Harbury & Ladbroke News



FEBRUARY 2026



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2 Feb	F - R - G	F
9 Feb	F	F - R - G
16 Feb	F - R - W - G	F - W
23 Feb	F	F - R - G
2 March	F - R - G	F
9 March	F - W	F - R - W - 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

This magazine is available by subscription and delivered within Harbury, Deppers Bridge and Ladbroke. Telephone 07900 852236 for details.

HARBURY & LADBROKE News

Published monthly to reflect all aspects of local life

FEBRUARY 2026 No. 623

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Editorial Office
31 Binswood End
☎ 612155
✉ articles@hlnews.co.uk
Article drop off point:
Harbury Pharmacy,
High Street

Advertising Office
36 Manor Orchard
☎ 612687
✉ advertising@hlnews.co.uk

Distribution Manager
49 Mill Street
☎07900 852236
✉ distribution@hlnews.co.uk
Inserts by prior arrangement with the Distribution Manager

Andy Goss – Paulette Kavanagh – Peter McDonald – Sue and David Turner
Daralyn Warren – Jackie West

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The Editors reserve the right to amend articles as they see fit.

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Cover Photo: Old New Inn Cottage taken from the Green by Sue Dronfield

EDITORIAL

A round up of local news

The very cold weather and light snow at the beginning of January seems to have abated for now. It remains to be seen as to whether we get any more of the white stuff during the remainder of the winter! Bill Timson's photo below taken from Vicarage Lane shows the Wolf Moon – the first full moon of the year, which peaked on 3rd January. As we move into February there are signs that the daylight hours are just beginning to lengthen. We can only look forward to the start of spring.



Ed Wilson, from the Harbury Society, this month highlights some of the issues on the plan to build two new housing developments and the effect this could have on Harbury. See the article on page 18.

If you are interested in helping with Ladbroke's Heritage project do contact Jackie West see page 13. It is not too late to give your views on the Millennium Green's Trim Trail plans, so do get in touch via their website www.ladbrokevillagehall.org.uk if you would like the opportunity to make comments.

Our condolences go to the family of John Palin.



HARBURY DIARY

For local events

FEBRUARY

Sun 1 3rd SUNDAY BEFORE LENT
Said Holy Communion, 9.00am, Church
Muddy Church, 3.00 - 4.30pm, start in Tom Hauley Room
Youth Group, 5.00 - 7.00pm, Tom Hauley Room
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall
RCCG Holy Ghost Zone Royal Leamington Spa Sunday Service, 10.30am - 1.30pm 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 Party, 2.30pm, 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
Storytelling, with award winning performer Jason Buck - fairy tales with the juicy bits left in, doors open 7.30 for 8.00 - 9.00pm, Village Library

Sat 7 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Harbury WI
Warwickshire Crime Prevention Team, from 10.00am, Village Library
The Carl Lewis Foundation - Charity Fundraiser - Games and Activities (carllewisfoundation.org), 10.00am - 3.30pm, Village Hall

Sun 8 2ND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT
Sung Holy Communion, 10.30am, Church
Messy Church, 3.00 - 5.00pm, Tom Hauley Room
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall
RCCG Holy Ghost Zone Royal Leamington Spa Sunday Service, 10.30am - 1.30pm Village Hall

Mon 9 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall

Tue 10 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall

Wed 11 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - Hatton (4½ miles)
Quiet Space, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room
Knitwits and Pleasant Pastimes, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library
Spellbound Dance Classes, 4.30 - 7.00pm, Village Hall
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 12 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
Harbury WI, Member's Night (no speaker), 7.30 for 7.45pm, Tom Hauley Room

Fri 13 Bread and Broth Lunch, 12.30 - 1.30pm, Tom Hauley Room

Sat 14 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Hereburgh Morris
Repair Café, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library

Sun 15 SUNDAY BEFORE LENT
Said Communion, 8.00am, Church
All Age Service, 10.30am, Church
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall
RCCG Holy Ghost Zone Royal Leamington Spa Sunday Service, 10.30am - 1.30pm
Village Hall
Harbury Heritage Centre open, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Harbury School (Park Lane entrance)

Mon 16 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall
New! Tom's Teas. Free Tea, Cake, Coffee, Friendship and Chat, 2.30 - 4.00pm, Tom
Hauley Room

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Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall
Harbury Theatre Group's Social Meeting, 7.30pm, The Shakespeare Inn

Tue 17 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall
Harbury Society, a presentation by Steve Dean on the Staffordshire Hoard, doors
open 7.30, presentation at 7.45pm

Wed 18 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - Burton Dassett (4 miles)
Connections: A Carers' Support Group, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Tom Hauley Room
Tickets for Harbury WI Village Cinema to be purchased by today from Village
Library - film showing on Sat 21st February
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 19 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

Sat 21 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Harbury Society
Councillors Corner, 11.00am - 12 noon, Village Hall
Harbury Local Market, 10.00am - 12.30pm, Village Hall
Harbury WI Village Cinema presents, "Downton Abbey - the Grand Finale" doors
open 6.15pm, film begins 7.00pm, Village Hall

Sun 22 FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT
Sung Holy Communion, 10.30am, Church
Informal Evening Service, 7.00pm, Tom Hauley Room

Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall
RCCG Holy Ghost Zone Royal Leamington Spa Sunday Service, 10.30am - 1.30pm Village Hall

Mon 23 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall

Tue 24 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall
Ponder in the Pub "So where do we go next?" 6.45 for 7.00pm, the Crown Inn

Wed 25 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - Kineton (3½ miles)
Knitwits and Pleasant Pastimes, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library
Spellbound Dance Classes, 4.30 - 7.00pm, Village Hall
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 26 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951
Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room
Harbury Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm, Village Hall

Sat 28 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of RBL Galanos

MARCH

Sun 1 SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
Said Communion, 9.00am, Church
Muddy Church, 3.00 - 4.30pm, start in Tom Hauley Room
Youth Group, 5.00 - 7.00pm, Tom Hauley Room
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall
RCCG Holy Ghost Zone Royal Leamington Spa Sunday Service, 10.30am - 1.30pm 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 - Welcombe Hills (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
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 Southam United Bowling Club
WI Soup and Pudding lunch in aid of the Esther Project, 1.00pm, Tom Hauley Room

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

FROM THE RECTOR

Rev Andy Batchelor
The Rectory, Vicarage Lane, Harbury ☎01926 714295 ✉ rev.andyb@gmail.com

In the Church calendar, February is often a transition month. We move from the bright, outward-looking season of Epiphany that celebrates Jesus as the light for all nations, toward the quiet, inward-looking season of Lent. For 2026, Ash Wednesday is set for the 18th of February, and with it the start of Lent. Once more we hear the invitation to "come into the desert" with Jesus for forty days. Lent is not about being "miserable"; it is about decluttering. Just as we might start thinking about "spring cleaning" our homes, Lent is a time to spring-clean our hearts. It asks us: What has become more important to me than God? What habits are keeping me from being the person I was made to be? During February we often hear the story of the Transfiguration. Jesus takes his closest friends up a mountain, and for a few moments, his hidden glory breaks through. His clothes become dazzling white, and the voice of the Father confirms: "This is my Son... listen to him." This mountain-top moment is given to the disciples to sustain them for the difficult journey ahead to Jerusalem and the Cross. February can offer us similar revelations. Perhaps it's the wonder of creation seen in the beauty of snowfall or a marvellous sunset. Maybe simply a word of encouragement from a friend, or a special encounter. So if February feels long and cold this year, remember that the seeds are already stirring beneath the frost. Growth often happens in the dark. This month we can trust that the God who showed His glory at the Transfiguration of Jesus is the same God who walks with us through the winter mists.



FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

Andy & Bez



January saw groups like Messy Church and Ponder in the Pub restart. A new group – Tom's Teas – began and we welcomed new people to the family service.

