A huge thank you to Julie and Andy and for lending us the church and Julie and the Committee for organising the tea, coffee and mince pies. Thank you also to Lucie, Catherine's daughter, for taking the fabulous photos and videos.

Thank you to all the parents for their support, cheering on the children and for being such a fabulous audience.



### **Christmas at Pre-School**

The children have also been making Christmas cards and decorations for their families. They have been making miniature Christmas trees using pinecones and pom poms.

We have set up a cosy 'Christmas home corner' with twinkly lights, blankets, books, a few wooden children's toys and sofas and a few catalogues.

### **The Colour Monster**

We have been exploring our emotions using 'The Colour Monster' book and puppets. Each emotion has its own colour and we regularly use the puppets to provide a visual aid for how we might be feeling.



The children really enjoy hearing the Colour Monster Story and have been choosing which colour they would like to paint their own colour monsters which are now up on display in the Pre-School room.

### **Christmas Party**

Next week, we are looking forward to our end of term Christmas Party with lots of party food, party games, singing and a visit from Father Christmas himself!

### **Thank you**

The staff would like to say thank you for the Christmas gifts and cards that we have received from parents. We would also like to say a huge thank you to all the parents and children for their support this term. We are very excited about welcoming back the existing children and meeting some new faces in January.



The staff and children at Harbury Pre-School would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

If you would like further information, or to register a child for Harbury Pre-School, please e-mail [enquiries@harburypre-school.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@harburypre-school.org.uk) text 07907 598461 or look at the web site [www.harburypre-school.org.uk](http://www.harburypre-school.org.uk) You can also find us on Facebook.



# HARBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lucy Bosley - Headteacher

*To love, learn and grow together.*

*"Let us not love with words and speech but with action and in truth" 1 John 3:18*

A big thank you to **e-Wheels** for helping us to move our **Reverse Advent collections** to local Foodbanks. We had an overwhelming response and it took a few cars to move all the food! Thank you to all the families who contributed.



## Posada

Travelling around the village has been our Harbury Posada. They made their final journey to All Saints Church on Friday 19th December and what adventures baby Jesus has had! From gymnastics, to attending Christening, meeting families and pets! Jesus has also had some wonderful homes and stables made for him. The children have been so excited to take the Posada home (especially KS1). Please visit All Saints Church to read about their adventures. They were knitted and crocheted by ladies in Harbury a couple of years ago and are still being thoroughly enjoyed.



We are looking forward to January which is Growth Mindset Month. We will be learning how to play wheelchair basketball and have the very famous Warwickshire Bears joining us for two days! More about how we got on in February's edition!

Happy New year from all at Harbury CE Primary School.



## HARBURY SCHOOL PTA

Alice Mellings

## Fundraising

December was a very busy month for us! Thank you to everyone who volunteered and took part in our Wreath Making Night. We raised around **£1,000** for the school and had lots of fun creating our beautiful wreaths.

We then had the pleasure of serving refreshments at both the Year 3 & 4 Carol Concert and the Infants' Nativity, raising a further **£400** for the school.

Our grand finale of the year was the Harbury School PTA Village Christmas Raffle. It was wonderful to see the whole village come together, with incredibly generous prize donations from local



~~ [www.vhs2dvd.info](http://www.vhs2dvd.info) ~~

Have your old VHS or Camcorder videos transferred to  
DVD or converted to digital files

(MP4/MOV/AVI/WAV)

Makes a great Christmas  
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Locally based - for details visit website

Or call 07733 368245 after 6pm



**ADVERTISING IN THE HARBURY & LADBROKE NEWS**

EMAIL: [ADVERTISING@HLNEWS.CO.UK](mailto:ADVERTISING@HLNEWS.CO.UK)

ADVERT SIZE	¼ PAGE	½ PAGE	FULL PAGE
1 MONTH	£13.75	£25.00	£45.00
3 MONTHS	£37.00	£65.00	£119.00
6 MONTHS	£67.00	£120.00	£218.00
12 MONTHS	£124.00	£218.00	£406.00

Adverts with payment to:

Sue Dronfield, 36 Manor Orchard, Harbury. See Diary for deadline dates.

