Harbury & Ladbroke News



MAY 2026



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4 May	F	F - R - G
11 May	F - R - W - G	F - W
18 May	F	F - R - G
25 May	F - R - G	F
1 June	F - W	F - R - W - G
8 June	F - R - G	F

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

MAY 2026 No. 626

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Articles to: Harbury Pharmacy, High Street or e-mail to articles@hlnews.co.uk by 5.30pm, Monday 25th May



Cover Photo: Aerial shot of Oakfields Estate, Harbury



EDITORIAL

A round up of local news

Committees and organisations in Harbury who organise summer activities are now advertising their events and calling for villagers to get involved. These include the Wheelbarrow Race, Carnival Games week. The Carnival itself, the Senior Citizens' Annual summer outing and the Garden Walkabout. So there is plenty to keep you entertained; please do join in the fun. Before all that though, we have another Harbury village tradition to enjoy, the Theatre Group's spring production, tickets for which are on sale now.

The Ladbroke Matters Team will be organising a Seventies Summer Breeze evening, with plenty of nostalgia with music and dancing for all to enjoy. Do read the next instalment of memories of living in Ladbroke from the Rector's wife of 150 years ago. And coming up in July, make a note of the Afternoon Concert to be held in the church.

Our cover photo is looking west over the Oakfields estate. The field beyond is under potential threat of development. Gladman's have circulated early proposals for around 145 houses in advance of planning permission being submitted.

Please do remember, if you are having your magazine delivered and haven't yet paid your annual subscription, you can give this to your distributor or pay electronically via your bank and complete the Google Form on the H&L News website.

Finally, congratulations to Sinead Minns and Ben Hudson on their recent marriage at All Saints, Harbury. We extend our condolences to the family of Audrey May West.



HARBURY DIARY

For local events

MAY

Sat 2 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Church Flowers

Sun 3 EASTER 5
Said Holy Communion, 9.00am, Church
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 4 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall

Tue 5 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall
'Community Art Therapy,' run by New Age Care - no charge, 1.30 - 2.30pm, Village Library
Poems and a Pint, 7.00pm, The Crown Inn
Harbury Heritage Centre open 7.00 - 9.00pm, Harbury School (Park Lane entrance)

Wed 6 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall – Wooton Wawen (3½ miles)
Mothers' Union, meeting starts 2.00pm with communion service, followed by speaker Paul Morris - MU outreach among the homeless in Coventry, Tom Hauley Room
Spellbound Dance Classes, 1.45 - 2.30 & 4.30 - 6.30pm, Village Hall
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 7 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951
Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room
Annual Parish Meeting, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Folk Club, 8.00pm, Village Library

Sat 9 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Carl Lewis Foundation
Repair Café, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library

Sun 10 EASTER 6
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 11 Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall

Tue 12 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall
'Community Art Therapy,' run by New Age Care - no charge, 1.30 - 2.30pm, Village Library

Wed 13 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - Bishops Itchington (5 miles) including cafe stop
Quiet Space, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room
Knitwits and Pleasant Pastimes, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library
Spellbound Dance Classes, 1.45 - 2.30 & 4.30 - 6.30pm, Village Hall
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 14 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951
Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room
Harbury Theatre Group presents 'God of Carnage', doors open 7.00pm, performance 7.30pm, Village Hall
Harbury WI, Resolutions Night - no speaker, 7.30 for 7.45pm, Tom Hauley Room

Fri 15 Harbury Theatre Group presents 'God of Carnage', doors open 7.00pm, performance 7.30pm, Village Hall

Sat 16 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Southam Mothers Union
Harbury Theatre Group presents 'God of Carnage', doors open 7.00pm, performance 7.30pm, Village Hall

Sun 17 EASTER 7
Said Communion, 8.00am, Church
All Age Service, 10.30am, Church
St. Giles, Chesterton, Holy Communion Service, 10.30am

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 18 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
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall
Southam Gardening Club – non-members £4.50, Growing Vegetables - Roger Umpleby, 7.15 for 7.30pm, Tithe Lodge Southam

Tue 19 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall

Wed 20 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - TBA
Spellbound Dance Classes, 1.45 - 2.30 & 4.30 - 6.30pm, Village Hall
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 21 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951
Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room
Harbury Society visit to UK Vegetable Genebank Wellesbourne, 2.00pm (in advance bookings only)
Classic Book Group, 7.30pm, Village Library

Sat 23 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Godstuff
Return Senior Citizens Trip invitation slips to Library by today 12.00 noon

Sun 24 PENTECOST
Sung Holy Communion, 10.30am, Church
Informal Evening Service, 7.00pm, Church
Zumba, 9.00 - 10.00am, Village Hall
RCCG Holy Ghost Zone Royal Leamington Spa Sunday Service, 10.30am - 1.30pm, Village Hall

Mon 25 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall

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Tue 26 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall
Ponder in the Pub - The Pope, tyrants and the 'Just War' debate, 6.45 for 7.00pm, the Crown Inn