In February we will be continuing these groups and we hope you will be able to join us for one or more.

We have the pleasure of sharing some of the pictures from the first Messy Church below. This group is activity-based with craft, games, songs and a tasty meal together for the children. It's messy because the activities are varied and exciting so getting your hands dirty and is part of the fun and a child-appropriate way to learn about Jesus.









Come and find out more!

Any questions or you would like a copy of the new welcome pack which contains further information on the groups at church, please email warden@allsaintsharbury.org

For bookings for the Tom Hauley Room contact Moira at thr@allsaintsharbury.org

MOTHERS' UNION

Gillian Hare

Apologies for the postponement of our New Year party; it seemed safer than it turning into a skating party! However, all is not lost. Weather permitting, it is rescheduled for 4th February, 2.30pm in the Ton Hauley Room. We are really hoping members will bring a guest as well as our usual small bran tub gift.

After that, on Friday 13th, we are inviting everyone to a bread and broth lunch - see separate advert. Again, please bring your friends; as well as a social time this is a necessary fund raiser. Our reserves for meeting local hardship needs are somewhat depleted as well as enabling us to support the ongoing commitments of MU on the wider stage.

After that will be our monthly meeting on 4th March when Jenny, wife of churchwarden Andy Dean, will speak about "Let us flourish" a project for teenage girls who are struggling. The meeting starts at 2pm with a communion service; all are welcome to this interesting talk.



LADBROKE NEWS & DIARY

FEBRUARY

Sun 1 CANDLEMAS
Family Communion, 10.30am followed by refreshments

Tue 3 Photography Club, 7.30pm, KINETON Village Hall

Thu 5 WI, 7.30pm, Village Hall

Sun 8 2nd SUNDAY BEFORE LENT
Holy Communion, 9.00am

Tue 10 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall

Sun 15 SUNDAY BEFORE LENT
Holy Communion 9.00am (BCP)

Mon 16 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

Tue 17 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall

Wed 18 Ash Wednesday Service, 7.00pm

Sun 22 LENT 1
Holy Communion, 9.00am

Tue 24 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall

MARCH

Sun 1 LENT 2
Family Communion, 10.30am followed by refreshments

Tue 3 Photography Club, 7.30pm, 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

Christmas has been and gone, the days are getting longer again and we are already looking forward to spring and to Easter. Lent begins on 18th February, and we shall be holding a special Ash Wednesday service on 18th February.

Last year we began to have an occasional Evensong service and several have asked us if we are going to do more. The answer is yes, and our next one is planned for Sunday 8th March at 6.00pm. The following week (15th March) will be Mothering Sunday, so please put these dates in your diary.

Forthcoming Services:

Sunday 1st February	10.30am	Family Communion
Sunday 8th February	9.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 15th February	9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Wednesday 18th February	7.00pm	Ash Wednesday Service
Sunday 22nd February	9.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 1st March	10.30am	Family Communion
Sunday 8th March	6.00pm	Evensong (no morning service)
Sunday 15th March	9.00am *	Mothering Sunday Family Service

** Time to be confirmed*

www.ladbrokechurch.org.uk **ladbrokechurch@gmail.com**



LADBROKE PARISH COUNCIL

Jackie West – H&L News Correspondent

Official minutes can be viewed on the noticeboard by The Bell Inn and the parish council's website - www.ladbroke-pc.gov.uk

HS2: As at the November meeting, a number of EKFB and HS2 staff were present. They brought hard copies of maps showing the text and exact locations proposed for traffic signs during the next Kineton Road closure, which is expected to be for two or three days in April. The comments and suggestions made will be considered and there will be a series of face to face meetings about traffic management between WCC and EKFB/HS2 to identify and resolve issues. EKFB are having direct discussions with Southam Agricultural Services about access for their suppliers and customers during Kineton Road closures. Note the **anticipated dates for the main road closures have slipped and may well change again**, currently it is thought Kineton Road will start in July and the A423 after that has been completed.

Last year there was a record amount of earth moving achieved (actually above target) and huge amounts are expected again in 2026, together with completing the re-routing of roads over three bridges: Kineton Road, A423 and Windmill Hill, by the end of the year. The current CEO of HS2, Mark Wild, appointed a year ago, did a detailed review and is leading a re-set in how they are working within HS2 and with contractors to be more productive, contain costs and meet (new) target dates. Part of the track is defined as a test area for the whole; this test area is now 50 miles long and includes our section which makes it high priority for EKFB completion and hand over to "Rail Systems" in 2028.

WCC: An HS2 Road Safety budget has been released. Our councillors asked Cllr Kettle to request traffic cushions (AKA speed bumps, as in Bishops Itchington) for Ladbroke. Temporary traffic monitoring using tubes across the road, which can count vehicles and measure their speed, was recommended to provide details of how many and the % of vehicles speeding at the measured points. In one village, I think it was Ufton, 60% were going above 30mph!

The budget is being worked on. WCC get a grant for SEND Education but it is currently underfunded by £6m per month! One of the main issues is home to school transport, apparently there can only be one SEND child per car. Central government committed to repay SEND overspends but it isn't happening yet and even defining the process of how they will repay is several years away. In the meantime council reserves have been used up, WCC is having to borrow and the interest on borrowing has to be funded by council tax payers!

SDC: The South Warwickshire Local Plan consultation had over 22500 comments which are being reviewed. The sheer quantity of these together with changes to the National Policy Framework has created more work than expected, so while updating the plan is still on track, all slack in the schedule has now been used. Following recalculation of the five year housing land supply there has been an increase in speculative planning applications. Severn Trent have confirmed that a single sewage works is used by Southam, Ladbroke, Stockton, Harbury, Bishops and Long Itchington and this will struggle to cope with more demand; more infrastructure is needed to cope with new developments, such as at Bishops Hill.

There is a consultation until 2nd February on a proposal to increase council tax on second homes across the District. SDC have organised a business conference for SMEs on the morning of 3rd February, see **bit.ly/sdcbizconference26**

Dog liaison officers have confirmed the troublesome dog on the Windmill Lane site has been seized and will not be returning but there is no other news regarding the site.

Budget & Auditing: The budget was agreed and the precept will be the same as last year. The auditor for the next two years was agreed and will cost the set fee, as the parish council has less than £25,000

Planning: Since the last meeting there were only planning applications concerning tree works in Bridge Lane, with that at Orchard Bungalow approved and one submitted for Maroondah's Orchard, though this was not mentioned at the meeting.

Defibrillator: The new defibrillator is in position on the wall of the village hall and, as before, you need to call 999 to get the code to open the outer box and get emergency services on their way. Cllr Neal will send an enews to see if anyone wants the old defibrillator, which needs a new battery as well as ongoing maintenance.

Next Meeting: Probably Tuesday 24th March (as unlikely to be quorate on the 11th).

LADBROKE & DEPPERS BRIDGE WI

Carol Lane



Our January meeting was held at Southam Bowls club on the 15th - a week later than usual owing to the storm. We were very pleased to welcome new member, Jeanette, who joined 16 other members and a visitor from Australia. We took turns with four rounds of 'floor curling' each. It is called floor curling because it is not played on ice. Three members of Southam Bowls club were on hand to help score, return the 'stones' and to give some guidance, but it was mostly trial and error for those of us who were not practised. After our refreshments and more curling, Jean was declared the winner and presented with a bottle of bubbly. Heather is to be thanked for arranging such a fun evening and for making a delicious orange-drizzle tray bake!

There was no time for a formal business meeting but we had been instructed in advance to make individual decisions about this year's resolutions. The five proposed resolutions this year were: better access to public toilets; action on homelessness for women; increase number of volunteer visitors to children in care; improved access to green spaces and women's self-checking for cancer. Sue collected our choices and will send them to the Warwickshire Federation.