Cheques payable to 'Harbury & Ladbroke News' or BACS details upon request



**FREE ANTIQUES VALUATION DAY**

St Francis of Assisi Church Hall,

110 Warwick Road, Kenilworth CV8 1HL

**Thursday 12th February 2026 | 10 - 12**

**Bring along your Gold, Jewellery,  
Watches, Silver, Antiques and Collectables**

Items may be consigned into Auction

Free Home Visits for large/multiple items,

House clearance and downsizing advice Probate and Insurance Valuations

For further information please contact Hansons Warwickshire 07470 459309

E: [clivejones@hansonsauctioneers.co.uk](mailto:clivejones@hansonsauctioneers.co.uk) [www.hansonsauctioneers.co.uk](http://www.hansonsauctioneers.co.uk)

Hansons Derbyshire, Heage Lane, Etwall, Derby, DE65 6LS

**Refreshments in aid of WCS Care**

# Caretaker Required

Harbury CE Primary School seek to appoint a dedicated caretaker. Ideally for 15 hours. Flexible hours by agreement.

**Subject to safeguarding checks**



- 15 hours per week
- Flexible working hours
- Full training provided
- No experience necessary
- 25 days holiday plus bank holidays
- Band D

For more information please contact the school office on 01926612656 or go to [harburyschool.com](http://harburyschool.com)

businesses and amazing support from villagers, teachers and parents purchasing raffle tickets. We raised a staggering **£1,500** for the school, which will go directly towards the new Forest School, being created at the beginning of 2026.



1	The White Company - Luxury home hamper	231-235	Green Edge
2	Lola Leamington - Fine wine	996-1000	Peach Edge
3	Fit 4 Kids - 2x School holiday activity vouchers	556-560	Peach Edge
4	Spellbound Academy of Dance - One month of free dance classes	291-295	Peach Edge
5	Store & Studio - Wash and blow dry	366-370	Yellow Edge
6	Store & Studio - £30 voucher	166-170	Pink Edge
7	Gladden Vicky - Nail treatment voucher	16-20	Pink Edge
8	Crown Inn - Harbury - 2-course Sunday lunch for two	971	Yellow
9	Nails with Jess - Nail treatment voucher	486-490	Blue Edge
10	Alster's Kelley Solicitors Limited - bottle of Baileys	51-55	Pink
11	Luxury Food Hamper - Gourmet goodies	536-240	Yellow Edge
12	Epic Bakes - Cakes and bakes voucher	551-555	Peach
13	Harbury Milk Shed - Local produce voucher	241-245	Green Edge
14	The Fox and Hen - £20 dining voucher	91-95	Brown Edge
15	Hill Top Farm - Breakfast for 2	956-960	Brown Edge
16	Mrs Smith's Hair Salon - Hair voucher	691-695	Blue Edge
17	Victoria Austin Beauty - £50 beauty voucher	291-295	Peach
18	National Running Show - 2 tickets	56-60	Pink Edge
19	The Running Pheasant - Art - Personalised name print voucher	341-345	Pink Edge
20	National Outdoor Expo - 2 tickets	681-685	Blue Edge
21	Mrs Smith - Hair care	716-720	Peach Edge
22	White Heart at Ufton and Harbury Village store - Wine Donation	996-1000	Blue Edge
23	Warwick Castle - 2x adult tickets for a magical day out	261-265	Blue Edge

### What we have contributed towards



We were delighted to donate books for the annual Father Christmas visit for the infants. The children had lots of fun and each went home with a gift on the final day of term.

We have also contributed:

- £30 towards Saxon coins for Year 4
- Funding for three hours of ICT technician support to upgrade school software
- £1,000 towards a Festival of Fun for the infants

## Earthworms

We are starting to get moving on the forest school in the new year with coppicing which is very exciting with the funds from the Christmas Raffle.

## School Disco

We are very excited for our annual School Disco, taking place on Friday 30th January 2026.

- KS1: 5.00pm – 6.00pm
- KS2: 6.15pm – 7.30pm

It will be a fun-filled evening of dancing and socialising. Children will have the chance to spend some money at the disco shop on a flashy gift, and all children will receive a treat and unlimited drinks which will be included in the ticket price.

If any local businesses would be interested in sponsoring this event, please get in touch at [harburypta@gmail.com](mailto:harburypta@gmail.com).