Wed 27 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall – Boddington Reservoir (4½ miles)
Knitwits and Pleasant Pastimes, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Village Library
Children's Art Class (https://www.elainepurcell.com/art-classes), 10.00am - 1.00pm, Village Hall
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 28 Table Tennis, 9.30 - 10.30am, Village Hall, Tel: 01926 612951
Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room
Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, 7.30pm, Village Hall

Sat 30 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Harbury Walking Netball

Sun 31 TRINITY SUNDAY

Sung Holy Communion, 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
Gong and Sound Bath (www.warwickshirefitness.com), 6.30 - 7.30pm, Village Hall

JUNE

Mon 1 Badminton, 10.00am - 12.00 noon, Village Hall
Martial Arts, Juniors 5.45pm, Seniors 6.45pm, Village Hall
Harbury Theatre Group's AGM, 7.30pm, Tom Hauley Room

Tue 2 Everyone Active Fitness, 10.00 - 11.00am, Village Hall
Harbury Heritage Centre open 7.00 - 9.00pm, Harbury School (Park Lane entrance)

Wed 3 Wednesday Walk, meet 9.40am, behind Village Hall - Leek Wootton (4½ miles)
Mothers' Union, meeting starts 2.00pm with communion service, followed by
Community of the Cross of Nails, Tom Hauley Room
Spellbound Dance Classes, 1.45 - 2.30 & 4.30 - 6.30pm, Village Hall
Hereburgh Morris Practice session, 8.00 - 10.00pm, School Hall

Thu 4 Holy Communion, 10.00am, Tom Hauley Room
Folk Club, 8.00pm, Village Library

Fri 5 Meeting Point, 12.30pm, The Crown Inn

Sat 6 Coffee Morning, 10.00am - 12 noon, Tom Hauley Room in aid of Stone, Sound & Vision

Sun 7 TRINITY 1

Sung Holy Communion, 10.30am, Church
Muddy Church, 3.00 - 4.30pm, meet Tom Hauley Room
Youth Group, 5.00 - 7.00pm, Tom Hauley Room
RCCG Holy Ghost Zone Royal Leamington Spa Sunday Service, 10.30am - 1.30pm, Village Hall
Harbury Wheelbarrow Race, 12.30 for 1.00pm start, starting at the Shakespeare Inn

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

All Saints HARBURY

FROM THE RECTOR

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

In our villages, May is the month where the world seems to blossom in full colour. The hedgerows are bursting with Queen Anne's Lace, the bluebells are carpeting the woods, and the birdsong starts before most of us have even reached for the kettle. Just as the seeds buried in the cold earth of February are now bursting into green shoots, May reminds us that

God is always in the business of making things new. If you look at an apple tree in May, it is covered in blossoms. These flowers are beautiful, but they aren't the final goal; they are the promise of the fruit to come.

In the same way, May is an appropriate time to look at what is blossoming in our own lives, the small signs of kindness, the new ideas, and the budding friendships; and ask God to help them grow into something that will nourish others. Our faith isn't just for inside the church building. It belongs in our gardens, our local businesses, and our neighbouring fields. It's a call to be good stewards of this beautiful corner of the world we've been given.

Towards the end of the month, we celebrate Pentecost or Whit Sunday. We remember the Holy Spirit descending like a rushing mighty wind. Much like the May breezes that scatter seeds across the meadows, the Spirit is what gives the Church its energy and its "pollen," carrying the message of God's love to places we might never expect.



FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

Andy & Bez

It's never too late to say thank you and we start this month's article by saying thank you to everyone that contributed eggs to the annual Easter Day egg hunt. We hid over 100 eggs in the church and garden. Many families enjoyed the interactive stations about Easter which linked community groups to the Easter story and prayer points.

Thank you to everyone that helped to bring this vision to life and to the children and families that completed the activities during the Easter holiday.

We were particularly blown away by the crafts done and left in church, making it feel special this Easter. Which service will you join us for in Easter 2027? (There will probably be some undiscovered eggs!)

May will see the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. Amy Pedvin-Lewis will be taking a step back from her role as safeguarding officer. We want to recognise the time, expertise and commitment she has provided in the last decade while being the point of contact. All Saint's Church continues to hold safeguarding in high regard and update training will be taking place in June.



Part of the Easter Experience Display

With lighter evenings, please remember there are opportunities to join us for Ponder in the Pub – topical conversations shared over a drink of your choice. We have a wonderful growing group that enjoy stimulating conversations in The Crown - the last Tuesday of the month. Come and join us!

From the Registers

Funerals
5th March 2026 - Audrey May West (aged 98)

Weddings
28th March 2026 - Sinead Minns and Ben Hudson

MIDSUMMER MUSIC CONCERT

Phillip Mayer and the Church Fundraising Team

This is advance notice of a magical midsummer music concert here in Harbury Church on Saturday 20th June at 6.30pm that you will not want to miss. It has two highly enjoyable and contrasting elements.