The next meeting is on 5th February when we will hear Jane Neary talk about her life with her therapy dog and the March meeting on the 5th will be Dr Heema Hargovan Kennedy showing us how to put on a sari. Both meetings will be in Ladbroke Village Hall and start at 7.30. All are welcome.

LADBROKE MATTERS

David Wright

Our Website

Our website **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

By the time you read this you will hopefully have enjoyed our first supper and film night of 2026. It is wonderful to see you all and we look forward to seeing you again at the next one. We would like to thank everyone who helps with the evening, especially our amazing chefs who always manage to serve up delicious food.

The Millennium Green Play Area

As I mentioned last month, phase two of the upgrade to the play area will commence later this year. This will involve replacing the trim trail and the large swings, both of which are suffering from rotting timber. Regretfully we had a disappointing response to our questionnaire seeking views on how we proceed with the trim trail. However, there is still time to make your suggestions via our website.

Upcoming Events

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 our website if you have any other ideas, or which of our events you especially enjoy.

Hall Bookings

Our hall has a small kitchen, and a stage area with sound and lighting. We 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**.

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 December 2025

£50	Elaine Taylor	£25	Maggie Watts
£50	Richard Walker	£10	Pam Collins
£25	Sarah Tierney	£10	Mandy Herriott
£25	Nic Timms	£10	Kate Liverton

Margaret Bosworth



LADBROKE & CHESTERTON GENERAL NEWS



LADBROKE HERITAGE

Jackie West

Thank you to the people who have already expressed interest in discovering and sharing our heritage this year. Hopefully there will be a few more this month, so we can rebuild momentum and celebrate in style the 150th anniversary of Ladbroke School opening and the restoration of Ladbroke Church by Sir George Gilbert Scott. Please have a word in person, call 810331 or email me on ladbrokechurch89@btinternet.com if you have ideas and/or time to get involved.

Heritage isn't just about history and things in the past, our **natural heritage** is around us every day. I'm sure some readers will have taken part in the RSPB's Big Garden Bird Watch in

late January. We study the birds in our garden for the requisite hour and are usually a bit disappointed as some of our favourites or occasional visitors fail to put in an appearance during the time we are counting them. There always seem to be fewer birds around than usual that weekend - are our neighbours filling up their bird feeders to encourage them into their own gardens? No matter, we enjoy watching our feathered friends all year and not just in our garden. The discover/nature page on our website **ladbrokeheritage.org.uk** has a list of birds seen across the parish. The birds of prey have increased in the last few years as the local buzzards, kestrels and sparrowhawks have been joined by red kites and a peregrine (often seen perched high on the church spire). Another bird that is spreading across the country and has now arrived in Ladbroke is the white egret.



Due to the icy weather, the January meeting of the **Heritage and Friendship Group** happened a week later than usual. Numbers were down but conversation on the topic "weekends when I was young" was at full strength. Geoff who grew up in Somerset recalled many trips to the seaside with his parents and grandfather, coming home happy and covered in sand! Those with Warwickshire upbringings remembered helping farmers at harvest time for a shilling an hour (or maybe less). Times were so different then - it was normal to have no car but children had more freedom and independence. Several people had memories of going out all day either alone or with friends of similar years when they were only seven years old. Sheila told us that Saturdays meant taking sandwiches and flask of tea through the cement quarries to wherever Dad was working, also lighting the boiler full of tiny potatoes to be cooked and fed to the pigs.



For Alan, Saturdays meant travelling alone on two buses through Coventry to Grandad's house. Slighter older at the time Don, used to join his friends Peter Griffin, "Spot" (Colin) Bicknell, Michael Goodman and Jim Long, racing around the fields near Deppers Bridge on an old motorbike and in an old ambulance and also going to the house of the organist to listen to his 78s such as Bach's Toccata and Fugue which introduced him to serious music. In those days it was not easy to advise of a change of plan if you were meeting anyone as most homes did not have phones, and of course this was many decades before there were mobiles, but Don remembered they did have a house phone and its number, Harbury 18. Our February meeting will be on the topic "Favourite Places" though we are still deciding which day will work best for the majority. If you are interested in some friendly chat over a cuppa and cake do join us. For more information, including confirmation of the date, please call Carol on 814715.


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CHESTERTON NEWS

Stephanie Ainslie

St. Giles Candlelit Carol Service

Hosting any event brings with it a familiar set of anxieties: will there be enough refreshments, will the music strike the right note, has everyone been invited, does the room look pretty and will anyone actually turn up?

These were just some of the questions our small team at St Giles' were experiencing prior to December's Candlelit Carol Service.

The scale of the task was considerable. There were over one hundred candles to light, more than two hundred cups of mulled wine and mince pies to make, the church to decorate, musicians, singers and bell ringers to organise and possibly a few extra chairs to put out.. just in case... Then came the moment of truth … to see how many people would join us for our sparkly, traditional carol service.

And turn up you did! Probably the most we have seen at St Giles'. The pews quickly filled, followed by the chairs at the back and standing room around the font. You perched on the steps around the organ, squeezed into the choir stalls in the chancel and overflowed into the porch!

We can't thank you all enough for venturing out in the dark and helping to make it such a special and successful evening. It was a joy to see the church so full and hear all the lovely hymns ringing out, superbly lead by the Harbury Folk Club Choir. Special thanks also to our fabulous violinists and organist, the decorating team and everyone who was instrumental in creating this wonderful event.

With barely a breathing space, we soon woke to a beautiful, bright, Christmas morning. The sunshine flooded through the stained-glass windows at St Giles' as the Rev Ann Mulley led a delightful Christmas Day service. We were lucky enough to have some members of a local choir to sing the harmony to our carols and we all gathered for a glass of warm mulled wine to wish one another a merry Christmas before dashing home to check on the turkey.

Our February service at St Giles' is Sunday 15th at 10.30am with coffee and biscuits after. Hope you can join us then!



HARBURY SOCIETY

Ed Wilson

This is one of those months when our activities are out of sync with the H&L News publication date. Only by one day as our New Year Feast was on the 20th January and was a sellout. We are very lucky to have such an enthusiastic membership.

Let me wish you all a very Happy New Year. Our programme for 2026 is shown below. Thanks to Sue Turner, we know that these talks/outings will prove very popular. Last year, due to consistently high numbers, we considered changing the venue. However, the membership feedback didn't support this. We will therefore remain at the Tom Hauley Room but with some additional management of numbers.

Outside of our social and meeting activities we have been responding to planning issues.

Planning is the issue I wanted to focus on in this article. The village is surrounded by agricultural land which gives us a privileged sense of wellbeing and appreciation of farming. It feeds us! Most of us hugely welcome having a dairy farm at the centre of the village. The walking opportunities are fantastic with several trails captured in our own 'Cross the Stile' publication (available at Harbury Library or on our website).

We are all aware of the pressures for new housing and indeed solar panel developments which will, and are already, significantly changing our rural landscape. Due to the government's much more central direction we have found it more difficult to make an impact on planning applications; particularly on the smaller infill developments. Fortunately, the Parish Council provides very good comments on housing and almost always reflects our views. We still comment on these when we feel it is worthwhile and there are important issues identified.

The PC has a supportive approach to solar panel farms which might not always see us in agreement.

However, the major planning challenges are the big housing development applications which are emerging. These will surely have a significant impact on the nature and infrastructure of Harbury.

First up has been the Mill Street (Co-op and adjoining field) outline planning application. It involves the building of 38 dwellings exiting onto our busiest road. The Society has objected to this application having set up a subcommittee to review it and obtained expert support from members on the archaeological and biodiversity aspects of the plans. I can give a short taste of our comments here.



The Mill Street proposed development layout

Detrimental effects on the village as a whole

The important views from Mill Street to the North that enhance the village and its countryside ambience will disappear. This is despite claims to the contrary by the applicants who intend to block the views with the houses pushing the 'protected' significant views behind houses on their proposed estate.