## Dates for the Diary

PTA meeting – 12th January 2026 – 7.30pm at The Shakespeare  
School Disco – 30th January 2026

## Lottery

Congratulations to our October Lottery winners:

- 1st Prize: £88.80

## Join the lottery

This is an easy way to support the school while having a chance to win!

- 50% of all proceeds go directly back to the school
- The more entries, the bigger the prizes!



To join, contact us at [harburypta@gmail.com](mailto:harburypta@gmail.com) for a sign-up form.

## Easyfundraising

Please join easyfundraising and support the PTA and school! Simply shop through easyfundraising, and the retailer you choose will donate to the PTA at no extra cost to you.

## Scan the QR code here to join.

 Follow **Harbury School PTA** for all your updates.



## HARBURY LIBRARY & BIBLIO'S CAFE

*Michael Luntley*

## A very Happy New Year to all.

Before we closed down for the Christmas period, we held a big 'thank you' party for all the volunteers who help run our community library. They make everything possible. We also hosted the first ever 'Tunes & Tales Carols in the Library'. Wonderful to see so many folks there sharing a seasonal sing-a-long, not just regulars from our weekly 'Tunes & Tales' sessions on a Thursday morning, but many who simply came to join in some favourite Carols with a glass of mulled wine, and a mince pie, a slice of banana cake, a sausage roll and.....

It was lots of fun all round. Many thanks to all who contributed to a very joyful get together just before Christmas, and special thanks to Hedy for suggesting it and helping to lead it.

And then, having shut-down for two weeks, we had a sort of un-seasonal spring clean - so extra many thanks to those volunteers who helped hurry away the dust of 2025.

And so this is 2026. A brand new year bringing changes, some developments and lots of things staying the same.

Apart from all the regular events that we host, we have another 'Live & Local' production in January and a storyteller booked for February.

On 16th January we have a one-man show - 'Mettle'. Returning to ship having been torpedoed during WWII Atlantic convoys takes courage. Returning after being torpedoed twice takes serious mettle. 'Mettle' is a gripping new play by Nicholas Collett, set in 1942 during HMS Vanessa's convoy escort. This moving and humorous odyssey explores war, bravery and personal legacy through true untold wartime stories. Tickets from Library desk or online from ticketsource - search 'Harbury'.

And then on 6th February, we have Warwickshire based story-teller Jason Buck - 'Folktales and fairytales ... with all the juicy bits left in'. Tickets will be available shortly from the Library desk.

Other things to watch out for in the new year: we are hoping to set up a daytime book group, plus more information and help sessions for signing up for a library membership card.

All the usual events that we host can be found on the Library calendar on the website: [www.harburyvillagelibrary.org.uk/events/calendar](http://www.harburyvillagelibrary.org.uk/events/calendar).



## GARDEN JOTTINGS

*Christine Dakin from Bridge Nursery*

Aren't plants amazing? In 2024 they (mostly) survived the excessive rainfall when they were sitting in saturated ground for many weeks and in 2025 it was the other extreme when they had a very long time without any rain. The pond was no more than a muddy puddle but it is beginning to fill up again. Many gardening jobs just couldn't be done when the ground was too wet or too dry. This means there is a backlog of jobs to get on with if the weather is reasonable.

During the last three months I have been doing some 'proper' gardening including digging out some of the unwanted self-seeding plants, reducing some clumps which had become too large and adding compost and plants.

### **Reminders to myself (you too if appropriate)**

Cut off hellebore and epimedium leaves, later in the month cut dogwoods right down leaving only pencil thickness stems, use the pile of woodchips as a mulch in areas which have gone a bit wild to keep all the weeds down (it is usually a waste product for tree surgeons, just ask for a load to be delivered), empty one of the compost bins (I have six) and spread round the borders, and last but not least, check seed catalogues to see what to order.



Wishing you a very Happy New Year.