First, the concert features fabulous Organ Music Masterpieces, played by a leading cathedral organist - John Wilderspin. John, who is the Organist at Worcester Cathedral for their Voluntary Choir, will include the famous JS Bach Toccata and Fuge in D Minor.

Second, you will be treated to a range of songs by the Harbury Primary School Choir, including some songs from the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat – which was originally written in 1968 for a school concert!

Tickets will only cost £10 and will be available online from early May and also from the church. Also, to complete your enjoyment for a lovely evening , there will be prosecco as well as red and white wine and soft drinks available for a donation, before the concert, during the interval and afterwards.

So, please put the date in your diary - **Saturday 20th June at 6.30pm** - and get some tickets, have some fun and support the Stone, Sound and Vision fundraising appeal for the church building improvements.

MOTHERS' UNION

Gillian Hare

At our April meeting, we were delighted to welcome Rosie Lee. As a member of MU at St John's, Kenilworth, she visited our linked community in Kapsi Bett, Kenya. Spending time there, involved in the vibrancy of faith often in difficult circumstances, and listening to Bishop Christopher and other clergy, encouraged her to think about her own calling.

She has now trained as a Deacon in the Anglican Church, gaining experience at a church in Foleshill, Coventry. She explained that she doesn't see her calling to continue to be ordained priest, as she feels her particular calling is as a servant. This means getting to know people as individuals, each with their own needs, and supporting them. Even in the brief time she spent with us, we were deeply impressed by her faith and humanity, and could see that the Lord has great work for her.

We have been sad to hear of the death of former member and treasurer, Trisha Harrison; a truly lovely lady, and were given details of her memorial service in Leamington on 13th June.

On 6th May Paul Morris will talk about the MU work with the homeless in Coventry and on 3rd June we hear about the Community of the Cross of Nails. Visitors are always welcome; we meet at 2pm in the Tom Hauley Room, starting with a communion service, before the talk and tea.



LADBROKE NEWS & DIARY

MAY

Sun 3 EASTER 5
Family Communion, 10.30am followed by refreshments
Tue 5 Photography Club, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Wed 6 Heritage & Friendship Group, 10.30am - noon, The Old School
Thu 7 WI, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Sun 10 EASTER 6
Holy Communion, 9.00am
Tue 12 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Wed 13 Parish Council 7.45pm, Village Hall
Sun 17 EASTER 7
Holy Communion (BCP), 9.00am
Tue 19 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Sun 24 PENTECOST
Holy Communion, 9.00am
Tue 26 Table Tennis, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Sun 31 TRINITY SUNDAY
Holy Communion, 9.00am (said service)

JUNE

Tue 2 Photography Club, 7.30pm, Village Hall/by the Canal (weather dependent)
Wed 3 Heritage & Friendship Group, 10.30am - noon, The Old School
Thu 4 WI, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Sun 7 TRINITY 1
Family Communion, 10.30am followed by refreshments



LADBROKE CHURCH NEWS

Peter Rigby

www.ladbrokechurch.org.uk

Christians celebrate "the greatest day in history" on Easter Day, which this year fell on the first Sunday of April. At our family service, Rev Ann encouraged us to update the traditional Anglican response of "He is risen – he is risen indeed" to "Jesus is alive – He really is!" and a congregation of almost 50 responded enthusiastically.

Our church Annual Meeting is due to have been held at the end of April and an update will be given in next month's H&L News.

Future Services and events:

Sunday 3rd May	10.30am	Family Communion
Sunday 10th May	9.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 17th May	9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Sunday 24th May	9.00am	Holy Communion
Sunday 31st May	9.00am	Holy Communion (said)
Sunday 7th June	10.30am	Family Communion

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











Some of our volunteers preparing Ladbroke Church for Easter, a big thank you to them all.

LADBROKE & DEPPERS BRIDGE WI

Carol Lane

On Thursday 2nd April we heard a fascinating account of Anne Harrison's childhood in care and her search for her mother.

In the 1950s and beyond, the British government called people from the Caribbean to come to Britain to fill post-war labour shortages in both skilled and unskilled jobs. Anne's mother came to England on her own at the age of 16 and started to work as a nurse at St Cross Hospital in Rugby.

She soon became pregnant and the baby – Anne – was placed with an unregistered foster mother on the understanding that her mother would pay for her keep, visit and eventually take her back. However this did not happen so when the foster mother discovered that Anne's mother had disappeared she left Anne in the care of the matron.

She was placed in an orphanage which is now Myton Hospice from the age of 2 – 14 months. The authorities then placed an advert in the local paper asking for foster parents for a black child. The Reed family who applied were white and had five children of their own and another black foster child. Despite the council's reservations, Anne was placed here and enjoyed about seven years in a loving home, going on caravan holidays and enjoying school. When she was bullied at school because of her colour, Mrs Reed talked to the school and the parents of the bullies.