Archaeological and Heritage assessment

The Harbury Society agree that the proposals will impact non-designated elements of the local historic environment but feel the assessment does not give appropriate weight to the local significance of upstanding medieval ridge and furrow earthworks on the site.

Biodiversity and Habitat

Of the two fields in the proposal, the western one (colloquially known to some as the Co-op field) is recognised as 'semi-improved grassland' within the Warwickshire LNRS designation.

It is one of the very few such areas in and around the village that is in contrast to the majority of grassland areas around us, which have been improved for grazing.

We have noticed that the number of comments from villagers was not as many as we might expect, although those submitted are of high quality. This may be because of lack of awareness. One of the things that impacts on the Planning Officers consideration is local and specifically comments from close neighbours. If you are interested, the link to the Planning Portal is as follows: *Stratford-on-Avon District Council; Planning & Building and then E-planning.* There is also an opportunity to 'Sign up for Planning Alerts'. It is quite easy to use and the specific planning application for Mill Street is 25/02712/OUT. There are tabs for key dates and documents. The latter shows the layout plan and the comments made by villagers and others. It is now closed for comments.

The portal will also be useful in considering the planning issues for the much bigger application on Butt Lane for 150 houses. Undoubtedly this would have a fundamental impact on the village and would also significantly push out our village boundary.

Moving on to something completely different. Our committee has been strengthened by two very welcome Harbury stalwarts as they have come free from their other jobs. Malcolm Bloxham has already made an impact on the planning issues mentioned above and Jill Baker will join us when she has freed herself up from Biblios management and other issues.

We're incredibly pleased to welcome them to our small team.

Finally, I look forward to seeing anyone attending our talk on Tuesday 17th February.

Next month we should return to our regular, high quality, scribbler to prepare our article!



Bloor Homes proposed site layout in Butt Lane

Harbury Society Programme:

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

Saturday 21st February – Coffee Morning in the Tom Hauley Room.

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.

Thursday 21st May – A visit to the UK Vegetable Genebank, Wellesbourne.

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 or visit the website www.harburysociety.org

HARBURY WI

Mary Thompson

The Warwickshire Federation have decided to support The Esther Project during 2026. The project is a safe, women-only group based in Leamington, supporting women in Leamington, Warwick, Kenilworth and South Warwickshire who are facing Mental health Challenges, Domestic Abuse, Addiction, Homelessness and involvement in the criminal justice system.

Harbury WI have decided to support this charity and Gill recently held a coffee morning in her home which raised £243.50. Thanks to Gill and Geoff for their hospitality and to those members and others who were so generous in their support. We shall continue to have other money raising events for the project – the next being a Coffee morning in the Tom Hauley Room on Saturday 7th February. We shall also be organising a Soup and Pudding lunch in the Tom Hauley Room on Saturday 7th March at 1pm – everyone welcome.



At our meeting on 8th January about 25 members braved Storm Goretti to hear a fascinating talk by John and Simon about the Warwickshire Lowland Search and Rescue team. The organisation has links to the RNLI, Mountain Rescue, Coastguard Rescue and Cave Rescue teams. The volunteers come from all walks of life and work in Warwickshire and the West Midlands but have links with surrounding counties. The Warwickshire team was formed in 2013 and became fully operational in 2017. Volunteers are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The main headquarters are in Stoneleigh Park but they also use Ryton Police College as a base. They hold a recruitment event every year and take on about 20 trainees. It takes about

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a year to become a Licensed Search Technician and they have to retrain every year. After 12 months experience, they can train to be a team leader. They also train for specific roles such as Drone pilots, Bank Searchers, Dog handlers, First Responder Emergency Care and Kayak Searchers. The team have to be called out by the Emergency Services to search for missing people whether they simply got lost, meet with an accident or wandered off, if they suffer from dementia. The Police have to decide whether there is a risk to life before they call out the service. This is a very sophisticated operation, using modern technology from a specially adapted van. CCTV and doorbell cameras can be a big help. The teams have a minimum of three to five volunteers but can be 15 to 20.



The organisation has no statutory funding and they have to fund their headquarters, vehicles, dog, boats etc, Each volunteer has to pay an annual subscription and they rely on Lottery funding, grants, donations etc. John told us that volunteers spend 4,000 hours a year fund raising – marshalling events, giving talks, shaking tins outside supermarkets etc. They actively look for sponsors and one garage in Warwick services their vehicles free of charge. The organisation recently received the King's Award for Voluntary Service. This was a brilliant talk and we were happy to donate to the organisation. For more information email at volunteering@warksar.org.uk

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12th February which will be our annual Members night. A social evening with activities provided by our members.

If you are passing the Library during February you will probably see some 'Show the Love' green hearts on the bush for WI coalition month - a link to Climate Change.

The next Cinema will be held in the Village Hall on Saturday 21st February when the film will be "Downton Abbey; The Grand Finale" (2025) starring Michelle Dockery, Hugh Bonneville and Laura Carmichael. Tickets should be purchased from the village library by Wednesday 18th February. In response to some of our regulars, we are going to trial a slightly different format for the February and March cinemas. Doors open at 6.15, fish and chips served at 7pm followed by the film. There will be an interval during the film to enable the audience to replenish their drinks from the bar and purchase ice cream.

HARBURY THEATRE GROUP

Celia Stockdale

Well, following the great success of our pantomime, 'Dick Whittington', we find ourselves in a rather damp January, but the memories are still vibrant though, and we thank all of our actors, back stage support team, artists, Producer, Front of House Volunteers, musical Director, our new Choreographer and last but not least, our Director Ali Hodge. What a well supported event by you, our audience. Once again, a big thank you to everyone who came to watch – we couldn't perform it without your support!

Our thoughts now turn to upcoming events, including a social evening at The Shakespeare pub on 16th February and we also plan to enter a team into the village Carnival games in June. So, as usual, if anyone is interested in what we do and would like to meet us, join us on 16th February or contact us at harburytheatregroup@gmail.com. We would love to hear from you.

We plan a Production in May this year, 14th 15th and 16th May, so watch this space for more details and don't forget to check our website harburytheatre group.com.

See you all soon!



FOLK CLUB

Ian Hartland

The 468th edition of Harbury Folk Club took place on New Year's Day 2026, giving rise to speculation that the room might be half-empty after the inevitable previous evening's celebrations. We need not have worried as we had a sufficiency of performers and audience, despite it being a cold and wet night.

I kicked off proceedings with "The End Of The Pier Show" and a traditional Irish song, "As I Roved Out". Pete and Liz followed with Brandywine Bridge's "English Meadow" and "The Wassail Song". Bob Clucas is a big fan of Paul Simon and sang his "Flowers Never Bend" and then sang a lovely self-penned song "Faith Full". Don took to the stage next with a tribute to the late Chris Rea with his "Road To Hell" and then gave us the seasonal "In The Bleak Midwinter" which he cleverly interspersed with snatches of "Here Comes The Sun". Richard then sang Graham Miles' "When The Snows of Winter Fall" and "Plaisir D'Amour" to test our long-forgotten school French lessons. Pete Grassby was up next and sang "I'll Love Thee" by Robert Burns and then the sea shanty "Salonika". The first half was brought effortlessly to a close by Peter McDonald, who sang "Red Corvette", a humorous song by John McCutcheon, and then Allan Richardson's "The Friend".

The second half opened with the Harbury Folk Club Choir singing the two songs they had performed in church on Christmas Eve, "Diadem" and 'Hush, Hear The Angels Sing". Keith Donnelly is an ever-welcome performer at the club and gave us "The Banshees' Scream" and followed it with "The Teddy Bears' Witchcraft Picnic", an hilarious re-working of the familiar children's song, though definitely not suitable for under-11s! Pete G completed his contribution with the popular "The Higgler" and was followed by Pete Bones with the Kipper Family's "Northrepps Twelfth Night Song". Bob then sang the wistful "Ballad From An Upstairs Window". Don gave us "All Things Are Quite Silent", a song about the dreaded Press Gangs. Richard sang an old favourite, Jeremy Taylor's "Red Velvet Steering Wheel Cover Driver". Peter Mc sang the uplifting "We'll Sing Hallelujah". I closed the evening with a song I had written back in 1977, "I Just Wanted To Share Some Memories".