**Bridge Nursery, Tomlow Road, Napton | [www.bridge-nursery.co.uk](http://www.bridge-nursery.co.uk)**



## NATURE NOTES

Martin & Amanda Randall

### Harburynature@gmail.com

Harbury does not often feature in national news stories (fortunately) so it was good to read an article on the BBC website about conservation work on the nearby Railway Cutting. As many readers will know, Harbury Railway Cutting is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), one of the two in our Parish. This steep-sided cutting through limestone has for decades provided a rich haven for wildflowers and a remarkable diversity of butterflies, including rare species like the Small Blue, Grizzled Skipper, Dingy Skipper and Green Hairstreak. We remember the protracted works that had to be carried out after the major landslip, near the tunnel, that damaged sections of the cutting. Over recent years, once the work was completed, there has been an ambitious habitat restoration project by Butterfly Conservation in partnership with local farmers and Network Rail. This has seen the sowing of meadow grasses and wildflowers to recreate rich nectar and larval foodplant resources. A flock of sheep has been introduced to graze the slopes. The sheep help keep competitive grasses and scrub in check over the winter — a sustainable alternative to mechanical mowing on the steep ground — giving pollinating insects the open, flower-rich habitat they need to thrive come spring.

Not far to the north-east lies Stockton Cutting, a disused railway corridor, now managed in parts for nature and recognised for its important limestone grassland habitat. This former railway cutting supports rare wildflowers, orchids and a suite of butterfly species adapted to its rich calcareous soils. Conservation work here focuses on maintaining the open grassland mosaic that allows both plants and invertebrates to flourish, continuing



Sheep grazing Harbury cutting  
(Martin Randall)

local efforts to protect and enhance biodiversity on former industrial sites. We are looking forward to hearing more about the work of the Butterfly Conservation charity and our local butterflies when Mike Slater, of that organisation, comes to speak at the Harbury Society meeting in April. Definitely a date for our diary!

We have been looking back at the records of birds coming to our garden in Harbury and noted that it is ten years, in early 2016, since we were last visited by Siskins. Siskins are small, lively finches, instantly recognisable by their streaky plumage and flashes of yellow. Males are especially striking, with a black cap and bib, bright yellow-green body and yellow wing bars, while females are slightly duller and more heavily streaked. They are agile birds, often seen hanging upside down as they feed, and their high-pitched, twittering calls are a giveaway even when they are hidden among branches.

In the UK, Siskins mainly breed in coniferous woodland, particularly forests of spruce, pine and larch in Scotland, northern England and Wales. They build neat, cup-shaped nests high



# What's Happening...

## JANUARY AT THE BELL INN, LADBROKE

### QUIZ NIGHT AT THE BELL

*Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January | £15pp*

Get your thinking caps on and round up your team for another evening of fun, friendly competition, and great prizes. Delicious Coq Au Vin will be served at 6:30pm with the first round of the Quiz starting at 8pm.

### BURNS NIGHT CELEBRATION

*Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January*

Join us for a Burns Night celebration, complete with whisky-tasting and a specially crafted themed menu.

### LIVE MUSIC

*Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January*

Enjoy great vibes at The Bell with Live Music!  
All are welcome, simply turn up and enjoy!

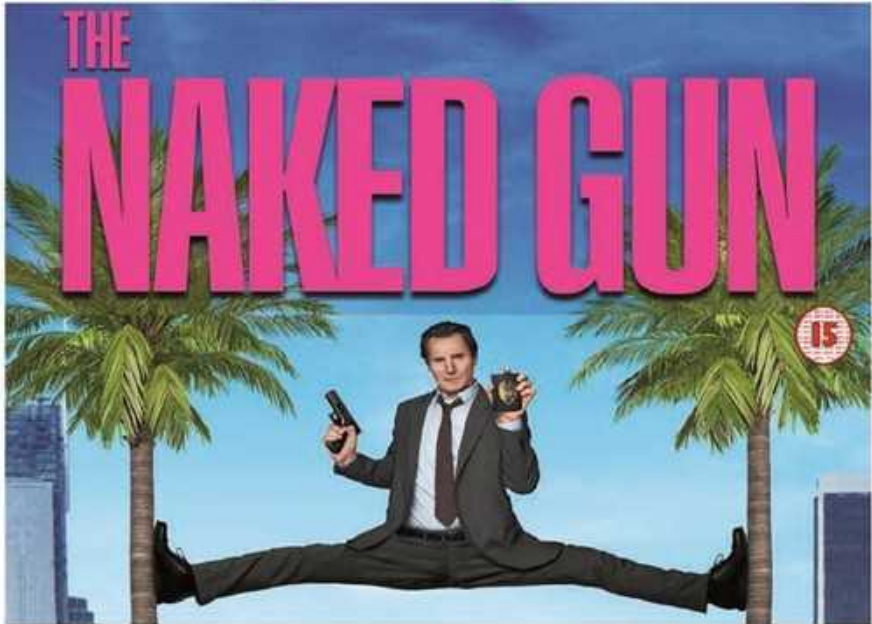
[bellinn@freespirtpubs.co.uk](mailto:bellinn@freespirtpubs.co.uk)

01926 811224

The Bell Inn, Banbury Road,  
Ladbroke, Nr Southam,  
Warwickshire, CV47 2BY



# Harbury Village Cinema



## Sat. January 17th 2026

Tickets: £14 with fish'n'chips  
& 2 raffle tickets. £8 ticket  
only with 1 raffle ticket.