However, when Anne was 7, the Reeds decided to take up the offer of assisted passage to Australia as £10 Poms. They very much hoped and expected to be able to take Anne and two other foster children with them but because of Australia's 'white only' policy and because the scheme only allowed children naturally born into the family, The Reeds sadly left without Anne.

Anne was placed in a children's home in Rugby which she referred to as Heartbreak House. She hated the regimentation and lack of any privacy at all. The material needs of the children were catered for but there was no affection. One thing Anne dreaded was being seen by any of her school friends when the children were marched 2x2 in uniform to buy their strictly rationed clothing.



She had never been in any situation to understand black culture but the teenage magazine, Jackie, allowed her to understand that her black skin and hair needed different products to white skin.

At the age of 14, Anne's mother was located and she learned that she had a brother who had also been abandoned as a baby. However her mother wrote a letter to Anne including the words 'Call me Auntie'. She never wanted to acknowledge she was a mother although Anne became very close to her brother.

At the age of 16 Anne became Warwickshire's first black police cadet and after a two year training worked as a police officer before training as a social worker. She married, had a son and eventually met her mother in

London where her mother whispered that she had to say she was a friend. The picture shows Anne with Dianne and her Auntie Ethel, who is 100 years old, holding Anne's book

We were all fascinated and Anne can be followed on Instagram at @anne.e.harrison and on Facebook at@callmeauntie. Her book 'Call me Auntie' is available from, Amazon, Waterstones or through the library.

In the business meeting, we heard that names of those wishing to go to the screening of the National AGM in Harbury Village Hall on Thursday 4th June must be given in by 22nd May. We were reminded of the Group meeting also in Harbury Village Hall on 10th June where the entertainer will be Ella Kendrick.

The Food and Friendship Group went to Whilton Locks Garden Centre where they enjoyed lunch and a wander around the wonderful range of splendid plants and gifts. Temptation got the better of some of them who went home with plants and souvenirs!

The next meeting, on Thursday 7th May at 7.30, will be our AGM after which Sue Wright will talk to us about the Teams4u charity's Christmas shoebox appeal. Sue has been supporting this locally for 10 years and will tell us more about the boxes and their distribution.

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.

Seventies Summer Breeze

We are planning a 1970's evening in the village hall on **Friday 26th June**. So if you remember the seventies (or even if you are too young) put this date in your diary and join us for an evening of fun, memories, food, and especially music and dancing. We will even throw in a nostalgia quiz and stories behind some of the songs we play. Food will be served from 7pm and there will be a bar.

Tickets at £15 each can be bought by emailing our dedicated booking line: **ladbrokesummerbreeze@gmail.com**. Every ticket bought entitles you to request one seventies song for the evening. Please mention your song requests in your email.

The Millennium Green Play Area

We are pleased to announce that by the time you read this, phase two of the upgrade to the millennium green play area should have been completed. So look out for new swings in the patch behind the main area and a new trim trail. If you have any comments about the upgrade let us know via our website.

Upcoming Events

We are looking forward to holding more fundraising events this year. Possibilities are a race night; a celidh evening; 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 including booking terms and conditions.

Our summer booking rates are £15 per hour, or £12 for Ladbroke residents - applicable from April to September 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 some of our events.

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 March 2026

£50	Serena Ford	£25	Margie Bosworth
£50	Elaine Taylor	£10	Linda Spence
£25	A and E Dowdeswell	£10	Izzy Palmer
£25	John Rose	£10	Helen Hay

Margaret Bosworth



LADBROKE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

Nicky Lewis

Our theme for the April meeting just after Easter was Generations – a broad topic open to a wide variety of interpretations, and members showed a lot of ingenuity with their photos. Photos submitted as part of the Competition were printed off on photographic paper, while some members only submitted images on a memory stick for display on the Village Hall screen. Members then chose their top three printed photos, and the points allocated count towards our Photographer of the Year Award.

We had many entries showing generations of family groups, which tested composition skills, funny shots, and 'in the moment' shots with children and some at weddings. For privacy, I have not selected these photos, rather I have focussed on three clever interpretations of the theme. The Winner was a photo by Jackie West from the International Bomber Command Centre overlooking Lincoln, a place of recognition, remembrance and reconciliation. It tells the story of RAF Bomber Command's extensive losses of aircraft and crews during the




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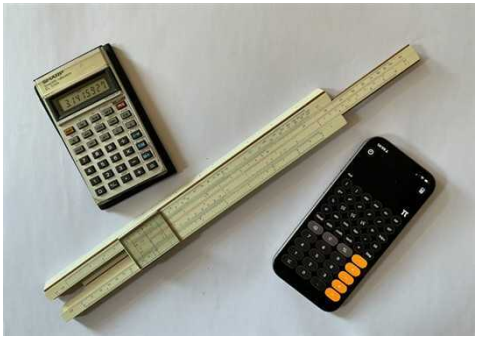
bombing of Germany in WW2. Jackie's photo is of three metal silhouettes showing Barnes Wallis, the inventor of the bouncing bomb, and two men from 617 squadron, "The Dambusters". It is well worth a visit.