At the end of the evening we had indeed all made some fine memories to carry forward into 2026. Thanks, as ever, go to all the performers and to the audience, without whom the club could not survive.

The raffle raised a very impressive £60.00 in aid of Cancer Research UK. Next month's Folk Club will once more be in the Library, starting at 8.00pm, when Pete Bones will be hosting. His theme for the evening will be: Romance. All we ask in return for an evening of fine acoustic music is a £1.00 donation to cover the hire of the room. Bring your own drinks and glasses/ cups and enjoy the entertainment.

HARBURY HERITAGE CENTRE

Bill Timson

In December, David Turner wrote about the Flecknoe family - a familiar name in Harbury which you will see every time you walk past the former Wesleyan Chapel in Chapel Street. This month's article looks at an even more familiar Harbury name, **Sutcliffe**. Before I tell you what we have in our archives about the 'Sutcliffes', I would like to make a BIG REQUEST; does anyone have or know of where we can obtain a photograph of Doctor John Sutcliffe, known locally as 'Doctor Jack', to add to our collection? **If you do, please contact me**.

Dr Jack, who many older residents remember was the son of Doctor Jack senior who was born John Forrest Sutcliffe in Lowtown, Kildare, Ireland in 1873. Jack senior was one of 11 children (three of whom died very young). Both Jack's parents, George Frances and Mary, were born in Ireland. After his schooling in Kildare, John attended Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities and in 1894 he qualified as a doctor and surgeon. John moved to Harbury and initially lived at 10, Mill Street.



On the 3rd of April 1907 he married Minnie Moulang originally from Dublin. They moved to Victoria House in Farm Street (shown opposite) and he soon became the village GP alongside Dr James Pirie who practised at Ashton House on the east side of the village. Jack Junior was born on the 17th February 1908, followed by sisters, Aileen in 1909 and Olive in 1911. Records indicate he came from a family of high achievers; his sister, Aileen, was also a doctor who worked as a casualty doctor at Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital, and Olive became a doctor of midwifery.

The 1911 census shows John Forrest Sutcliffe Senior (aged 38), living in Farm St. His occupation is listed as Physician and Surgeon. Also listed on the census is his wife Minnie aged 28, John Forrest junior aged 3 and Aileen aged 1. They had a servant, Alice Daisy Padbury, a familiar Harbury surname, she is aged 16 and was born in the nearby hamlet of Kingston. The family was supported by local staff, including Daisy who worked for them for many years. On qualifying Jack junior 'helped' his father in the practice. The surgery was to the south side of Victoria House – it comprised a small waiting room and small doctor's room.

A document in the Heritage collection, (HM-0187) provides an interesting insight into a visit to the surgery in Farm Street:

'He did his round in the early days on a horse and cart (trap) until they (the Sutcliffes) became the first people to have a motor car in the village. When Dr. Jack's father died Jack took his place at the same surgery, although both his sisters were doctors. To see the doctor, you had to go up two steps. Then you had to go to the right of a screen. The seats you sat on were any old chairs, some all wood, some had leather seats, they were the kind you would find in a kitchen. The desk was covered in papers and there were pigeon holes in the walls full of papers as well. The walls were

lined with bottles. Dr. Jack would find out what was wrong with you then he would go behind a screen with a bottle you had to bring, then he would make his own medicine. For a child it would be raspberry flavoured but for an adult it would be white or black.

Even though he was a doctor, Dr. Jack smoked cigarettes, about 40 a day, his father before him had smoked a pipe. Doctor Jack practised for 52 years only leaving to serve in the Army in World War II, when his sister Olive took over his work'.

A presentation was made to Jack and his wife in the Village Hall when he retired in 1969. After retirement, the Sutcliffes returned to Ireland for a short time. Later they moved to Sudbury in Suffolk. Jack passed away there in September 1985. Sadly, three weeks later his wife too passed away.

Jack senior died in Warneford Hospital, Leamington Spa on 27th March 1943. He is buried in Bishop's Itchington Cemetery alongside him lies Minnie who died in 1954.

A new surgery was built at the entrance to 'Sutcliffe Pastures', the name given to a new housing development built in the 1960s. The increase in the population of Harbury during the late 1960s meant that the small surgery was inadequate; the building, a bungalow, remains as a private dwelling on the corner of Farm Street and Sutcliffe Drive today. A new and much bigger surgery was built in Mill Street which still serves the public today.

As mentioned previously, Dr. Sutcliffe was the quintessential village GP. His death (and that of his father before him) marked the end of an era of 'traditional' family medicine in Harbury. The naming of **Sutcliffe Drive** serves as a permanent memorial to the family's service.



Daisy Padbury, while not a 'public figure' in the traditional sense, her death was noted in local lore as she was a fixture of the Sutcliffe household and the village's social memory for decades.

Local Harbury man, Les Sollis told me that his mother was housekeeper for Dr Jack at one time and that she was paid £1 a week which was of course, a tidy sum of money at the time.

Other News

The Heritage Centre is open to the public on Sunday 15th February 2 to 4pm.

We look forward to seeing you. Come and find out about the history of Harbury, browse our extensive collection of documents, photographs, maps etc in our award-winning Centre. Entry via the primary school gate in Park Lane.

Contact us via our website www.harburyheritage.org.uk

HARBURY PRE-SCHOOL

Staff and Committee

Welcome Back

It was lovely to welcome six new starters last week and also to see our existing children back at Pre-School. We have enjoyed listening to them share what they have been up to over the holidays.

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Snow!

Last week we were treated to a sprinkling of snow which was very exciting for the children and staff. It provided us with a host of learning opportunities. The children enjoyed making 'snow castles' using buckets and spades. They also tried mark making in the snow with brushes. We had filled the tuff tray with ice and hidden some treasures for the children to 'free' from the ice. The children loved breaking up the ice to reveal what was inside. The ice and snow prompted lots of discussion about the weather; why we get snow and what happens when snow and ice melt.









Inside, we had a winter scene on the tuff tray with different fabrics and materials to represent snow, ice and water. We also added some arctic animals. The children also made some winter collages. The indoor tray contained a white gloop using cornflour for the children to explore how the texture changes when the mixture is touched.

In the role play we had a home corner but added some winter clothing – coats, hats, scarfs and gloves for the children to practise putting on.

Story Time

One of our focuses this term is traditional tales. Our children love a story and the Pre-Schoolers visit the library once a week where one of the library volunteers reads them a story. They can then choose a book to look at during the library visit.

In Pre-School, we have been focussing on a few of our favourites – Stick Man and the Gruffalo. The children have been split into small groups for each story and have had the opportunity to choose which story they would like to hear on that particular day. It has been lovely hearing them join in with some of the rhyming words and comment on what they think might happen next!

If you would like further information, or to register a child for Harbury Pre-School, please e-mail enquiries@harburypre-school.org.uk text 07907 598461 or look at the web site 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

Dragon Eggs

Mysterious goings on in Y2 this last week…a parcel delivered with giant eggs, crisps packets, a map and a cryptic letter inside…the children were then able to spot lots of dragons around the school but curiously none of the adults could see them…



Coventry Cathedral

On Wednesday 14th January, Year 3 and 4 enjoyed an exciting and enriching wow day at Coventry Cathedral. In the morning, the children took part in a fascinating guided tour where they learned about the cathedral's history and explored key Christian beliefs, including salvation, incarnation and reconciliation. They also took time to reflect thoughtfully on our school values for this half term: **hope** and **collaboration**.