Tickets from the Library by  
cash or card.

Please buy before 14th  
January

No tickets on the door.

Doors open  
6.15

Film begins  
7pm

Licensed Bar



**M**oving Pictures



**LIVE**  
& LOCAL

in trees, where they lay four to five eggs in late spring. Outside the breeding season they become more mobile, moving into lower ground and mixing with other finches, like Chaffinches and Goldfinches, in flocks. Their natural diet consists largely of seeds, especially Alder and Birch, along with conifer seeds and the occasional insect during the breeding season.

The UK breeding population is estimated at around 200,000 pairs, but numbers can swell dramatically in winter. Siskins are partial migrants, and large numbers arrive from Scandinavia and northern Europe in some years, especially when seed crops fail on the continent. These winter visitors can make Siskins suddenly abundant in places where they are rarely seen in summer, including gardens and parks. We have seen them feeding on Alder seeds at Ufton nature reserve during several winters.



To attract Siskins to your garden, offering the right food is key. Nyjer (niger) seed is their favourite, though they will also take sunflower hearts. Gardens near trees or woodland are particularly appealing, especially if there is a reliable food source during cold weather. Fresh water for drinking and bathing can also help, and once Siskins discover a good garden feeder, they often return in noisy, energetic flocks throughout the winter.

Just an annual reminder that the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch is on the weekend of 23rd to 25th January this year. It is the world's largest garden wildlife survey. Taking part helps to build a picture of how garden birds are faring. Details are on the RSPB website.

### **Harbury Nature gallery**

Apologies to those of you who tried to scan the QR code for the Harbury Nature Gallery, only to find that it did not work. Here is the functioning code. Alternatively, you can paste the following into your browser [photos.app.goo.gl/vrc61d3zPsa7SwDF7](https://photos.app.goo.gl/vrc61d3zPsa7SwDF7) or join the 'Harbury Nature' group on Facebook.



If you click on any photo in the gallery, you can read about who took the photo, and some information about the subject.

This gallery will continue to expand as long as people send in photographs. So if you have a favourite nature photo that you've taken locally (e.g. in or around Harbury, Ladbroke, Chesterton, Deppers Bridge), please email a copy to [harburynature@gmail.com](mailto:harburynature@gmail.com) with your name and a brief description of the subject matter, and we will upload it.

We look forward to adding your pictures.

### **Harbury Swift Village**

The return of the swifts in May still seems a long way off, but thanks to Harbury Parish Council, Harbury Swifts now have their own page on the Parish Council website. You can find it by scanning the QR code here, or by going to Parish Council's website and selecting the drop down menu 'About Harbury'.





## HARBURY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATE

District Councillor Susan Ostrander (LibDem)  
([susan4harbury@gmail.com](mailto:susan4harbury@gmail.com) or [sue.ostrander@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:sue.ostrander@stratford-dc.gov.uk))

As we begin a new year, I hope you all enjoyed a peaceful Christmas and New Year period, and that you were able to spend some time with those you care about — without overdoing the mince pies and other goodies too much! January is always a good moment to take stock, look ahead and share a few updates on what has been happening at District Council level and what lies ahead in the coming months.

### Community Climate and Nature Fund

Many of you may already be aware of the Community Climate and Nature Fund (CCNF), which Stratford-on-Avon District Council introduced in November 2023. Since then, it has helped fund a wide range of projects across the District aimed at tackling climate change and supporting biodiversity — from solar panels and air source heat pumps, to pond restoration and flood prevention schemes.