The second photo is from Nigel Reece, an amusing interpretation of a mother swan trying to keep her offspring in a line! Another quirky interpretation is the third photo, from Mike Todman, of generations of 'devices' – from a slide rule (remember them!) to an original calculator, both now replaced by the ubiquitous smartphone. Can anyone add up without one these days?? For the eagle eyed among you, you will see that Mike has set them all to Pi, aka 3.14159, now just the universal symbol.



Our next meeting is on **Tuesday 5th May** at 7.30pm in Ladbroke Village Hall where our subject is **Yellow**. Guests always welcome (£3 fee). We are a small friendly club for anyone with an interest in photography and no special skills required. Please contact me if you are interested in finding our more. nicolalewis1958@gmail.com

LADBROKE GENERAL NEWS

LADBROKE HERITAGE

Carol Lane & Jackie West

Heritage and Friendship Group

We continue to meet 10.30 - 12 noon on the first Wednesday of the month. Last time we chatted about Weddings and in May our topic will be Shops and Shopping. If you would like to join us for some friendly reminiscing over a cuppa and cake please contact Carol on 814715.

1876 - 2026 Celebration

The next instalment of events in the village 150 years ago, as seen through the eyes of Charlotte Errington, the Rector's wife.

Ladbroke School

As well as trying to keep Ladbroke's fine old church going, another major problem was giving us headaches. The children of the farmers and labourers had to walk to and from Bishops Itchington School over two miles away. The attendance was poor when the weather was bad or when the children were needed for domestic or farming tasks. We were worried that the next generation were lacking vital education. Luckily for us, the Elementary Education Act,

passed in 1870, stated that a school should be within reach of all children between the ages of 5 and 10. There are already Church of England Schools in some villages and it was decided that we would support the building of a National Church of England School in Ladbroke. Grants are available from the Government for the building and some of the upkeep and our generous neighbours promised donations. Obviously the next thing to be decided was where the school should be situated and by swapping parcels of land from our Townlands, the 16 acres of land gifted by Widow Alibone about 200 years ago, we were able to identify the perfect site in the middle of the village.

At this time, schools, often non-denominational, were being built all over the country and run by Boards so the design was pretty standard. It consisted of a single, large classroom with the beams in the vaulted ceiling exposed. There is a large window on one side, windows at the front and a cloakroom at the back with a door for the children to enter. On the other side is a house for the school master or mistress which consists of two bedrooms and two small rooms downstairs. A brick building with a tiled roof at the back houses toilets and there was room for a large playground at the front.



The building work had taken place by 1875 and Mr Lord was appointed as the first master to start in January 1876. The desks, slates and slate pencils were all ordered and Mr Lord decided what books he needed to help him to set sums or read to the class. Families with children aged between 5 and 10 had watched the school being built and some of them were keen for it to open. However, the children do not have to go and there is a fee, depending on what the father earns so some families are worried that this will stretch their budget too far. Some of the children get paid to work and the family will lose this income. Also, the children would be leaving the schools which they had been going to, mainly Bishops Itchington and as that school was due to have an inspection, the master wanted the children there until the inspection was finished.

The date was all set to open at the beginning of January in 1876 but the slates and books had not arrived so Mr Lord was forced to delay the opening. It was such a joy and a relief when they came on the 17th so we were all delighted to tell the families that the first school day was to be January 24th. We were all in the playground to see the children flock in on that first day – all 63 of them!

The children are taught to read, write and do arithmetic as well as learning about Geography, History and Scripture. They are tested and they have to attain certain standards. To pass Standard 1 a child has to be able to add up and take away and to know their times tables up to 6; to read a sentence with some two syllable words; write a few words from dictation and copy a line of script into manuscript. By standard three they should be able to do long division and understand pounds, shillings and pence; read a paragraph, write a sentence from dictation and copy a line of print from an advanced reading book.

Mr Lord was at first disheartened that only six children in the whole school were able to pass Standard 1. He worked very hard but progress was slow as he tried to teach all the different abilities. I think he was relieved when the daily rote learning of tables was chanted and he could just relax. Just as he was thinking some of the children were grasping what he was trying to teach, they would be absent and in that year there were bouts of measles, scarlet fever and whooping cough. Children were needed to pick cowslips in May and the families need the money from this to buy clothes for the children for the year so he couldn't force the parents to send their children to school. At least Mr Lord had some help at the beginning of February when Bessie Ducket began cleaning the school.

My husband, John, maintained a very close interest in the school and the pupils and went in almost every day for prayers and to tell them Bible stories. Most of the village children attended Sunday school where we taught them their catechism – the Apostles creed, the 10 commandments, the Lord's prayer and about baptism and holy communion.