In the afternoon, the children showcased their creativity through art activities inspired by the cathedral. They studied the beautiful baptismal stained glass window by the font before creating their own artwork, and had great fun designing gargoyles using collage. It was a memorable day filled with learning, reflection and creativity.

Year 1 - A walk back in time

As part of their learning topic, 'My Island, Your Island', Year 1 embarked on a fantastic walk around Harbury. The children showed tremendous enthusiasm and curiosity, asking insightful questions throughout the journey. Their positive attitude made the experience truly memorable. A special thank you to the Harbury Heritage Centre for their invaluable support in making this outing a success!



Year 6 - Imperial War Museum

Year 6 visited the Imperial War Museum in London. Upon arriving at the museum, the children were greeted and signed in at the West Entrance before beginning their experience of the Second World War exhibition.

During the exhibition, the children were taken on a chronological journey from the start of the war to its conclusion. They explored a wide variety of historical sources and enjoyed many interactive exhibits along the way. The children were particularly intrigued by the Anderson and Morrison shelters, as well as the clothing, weaponry and all the original audios that were available.

Overall, the trip was an incredible experience and provided the children with the opportunity to see and hear many fascinating things that linked closely to our topic. A huge thank you to the amazing parents who supported us on the trip and to our incredible PTA, whose funding made this visit possible. We would not have been able to go without your generosity and support, and we are extremely grateful for the time you gave and fundraising you did to help enrich our learning.

HARBURY SCHOOL PTA

Alice Mellings

Fundraising

We are only just coming down from the excitement of Harbury School PTA's annual **school disco** which took place the last Friday in January. We had so much fun with our glow sticks, dancing the night away to a diverse play list, from K-pop to Taylor Swift!

I want to say a huge thank you to all the parents and teachers who helped at the school disco making it possible for the evening to go ahead.

We also want to thank Simon for being our DJ and Alice and Helen from The Shakespeare for looking after all the parents whilst they wait!!

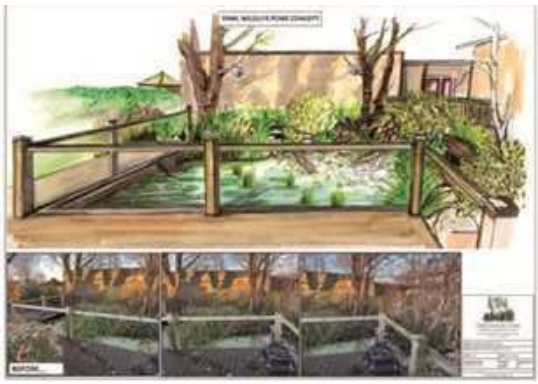
What we have contributed towards

If you have read this before you will note that coaches are a big part of what the PTA fund, we helped to pay for the **Y6 trip to London**, which cost a staggering **£875**, saving each parent **£30** each towards the cost of their school trip.

We have also been able to fun £250 for Lego therapy, which provides specialist therapy for children within the school.

Earthworms

The team have been working really hard on improving our school grounds, not just for the children but to also improve the wildlife diversity. There are exciting plans in place to improve the pond area. This project will provide a safe learning area for children to see biodiversity in action and develop and share knowledge about how ecosystems are sustained and developed, and their overall impact on our lives.



Furthermore, Amy, Amanda and the team have been working hard to arrange works to begin on the new forest school area, made doable thanks to all who entered Harbury School PTA Christmas Raffle.

Dates for the Diary

PTA meeting – 23rd February – 8pm on Zoom. Email harburypta@gmail.com for the link.

World Book Day – 5th March • Mother's Day Shop - 13th March • Easter Excitement - 27th March

We have some thought around the above events, but if anyone wants to share a new idea, or sponsor an event please contact the PTA on the above email.

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Membership Number/s (tbc after signing up)

I confirm I will set up a Standing Order with my bank for £24 annually (per number), or £2 a month (per number) into the Harbury PTA Lottery account, until I advise the bank otherwise which I can do at any time. Alternatively, please ask for a mandate if you would like us to set up on your behalf.

I **am/am not** happy for my name to be shared by school/Facebook/Harbury News if I win.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Harbury Bank Details for Standing Order:

Bank: CAF Bank* Type of Account: Business
Name on Account: Harbury School Parent Teacher Association

Sort Code No. 40-52-40 Account No. 00023239

Payment Reference: **Your name**

Numbers per month	1	2	3	4
Standing order on the FIRST of each month	£2	£4	£6	£8
OR Standing order annually	£24	£48	£72	£96

Please return sheet to the school office

** CAF doesn't offer the account checking service that other banks now offer online so your bank may say the details can't be confirmed.*

*** Thank you***

HARBURY LIBRARY & BIBLIO'S CAFE

Michael Luntley

February can be a dull and gloomy month. The weather's wintry and the light is dull. And spring seems a long way away. But not to worry. Your Community Library is a warm welcome space. Bilbio's cafe is serving coffee, tea and home baked cakes Wednesday through Saturday. And there are daffodils in the vases on the library tables. There are books everywhere to peruse and borrow, or maybe just scan through while tackling a thick slice of chocolate gateau and a warming flat white - two shots please. And then there's all the various groups, open to all - pleasant pastimes, board games, silent reading and, for younger folk, 'tunes & tales' the Home school group, Lego club. See the calendar on the Library website for all the activities available in a given week plus the varied evening events in the library.

Parler-vous francais? Non! Mais, c'est tres triste. Oh la la, mais j'ai une idee. Have you thought of trying the french conversation classes run in the Library by Kay Garvey? They run fortnightly on Wednesdays at 4.30pm for an hour. The first one in February is 11th of the month. Contact Kay - on kaymilverton@gmail.com - if you're interested.

And if poetry is your thing, don't forget we have the library's 'poems and a pint' hosted by the Crown Inn on the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm. The folder containing copies of all the poems read over the first three meetings in the autumn is available for your perusal in the library. A big blue lever-arch folder on the shelves as you enter the library - ask at desk if you can't see it. Over sixty poems - some familiar, some not and some brand spanking new - have been read so far and collected in the folder.

Our next evening event celebrating the spoken word is on Friday 6th February when we host local award-winning performer, Jason Buck. Jason will be telling original fairy tales... with all the juicy bits left in... See flyers in library and posters around the village for more details - tickets at the Library desk.

And on Saturday 7th February we welcome Warwickshire Crime Prevention who will have a stand in the library from 10.00am. Lots of useful info available.



GARDEN JOTTINGS

Christine Dakin from Bridge Nursery

An unwelcome start to the year was the discovery of a large tear in the shade tunnel cover after the snow overnight on 8/9th Jan. It's done exceptionally well though and hasn't been renewed for maybe 20 years. It might be possible to mend it temporarily to delay getting a whole new cover for a year or two.

Other things are showing signs of aging (including me!). The pergola leading into the garden has some rotten timber which needs replacing before the rambling rose causes the whole thing to collapse. The garden benches all need some wood preservative applying and Polly the panda needs some patching with resin.

As soon as the weather starts to perk up it will be time to cut down all the ornamental grasses. This takes quite a while because there are a lot of them. Interestingly, they are all shorter than normal after the dry summer last year. There is still time to plant bare-root trees and hedging,

a much easier and cheaper way of adding native plants and fruit trees than buying pot grown specimens. Broad beans can be sown in trays but keep them out of reach of mice and voles which will happily deprive you of a crop later in the year.

Bridge Nursery, Tomlow Road, Napton | www.bridge-nursery.co.uk

NATURE NOTES

Martin & Amanda Randall

Harburynature@gmail.com

During these cold and damp winter months, there is still plenty to look out for as we take our local walks. For example, molehills are often more noticeable in the fields. At this time of year, moles are especially active as they extend their tunnel systems in preparation for breeding. Wetter winter soils are easier to excavate, allowing more soil to be pushed to the surface. In addition, grass growth is minimal in late winter, so molehills stand out more clearly than they do later in the year, when vegetation quickly hides them.