Round Three of the CCNF opened in May 2025 and will remain open until April 2026. Applications are considered at set appraisal dates, with the next ones taking place on 14th January 2026 and 15th April 2026. To be considered at the January appraisal, applications must be submitted by 5pm on Monday 12th January. I know this is just round the corner and may be too late, BUT you could start getting something ready for the April appraisal.....

The most recent assessment period, which closed in October, supported a number of projects, including solar panels at Welford-on-Avon Bowls Club, woodland restoration at Hoppers Lane Wood, biodiversity improvements in Henley-in-Arden, energy-efficient lighting at Tysoe Tennis Club, and air source heat pumps at both Henley Memorial Hall and Kineton Village Hall.

Further information on eligibility and how to apply can be found on the District Council website at [www.stratford.gov.uk/environment/climate-change-fund.cfm](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/environment/climate-change-fund.cfm)

It's really encouraging to see community groups and parish councils coming forward with practical projects. I imagine that there are some good ideas that could be implemented using this fund here.

### Consultation on Council Tax Premium for Second Homes

The District Council has also launched a six-week consultation on whether to introduce a Council Tax premium on second homes.

From April 2025, councils in England were given new powers to charge up to a 100% premium on properties that are substantially furnished but are not anyone's main residence. Stratford-on-Avon District Council is consulting on whether to apply the maximum premium, which would mean second homes paying double the standard Council Tax rate. At present, second homes in the District already pay full Council Tax, but without any additional premium.

Following the consultation, a decision will be made in February 2026. If approved, the premium would come into effect from 1st April 2027, with owners of second homes notified by 31st March 2026.

The proposal is being considered in the context of ongoing challenges around housing availability and affordability, particularly in rural areas. Any income raised would support the Council's budget, including funding for affordable housing and reducing reliance on temporary accommodation.

The consultation is open until Monday 2nd February. More information, including the background to the proposal, is available at: [www.stratford.gov.uk/council-tax/council-tax-premiums-on-second-homes-consultation.cfm](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/council-tax/council-tax-premiums-on-second-homes-consultation.cfm)

The online questionnaire can be completed at:

[online1.snapsurveys.com/counciltaxpremium](http://online1.snapsurveys.com/counciltaxpremium)

Paper copies of the questionnaire are also available at District Council offices.

### **Planning Applications and the Five-Year Housing Land Supply**

Finally, I want to address the planning situation affecting Harbury and surrounding areas.

As many residents will be aware, Harbury has recently seen a number of large-scale outline planning applications come forward. These are proving particularly challenging in light of changes to planning set down by Central Government, which have resulted in Stratford-on-Avon District Council currently being unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. This significantly weakens the Council's ability to resist development proposals.

The District Council has established a task force of planning officers to work on restoring the five-year housing land supply, which would allow greater local control over planning decisions again. However, the reality is that restoring the supply involves delivering new housing more quickly, which makes resisting applications more difficult in the meantime. In many cases, decisions come down to seeking the least harmful option rather than being able to refuse development outright.

I am working closely with fellow District Councillors facing similar pressures in neighbouring wards, including Bishops Itchington, particularly in relation to major proposals such as the outline application for 230 homes at the former Harbury Cement Works. I am currently preparing an objection to this scheme, which will ensure it is considered by the Planning Committee at Stratford, where it can be debated publicly. The same applies to the smaller site at Mill Street.

Your Parish Council is also working proactively to represent local interests, and I want to thank them — and all residents who have already commented, or intend to comment, on the District Council's e-planning portal at:

[apps.stratford.gov.uk/eplanningv2](http://apps.stratford.gov.uk/eplanningv2)

As always, if you have concerns or questions about any of the issues above, please do get in touch: ([susan4harbury@gmail.com](mailto:susan4harbury@gmail.com) or [sue.ostrander@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:sue.ostrander@stratford-dc.gov.uk))



## **BUMPS & BUNDLES**

---

*Carol Jackson and the Bumps team*

We had our last meeting on 16th December and it was a very happy occasion and many little ones came who have been coming all along and they enjoyed playing with the toys and each other and we had a small buffet for Christmas.

"Bumps" has been meeting every Tuesday in the Tom Hauley Room from 10.30 am - 12 noon for the last 15 years but now is the time to finish.

Numbers have been dwindling and there are other groups to which Mums can take their little ones. Bumps has been helpful to many people over the years and Mums (and Dads and carers) have benefitted from the "wisdom" of our older Mums, especially our cups of tea and biscuits.