I also got to know the girls when Mrs Pearson and I went in to do sewing with them. We noticed that some of the children had no idea how to hold the needle and fabric while others had been taught by their mothers and we tried to help them to make simple clothes like aprons. John and I often talked about our time in school in the evenings and there were one or two particularly difficult families - John had to send one of boy home until he was cleaner. We wondered whether his mother was mortified or whether she was too overwhelmed by problems to be able to help? Another boy, James, was always in trouble and his mother wouldn't allow him to be kept at school to do his home lessons. He often pilfered pens and repeatedly told falsehoods such that Mr Lord suspended him and consulted John and the other volunteers who helped to manage the school. We feared for the future of this ungovernable boy but Mr Lord refrained from giving too severe a punishment.

However, there was nearly always a cheerful atmosphere when we went in and lots of the children worked diligently at school and with their home lessons such that in April Mr Lord put 49 pupils in for Standard 1, 10 for Standard 2 and 3 for Standards 3 and 4.

The inspectors visited between the 27th and 30th of July and their opinion was that, "the discipline and general efficiency is fair and that Mr Lord worked hard but the older children were very ignorant when he started the school". It was wonderful that they recommended that an assistant teacher should be appointed as soon as possible.

Afternoon Concert on Saturday 11th July

To help us celebrate 150 years since Ladbroke church had its George Gilbert Scott makeover, which included selling the old organ (I was told it went to the Congregational Chapel in Southam) and installing a very grand one made by the eminent organ manufacturer's, Hill and Son we are holding an afternoon concert on Saturday 11th July. The music will be provided by organist Hannes Ludwig, several other musicians and the choir, Prenzlau Cantorei. Hannes is the organist and director of music at Marienkirche (St Marys), Prenzlau, Germany.

During the final days of WW2, the Marienkirche, a 13th/14th century brick gothic church, sustained catastrophic damage as Soviet forces of the Red Army liberated the city on 27th and 28th April 1945. Intense street fighting and subsequent arson led to widespread fires that engulfed the city centre, reducing approximately 85% of Prenzlau to ruins, including the church. Rebuilding the church started in 1970 and has taken many decades.

Most recently they have been restoring and installing an historic organ, made in 1904 by Hill & Son, previously located in a church in Kilbarchan, Scotland. Hannes is very busy overseeing and reporting on its installation in Marienkirche and organising a musical festival in May to celebrate the musical rededication of their "new" organ. So, while I do not have details yet of what will be played and sung here in Ladbroke a couple of months later, I'm certain it will well worth coming to hear.

HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Alison Biddle – Clerk to the Council

Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 7th May 2026

All residents of Harbury and Deppers Bridge are cordially invited to attend this year's annual parish meeting which takes place on Thursday 7th May at 7.30pm in Harbury Village Hall. This is a village meeting, not a parish council meeting. It's an opportunity for residents to come together and review the past year but also ask questions and discuss current issues affecting our community. Wine and nibbles will be served at the end of the meeting. We do hope you can come along.

Vacant Allotment

We currently have a couple of vacant allotments at the Pineham Farm site off South Parade. If you are interested, please email the clerk at clerk@harbury-pc.gov.uk or Tel: 01926 614646.

There are also a few vacant plots at the Hall Lane allotments. The parish council bought this site a couple of years ago but we haven't been in a position to make them available to new tenants until now. This is because we wanted to improve the access and carry out essential repairs to the wall fronting Hall Lane. By the time you read this, after several delays, we hope this work will finally be underway.

A new access is to be created which, while still not making the site fully accessible, will be a great improvement and at the very least will prevent the need to climb over the wall! The plots on this site are small but might appeal to someone who has never had an allotment before. If you are interested, please contact the parish council office.

Overgrown Hedges

We often receive complaints about hedges that have outgrown their garden and are hanging over the pavement, making it difficult to get by without walking in the road. If you have a hedge, please ensure that it stays within your garden boundary and doesn't make it difficult for people using the pavement. Your help with this is much appreciated.

Streetlight Problems

If you notice a light that is out, or flickering, or on during the day, the quickest way to get something done about it is to report it directly to WCC via their website. The link is on their home page. It's very easy to use and you can report all kinds of things, not only problems with streetlights. So next time you spot something wrong, please try it out.

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HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Nicola Thompson – H&L News Correspondent

Official minutes can be viewed on the Parish Council website www.harbury-pc.gov.uk or obtained from the Parish Clerk, Tel: 01926 614646

Meeting - 26th March 2026

Public Participation: Paul Quinney spoke on behalf of a grant application from the Guides & Scouts group. Seventy two young people and leaders from the uniformed groups will shortly be going on camp and need extra funds for two new tents, a small generator, a trolley and various other items of equipment. A lot of the equipment could also be used for weekly meetings and will stand the groups in good stead for a number of years.