Molehills (Martin Randall)

Moles are among the most misunderstood wild mammals in the United Kingdom, largely because they spend virtually their entire lives hidden beneath the soil. The species found across Britain is a small, compact insectivore superbly adapted to life underground.

The mole's body is perfectly shaped for digging. Its short, cylindrical form allows it to pass easily through narrow tunnels, while its dense, velvety, black fur lies flat in any direction, reducing resistance as it moves. The broad forepaws, which face outwards rather than forwards, act like powerful spades driven by strong shoulder muscles. Although commonly believed to be blind, moles do have eyes; their vision is poor but sufficient to sense changes in light. They rely on their keen sense of touch and smell to navigate and hunt underground.



European Mole (Beeli on Pixabay)

Moles feed mainly on earthworms, supplemented by insect larvae and other soil-dwelling invertebrates. Their high metabolism means they must eat frequently, sometimes consuming close to their own body weight each day. To support this lifestyle, moles create extensive tunnel systems. Shallow feeding tunnels just below the surface often appear as raised ridges in lawns and pasture, while deeper tunnels house nesting chambers and permanent routes. The soil removed during excavation is pushed upwards to form the familiar molehill.

Although their underground existence offers protection, moles do have natural predators. Birds of prey such as owls and buzzards may take moles when they surface or when tunnels collapse. Foxes, stoats, and domestic cats can catch young or wandering individuals, especially during the dispersal period in early summer. Once established underground, adult moles are relatively well protected from predation.



What's Happening...

FEBRUARY AT THE BELL INN, LADBROKE

VALENTINES CELEBRATIONS

Monday 9th to *Saturday 14th February*

Celebrate love all week long with our Valentine's week set menu, bring your loved one to enjoy the cosy, romantic atmosphere of The Bell.

SHROVE TUESDAY

Tuesday 17th Feb

Join us to celebrate Pancake Day with our 'Build Your Own Pancakes' specials.

LIVE MUSIC

Friday 27th February 11am to 4pm

Enjoy a fantastic evening of live music from the brilliant 'Rob Latimer'

AFTERNOON TEA EVENT

Saturday 28th Feb

Enjoy a tasty selection of sandwiches, cakes, and freshly brewed teas.

bellinn@freespiritpubs.co.uk

01926 811224

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

Harbury Village Cinema



Saturday February 21st

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 February 19th

Doors open
6.15
Film begins
7pm

Licensed Bar



Harbury
the WI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Moving Pictures

LIVE &LOCAL

Moles are active throughout the year and do not hibernate. Breeding occurs in early spring, with females producing a single litter of three to five young. These juveniles are forced to leave the maternal territory after a few weeks, as moles are solitary and highly territorial animals. This dispersal phase is the most dangerous time in a mole's life.


Old Man's Beard
(Martin Randall)

For centuries, mole catchers were a familiar presence in the British countryside. Farmers employed them to reduce mole numbers and limit damage to grazing land. Mole catching developed its own folklore: in some areas, mole catchers were believed to possess secret knowledge or special luck, while moles themselves were associated with superstition, symbolising blindness, secrecy, or hidden wisdom.

Despite their ecological benefits, moles can cause some problems. Molehills can make pasture unsuitable for grazing animals. Tunnels may create uneven ground that poses a risk to livestock and people. Nevertheless, moles contribute positively by aerating soil, improving drainage, and mixing organic matter into deeper layers. They also help regulate populations of soil invertebrates. Understanding both the benefits and the problems associated with moles allows for a more balanced view of this secretive but significant mammal in Britain's landscape.


Old Man's Beard Seed Head
(Martin Randall)

Away from the fields and into the woodlands, we have seen the seed heads of traveller's joy, also known as old man's beard, scrambling over hedges and trees. It is most easily recognised by its mass of silky, white seed heads that give the plant a shaggy, bearded appearance. Native to much of Europe, this wild species of Clematis thrives in sunny edges of woodland and along hedgerows, where it can quickly create dense cover.

This plant plays an important role in supporting wildlife. Its rapid growth provides shelter and nesting sites for small birds, while the thick tangles of stems offer protection to insects and other invertebrates. The flowers, which appear in summer, are rich in pollen and nectar and are visited by bees, hoverflies, and other pollinating insects. It is also the foodplant of a number of moth caterpillars.

As the flowers fade, they are replaced by distinctive feathery seeds that are valuable to a variety of animals. Many birds, such as finches, feed on these seeds during autumn and winter when other food sources are scarce. Small mammals may also take advantage of fallen seeds on the ground.

Beyond food, traveller's joy contributes to the structure and diversity of hedgerows and woodland margins. By linking trees and shrubs together, it creates wildlife corridors that help animals move safely through the landscape.

Last month we wrote about siskins and wondered whether we would see any of these bright yellow and black finches this winter. We haven't so far, but were pleased to hear from Dawn Teverson that she had recorded siskins (as well as 23 other bird species) using her 'Merlin' birdsong identification app at the Hall Lane allotments. Dawn and Sean have also told us about the greenfinch roost in their bay tree. As we have written previously, greenfinches are

in serious decline in the UK, so it is encouraging to hear that locally they are doing better. Their decline is due to a severe outbreak of a disease called trichomonosis, which is spread through contaminated food and water at feeding stations. You can help prevent the spread of this fatal disease by ensuring that you thoroughly clean your bird feeders every week. When you refill them, empty out the old food before adding fresh. Bird bath water should be changed daily. There is other helpful advice on keeping your garden birds healthy on the RSPB website. We can be contacted at Harburynature@gmail.com if you have other interesting local wildlife observations.



HARBURY GENERAL NEWS

HARBURY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATE

District Councillor Susan Ostrander (LibDem)
(susan4harbury@gmail.com or sue.ostrander@straford-dc.gov.uk)

Today, whilst delivering some leaflets in Deppers Bridge, I saw my first snow drops. Apparently, they had been out since early December! Nonetheless, they were a welcome sight, and I look forward to the gradual increase in colour and cheer provided by our late winter and early spring bulbs. This is one of the benefits of doing leaflet deliveries; you get to enjoy all the hard work done in other people's gardens (and gather a few ideas for my own)!

On to District Council business:

Budgets

So, this time of year brings work on budgets: both at County and District and for the County Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Stratford District Council Budget 2026/7 will be coming out for consultation towards the end of the month and, as always, the administration welcomes your views. It will be on the Stratford District Council website and I will circulate the link when this goes live.

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Warwickshire, Philip Seccombe, is inviting public feedback on how policing should be funded in 2026/27, following the Government's recent announcement on police funding.

This year's announcement from Government has provided only limited detail about how funding will be allocated to individual police forces. While Warwickshire is expected to receive a modest increase, the proposals assume that a significant proportion of the additional funding would come from local Council Tax, rather than national government. Around two-thirds of the increase is expected to be funded locally.

The Government has indicated that Police and Crime Commissioners can increase the police element of Council Tax by up to £15 per year for a Band D household, with higher or lower amounts applying to other bands. The PCC has said that not applying the full increase would reduce the ability to maintain and improve policing services in Warwickshire, both in the coming year and in future years.

If the full increase is applied, the proposed budget would allow continued improvements in areas residents often raise as priorities. These include faster response times, stronger investigations, better outcomes within the criminal justice system, and maintaining visible neighbourhood policing and patrols. The budget would also support investment in training, equipment, vehicles and digital systems, alongside efficiency savings aimed at protecting frontline services.

The PCC has acknowledged the pressure many households are facing with rising costs, but has said that, without greater national funding, asking local taxpayers to contribute more may be necessary to ensure Warwickshire Police has the resources it needs to keep communities safe.

Residents are encouraged to share their views before any final decisions are made. The budget will be considered by the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel on 2nd February, so the consultation is time limited.