We would like to thank all the people who have come and joined us and all the people who

have helped us over the years. If anyone is interested in taking over the group and perhaps taking it in another direction, please do contact me or any of the team. Please also look at our Facebook page.

We will have to remove all the toys, bricks and puzzles etc from the Tom Hauley Room after Christmas, please contact us if any of it would be of interest to you or your group.



## HARBURY SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE UPDATE

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*Mike McBride, on behalf of the Harbury Senior Citizens Benefit Association*

We were reminded again by many of our guests about the importance to them of attending the annual Christmas party and how much they enjoyed it. For some it is the highlight of the season. This year we had dancing to music provided by Ken Smith, and the floor was occupied by many moving and shaking to the beat of The Shadows, The Beatles and many more. Thank you, Ken, for entertaining all of us.

The raffle helps to finance the party so thanks to those who donated the many prizes to help us and who bought the raffle tickets. Also, this year we had a grant from the Wigley Trust that went towards the cost of hiring the village hall. Again, this year, as in many years past, we were also helped by a donation from the Harbury Carnival committee. We are grateful for the generous support given to us to help with the running of this much loved event.

We couldn't do this without the volunteers who handle everything from setup to cleanup. In addition to the Harbury Scouts who helped with the setting up, we were also joined in the evening by young people from the Explorers group who helped serve at table. We also had partners and family members and friends of the committee who helped us as well. Thank you one and all and we hope to see you again next year.

The committee would like to wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year and we look forward to seeing you at our events during the year and for giving us your support. Look out for our schedule of activities in the Harbury and Ladbroke news and occasionally on Facebook and the first will be a coffee morning in the Tom Hauley Room on Saturday 31st January 2026!!!



## WEDNESDAY WALKERS

---

*Sheila Burt*

If you have planned to get out in the fresh air and exercise more in the New Year then why not come along and join us on one of our walks. We have planned a weekly programme of walks up to Easter - details of which you can see in the diary of the HLNews. Just turn up if you would like to join us. We're a friendly bunch, we share lifts and always have a coffee break half way round. Hope to see you on a Wednesday morning soon.



## NEW! TOM'S TEAS

---

*Elaine Barnden, Michael Vincent & Team*

This is a new community activity being put on in the Tom Hauley Room, at All Saints' Church, and we invite you to come along for a free cup of tea, cake, coffee, biscuits and chat. Perhaps you don't know many people in the village, maybe you are new here or just a bit isolated and would like some companionship. It's a great opportunity to meet new friends or catch up with old ones.

The first Tom's Teas will be 2.30 - 4.00pm on the third Monday in January - that's the 19th January 2026. You can be sure of a warm welcome.

# Senior Citizens Christmas Party



1st Harbury Scouts and Leaders



Explorers with their Leader



Angie and Peter all ready for the Raffle



Senior Citizens Committee



Serving the meal



Dancing the night away!



## PONDER IN THE PUB

---

*Fliss Harris*

This discussion group meets again on Tuesday 27th January, 6.45pm for 7pm at The Crown Inn. This month's topic is "You must have imagined it!"

Everyone is welcome: please do join us!

Meanwhile, we wish you a Very Happy New Year.



## QUIET SPACE

---

*Jill Winter & Gill Guilford*

Christmas and New Year have been enjoyed, but are now over. Ahead lies 2026 with lots of unknowns. Maybe you've made some New Year resolutions. If so I wonder if one of them might be to take more time to be quiet and try to be less busy. Quiet Space may be just what you are looking for.

We are a small group, though Christian we welcome anyone to join us. We usually average eight to ten folk, who meet just once a month to enjoy twenty minutes silence together. There is no pressure for anyone to do anything. The silent time is used by everyone in any way that is comfortable and helpful for them. It is totally individual, but those who come, however the time has been used, say they find it is time well spent and that silence together is very meaningful.

For those who would like some company first, we meet at ten o'clock for coffee and biscuits, others come just for the silence. At half past ten a candle is lit in the middle of our circle of chairs, then a short poem or other piece of writing is read out and everyone settles for the twenty minute silence. At the end some people leave immediately, wanting to savour the feeling of peace that usually surrounds us as we finish, while others choose to stay on for a few minutes more.

If you would like to give it a try you are assured of a very warm welcome.