Community Grant Applications: Council members considered the two applications they had received for the final round of grant funding in this financial year. These were £1500 from GASS for camping equipment and £500 for Harbury Carnival for children's entertainment. The clerk explained that there is only £1577 on the budget for this year so, after discussion, it was agreed to award the Carnival Committee £500 and Gass £1077 as GASS had received a grant earlier in the year.

Harbury Library: Cllr Mulley reported that the current Christmas lights used at the front of the building are quite old and a number of bulbs are broken. The library committee intends to replace them with lights that fit in with the other parish council lights around the village. Despite advertising the position internally and on Facebook the committee had so far been unsuccessful in attracting someone to fill the volunteer position of café manager.

Harbury School: The school has made a lot of progress on their plans for a "Forest School" as a water play area, a digging area and a mud kitchen has been added to the outdoor space. A specialist pond company will be on site over the Easter holidays to improve the school pond.

Village Hall: Cllr Thompson reported that, at the recent village cinema, there had been a small fire in the kitchen due to the fish and chips in the oven catching fire. Although the fire extinguishers used to put it out had made a lot of mess, there had been no need to evacuate the hall and the chip shop had – very luckily - been able to replace the damaged portions at short notice.

Stratford District Council: The main points in Cllr Ostrander's report were:

- A central government consultation on the reorganisation of local government expired on 26th March.
- SDC is again running a number of screening events for prostate cancer, diabetes and cholesterol. Our local event is on **9th May at the Graham Adams Centre in Southam**. It is very important that residents wishing to attend pre-book.
- The council has unveiled a new website.
- A Growing Opportunities Plan has been launched which seeks to tackle rural poverty and inequality including fuel poverty, supporting young people and ongoing cost of living pressures.
- Operation Recall is being led by Warwickshire Police to raise awareness of livestock worrying in the wake of new legislation which has strengthened penalties including unlimited fines and powers to seize dogs.

- There will be a by-election in the Bishops Itchington ward following the resignation of Cllr Nigel Rock.

Planning: 5 Henrys Place, Bush Heath Lane 26/00562/LDE – The majority of properties in this small development have a covenant restricting their sale to over 55's. However, this application seeks to confirm that this does not apply to no. 5 as it was built under a separate planning application. The council made no representation on this application.

Properties

Hall Lane Allotments: The allotments have now been cleared of a large quantity of debris - including an active mole trap - and work will commence in June to repair the wall and create a new entrance to the site. A number of the antique coping stones across the top of the wall had been stolen although some had been fortuitously hidden by the contractor to prevent this. The clerk has contacted a contractor who will repair the current water harvesting system and it was noted that Cllr Sylvester has a potential plan to apply for grant funding for the connection of a mains water supply. Despite concerns about safety of access, the council agreed that the vacant plots should now be advertised at a "peppercorn" rent of £1 per year for the first year in order to hopefully attract tenants who can make use of this year's growing season.

Cemetery Gates: It was agreed that the gates should be painted.

Memorial Garden, Chapel Street: The crazy paving in the Memorial Garden is in a poor state of repair and it was agreed to get a quote for repaving the area.

Environment

Replacement Stiles: Progress on the replacement stiles continues to move very slowly but the clerk has written again to the landowners.

Ivy Lane/South Parade Junction: At an earlier meeting the council had agreed to have a feasibility study carried out at a cost of £1000 to provide recommendations on the difficult parking situation at this junction. Members deliberated whether to go ahead with this or to consult with residents first. In Highways matters nothing comes cheap – it was noted that painting some double yellow lines would cost around £3000! It was agreed to go ahead with the feasibility study.

Finance

The council agreed the budget, reserve levels and to the transfer of some reserves. Although a cheaper quotation had been received, they agreed £1750 for Wright Hassall solicitors to carry out work to review the lease for the EV charging station as they felt they would do a more thorough job.

Items for Future Agenda - Street lighting: Cllr Mulley has carried out a preliminary survey of the streetlights. Half of the poles were checked five years ago, the remainder need to be checked in the short term and the cost of this is £9 per pole (from Warks CC). This ongoing issue will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 23rd April, 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.



Dr John Hancock

Harbury Society Chairman 2007- 2020

In March, after we had sent our article to print, we heard the sad news that John had passed away. There is much to say about his activities but we would like to take this belated opportunity to remember him warmly for his general popularity and great good sense. He was a great asset to the society over the years and we shall, of course, always treasure the memory of his friendship.

Medical Detection Dogs

Dr Fiona Baskett is a retired GP and had worked in the NHS for 40 years before retiring, but she came to the Harbury Society on Tuesday 17th March to tell us something about Medical Detection Dogs.