You can take part by completing a short online survey at: **forms.office.com/e/vvDYS61NZs**.

The Stratford District Council Budget 2026/7 will be coming out for consultation towards the end of the month and, as always, the administration welcomes your views. It will be on the Stratford District Council website and I will circulate the link when this goes live.

South Warwickshire Local Plan – Why It Matters and Latest Update

The South Warwickshire Local Plan is one of the most important documents the District Council produces. It sets out where new homes, employment land and infrastructure should go, and where development should be limited, over the coming years. Decisions on planning applications must be made in line with the Local Plan, which is why it matters so much to our towns and villages. Alongside this work, the District Council is focusing on restoring its five-year housing land supply. In simple terms, this means being able to demonstrate that enough land is identified to meet housing needs. Recent changes by central government to the planning "goalposts" meant that the District's housing land supply fell sharply, from over 24 years to under three years. Restoring a robust five-year supply will give the Local Plan real weight in planning decisions and help reduce the risk of development being driven by speculative applications rather than by local priorities.

Earlier this year, residents were invited to comment on the South Warwickshire Local Plan as part of a public consultation which closed in March 2025. This consultation generated a very high level of interest, with over 22,600 responses received. All responses can be viewed online on the South Warwickshire Local Plan website: www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp/representations-preferred-options.cfm

The volume of responses is one of the reasons the timetable for producing the Plan has been revised. In December, the Cabinets of both Warwick and Stratford District Councils agreed to an updated timetable to allow sufficient time for the detailed work required to properly assess the comments received.

There have also been wider national factors affecting progress. Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2024, must be fully considered. Many councils across the country are in a similar position, working to submit their Local Plans by December 2026, when the planning system is expected to change. This has created increased demand for specialist planning expertise and additional pressure on resources, alongside the need to work closely with partners such as the County Council and the national highways authority.

Under the revised timetable, a first formal draft of the Plan is expected to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in June or July 2026, where it will be tested for whether it is considered "sound". After this stage, and once responses have been reviewed, the Plan is due to be submitted for independent examination later in 2026, ahead of the final deadline of 12th December 2026.

Although a summary of consultation responses is available online, it is important to note that

the current assessment focuses on the planning merits of the comments, rather than the number of times a particular point was raised. Inevitably, some responses repeat similar themes or reflect organised campaigns, and these are taken into account as part of the technical review.

Given the importance of the Local Plan in shaping future development across South Warwickshire, I will continue to keep residents and Parish Councils informed as the process moves forward.

Stratford Business Conference – February

I am pleased to let residents know about a new free business event being hosted by Stratford District Council, in partnership with the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub. The Stratford Business Conference, taking place on **Tuesday 3rd February, 8.15am–12 noon** at the **Crowne Plaza, Stratford-upon-Avon**, aims to support local small and medium-sized businesses by sharing success stories, inspiring new ideas, and fostering collaboration across the District.

The event will feature a series of short talks from business leaders and practical sessions designed to help businesses strengthen, grow, and future-proof their operations. Speakers include local entrepreneurs, representatives from the British Business Bank, Warwickshire Skills Hub, and our own District Council, who will explain the range of support available to businesses in the area.

There will also be around 20 exhibitors showcasing innovative products and services from across Stratford District, offering a great opportunity for networking and discovering new business opportunities.

This is a valuable opportunity for local business owners, aspiring entrepreneurs, and anyone interested in the local economy to come together, learn, and make connections that can support growth in our communities.

To attend the Stratford Business Conference, please visit: bit.ly/sdcbizconference26

And lastly….more police presence!

Southam Safer Neighbourhood Teams Update

PC Hannah Rankin has been joined by two new community support officers for the Southam beat. They are PCSO Cowley 6007 and PCSO Withers 6013. I am sure that we will welcome them to our parishes where we need as much support as we can get for our rural villages.

For more information about our local policing team: www.warwickshire.police.uk/area/your-area/warwickshire/stratford-on-avon-district/southam/about-us/top-reported-crimes-in-this-area



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.

Following the first ever Tom's Teas in January, which was very enjoyable and well attended, going forward Tom's Teas will be held on the third Monday of every month from 2.30 - 4.00pm, in the Tom Hauley Room.

So, the next three Tom's Teas will be on

- **Mon 16th February**
- **Mon 16th March**
- **Mon 20th April**

You can be sure of a warm welcome.

HARBURY LOCAL MARKET

Steve Ekins

Our next Market will be Saturday 21st February 10.00am until 12.30pm.

This month's local Community Group is GASS.

Come and join us for a tea or coffee and a bacon roll.

Councillors Corner will be there 11.00am – 12.00 noon to answer any question you have.

Facebook @Harbury Local Market, please join our group for regular updates.

Our Sponsor

PONDER IN THE PUB

Fliss Harris

Tuesday, 24th February, 6.45 for 7pm. Join us at The Crown Inn, Harbury to explore life's big questions in a friendly, welcoming space. This month's topic: 'So where do we go next?'

Everyone is warmly invited to take part.

CARERS4CARERS

Lisa Barnett

Carers4Carers – your local support group for family carers. We usually meet on the fourth Friday of the month (except December) from **10.00am to 12 noon** at **Kineton Village Hall**. Loved ones are welcome too – they can join our Companionship Group during the meeting.

Friday 27th February – Act on Energy

We know energy costs can be tough, particularly with no gas supply across local areas. Sian Orchard, Act on Energy's Community Outreach Officer for Stratford District, understands these challenges and is here to help. She can offer clear guidance, explore ways to reduce bills, and support applications for available grants.

For further details about our group or help with transport arrangements to/from our meetings, please contact Gillian on 07947 893504, send an email to kcarers4carers@gmail.com, or explore our website www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk



NAPTON ART GROUP

Howard Collerson

Easter Art and Crafts Exhibition

Easter Art and Crafts Exhibition. Napton Art Group are holding their annual Easter Exhibition of members' work at Napton Village Hall (CV47 8LS) on Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th April 2026 between 10am and 4pm. There will be about 200 paintings in all media, including oils, watercolour, acrylics and pastels, most of which will be for sale and greetings cards of some of these will be available. Admission is £1 with free entry for children and there will be light refreshments in the pop-up cafe. Everybody who comes can vote for "The People's Favourite" painting. There will be a nominated charity and members will be displaying small paintings that will be for sale at a cost of £10 with the proceeds going to the charity. Payments for items for sale can now be made by card/ phone as well as cash/ cheques. The Art Group has a membership that now stands at over 50 and meets every Thursday afternoon at Napton Village Hall and has a programme featuring a wide range of demonstrations and weekend workshops. Visitors who might wish to join the group are welcome on any Thursday afternoon 2 - 4 pm.

Further details from Howard Collerson 01926 813181.

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harburyvillageclub23@gmail.com

HARBURY VILLAGE HALL
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harburyvillagehall@googlemail.com

HARBURY VILLAGE LIBRARY
Michael Luntley
communityhub@harburyvillagelibrary.org.uk

TOM HAULEY ROOM
Moira
thr@allsaintsharbury.org

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e-Wheels driver
Wight School car-park on Mondays between 11.30am - 12.30pm

Harbury Co-op
Tall basket by door

• Potatoes - tins and packets of instant mash • Tins of meat • Jars of pasta sauce
• Tins of spaghetti in sauce • Tins of fruit • Sponge puddings • Custard • Small bags of sugar
• UHT milk • Toiletries such as: shampoo, shower gel, soap, toilet rolls and cleaning products.

Advertising In The Harbury & Ladbroke News

Email: advertising@hlnews.co.uk

	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:
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36 Manor Orchard, Harbury
See Diary for deadline dates

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

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Bread and Broth Lunch



Please join us for lunch on Friday 13th February 12.30–1.30pm in the THR.

We are having hot and nutritious homemade soup, with coffee & cake for afters.



Donations for MU local projects as well as for the wider world would be very welcome.

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