**Where** - Tom Hauley Room **When** - Second Wednesday of the month

**Time** - 10am for refreshments, 10.30am prompt for silence

Contacts - Jill Winter 01926 612585 or 07941 872383 / Gill Guilford 01926 614206 or 07856 764814



## HARBURY LOCAL MARKET

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*Karena, Mandy, Jane & Steve - The HLM Team*

Happy New Year Everyone from Harbury Local Market.

We would like to thank you all for coming along to the markets held this year and the eight, yes, eight years, before!

With your help, we have raised on average £400 per market for local charities and groups in and around the area. Without you, the markets would not work! All monies raised go to the supported charity of the day. We have support from Harbury Parish Council who pay for the hall to hold the market and the leaflets we will be posting in/around the market soon.

Hopefully you all will continue to attend and enjoy the market, raffle and the bacon butties that all the charities and groups provide.

'Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth, ' 1 john3:18

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*Some of the groups who have raised money at the markets this year.*

Next year, there is a slight change as we have realised that some markets do not work as well due to the dates, so look out for the new dates - come along and support where you can.

Do let friends and family know about the markets and bring new faces along when you can!

All the best for 2026!



## **A SCHOOL TRIP TO REMEMBER!**

*Nigel Chapman*

When I was working at Harbury School we usually took the top class away for a week each year to a hostel or similar. Each evening before bed time I would read or tell silly stories and this is one of them. Anyone who was on that trip will vividly remember this one!

At the beginning of the week, Mr Chapman pointed out a clearing in the wood where a charcoal burner had once lived. He told us that something horrible had happened and that the story was too awful to tell us .... Perhaps he might at the end of the week. We pestered him all week to tell us, but he left the story till the last night. We had changed into our pyjamas, and had settled on the floor for the usual funny stories. The room was quiet as he opened his book and started this story...

### **The ghost of Badby Wood**

Late in the 19th century there used to be a charcoal burner in the forest nearby. He had gone into seclusion there after a terrible accident had left him with a severe limp, lopsided face, gnarled hands and so on. He was hideously disfigured.

However he was very friendly towards all who bought charcoal off him, but was avoided because some said he possessed strange powers.

Children avoided his part of the wood. They preferred to play near the village. But when they DID meet him, they called him names, threw things at him and were generally very cruel and unkind.

One day a group of children, boys AND girls, decided they would have some fun. They had found a man-trap. They thought it would be fun to set it near the charcoal burner's hut. They had no thought that the poor man might get caught in it, perhaps dying a horrible agonising death. Anyway the children checked the trap regularly, until one day it had disappeared.

The charcoal burner was found weeks later after a search of the woods. His body was horribly twisted, his leg almost severed.

The children attended his funeral, alongside their parents, but didn't tell anyone of their involvement in his death. But as the coffin was carried past them, the lid opened and a twisted finger pointed at each and every one of them, one by one. The children were terror stricken.

After the funeral all was quiet for a few days, but then the revenge started. The pattern was the same for all the children involved. Not long after bed-time, a gentle tapping would start at the window. At first they got up to see, but always there was nothing there. The next night it would be louder, then louder, until the children felt themselves going out of their minds with fear. In the mornings they would find scrape marks on the ground outside the window, as if something metal had been dragged across the garden – the man-trap. One by one they were forced to leave the village, to escape this terrifying ordeal. Once all the children involved had been driven out, the tapping stopped.

However, about 50 years ago it started again with other children who had not been involved, so local people say. The old charcoal-burner was taking it out on ANY children at all ..... and then just as abruptly ceased again.

The terrifying knocking hadn't been known for several years though, until now – there have been reports recently in the Forest Advertiser newspaper of the tapping starting again. Children in this part of the Forest have heard the story from their grandparents and old relatives, and are at the moment quite terrified that they might become the old charcoal-burner's next victims. You can understand now why you weren't told of this at the beginning of your stay at Holly Barn. Let's just hope we are lucky, and it doesn't happen here.

*(At this point Mr Chapman closed his book..... the signal to Mr Bones, who had been waiting outside, to tap on the window, except he didn't just tap, he suddenly hammered on the pane as hard as he could. – and we jumped in the air screamed and clutched each other in fear, before dissolving into great gales of relieved laughter as we realised the story was just that – all made up.)*

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