Dr Fiona Baskett

She keeps up to date with advances in medical technology and she also loves dogs, having a six-year-old black Labrador of her own. Fiona took us back to 1995 when she was a young GP and attached to a military field hospital offering emergency medical cover at the celebrations of the 50th VE Day commemoration banquet hosted by the late Queen Elizabeth and attended by 15 heads of state. Security was very tight and on the morning of the banquet the coach she was on arrived at Portsmouth and, approaching the Guild Hall, many roads were cordoned off. They were informed at a police checkpoint that they should pull off the road for the exterior of the coach to be checked. Following the inspection, the police said they then needed to check the interior.

This is where a little spaniel enters the story, running up and down the aisle of the coach with his tail wagging nineteen to the dozen, his nose quivering as he's sniffing all the seats. He suddenly comes to a standstill, by Fiona's case. At this point Fiona realises she should have mentioned to the officer that she has heroin in her case as well as morphine and a whole lot of other things. She informs the officer about the drugs and that the case is locked and they're for legitimate medical purposes and only she has access to them. The officer looked her in the eye and said 'Oh no, he's not a drug dog, he's an explosives dog – hand over the key'. He unlocked the case (which was a metal one) and he found wrapped in several layers of thick polythene a fluid called gelafusine, which is something you might give someone who has lost a lot of blood. The key ingredient of gelafusine is modified gelatine and dogs are trained to detect gelatine-based explosives. Fiona said although it was over 30 years ago, she's never forgotten how this little dog was able to detect a scent through the metal case and all those layers of polythene.

This was a demonstration of the amazing abilities dogs have and how they can be trained to detect specific smells, be it drugs, explosives, cancer in its early stages or episodes of medical

conditions. Working as assistance dogs, on a one-to-one basis, they can alert their human partner to an imminent life-threatening emergency, such as an epileptic fit.

How did the charity start?

We were shown a photo of Dr Claire Guest, a scientist, a behaviour therapist and CEO of Medical Detection Dogs. Some years ago a friend of Claire's had a dog that kept pawing at an annoying spot on the lady's leg and kept trying to attract her attention. Eventually, when she had it checked out, it turned out to be a malignant melanoma, which had been caught at an early stage, enabling a good recovery to be made. We then were shown a short video of Claire describing her own medical story that began with her own dog called Daisy. Daisy started behaving strangely and she kept staring at Claire anxiously.

One day, whilst taking her for a walk, Daisy refused to get out of the car, so Claire lifted her out and, as she did so, Daisy nudged at Claire's breast. As they were walking Claire felt that her breast felt slightly bruised and after a couple of days she thought she ought to get it checked out. Her GP referred her to a surgeon and, after a number of biopsies, she was diagnosed with an early but deep-seated breast cancer. Following treatment and ten years later, she is still alive to tell the tale, but her physicians have told her that had she not received an early warning from Daisy, it might have been a different outcome. Daisy had saved her life and this inspired Claire to consider how many people around the world could have their lives saved by the amazing ability of dogs. Claire referred to them as 'biosensors with muddy coats and waggy tails'. She says that the science behind what they are doing is as strong as any other diagnostic instrument and the wonderful thing about it is that the dogs love doing it.

Claire thought she was onto something but, as a scientist, she felt that it should be put onto a firm scientific footing with some serious research. By chance she heard a radio interview with someone called John Church who had been undertaking studies into dogs' ability to detect early bladder cancer. Claire got in touch with him and they agreed to establish a charity called Medical Detection Dogs for research. They commenced with some very small premises in Buckinghamshire. One day a solicitor contacted her and informed her that a local benefactor had left some money in her will to go to a worthwhile local charity and Medical



Medical Detection Dogs headquarters at Great Horwood, Buckinghamshire



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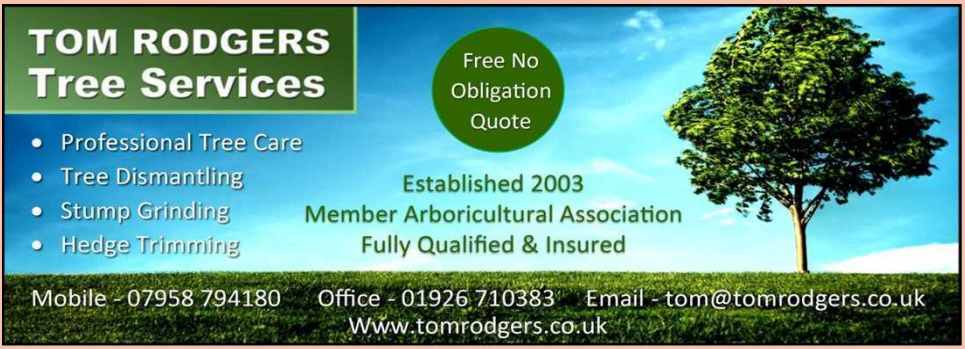

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HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL

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10.00am 12.00pm

CHAIRMAN:
Tim Lockley
Email: chair@harbury-pc.gov.uk

CLERK:
Alison Biddle
Email: clerk@harbury-pc.gov.uk

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To speak on any issue, please contact the Parish Clerk



Detection Dogs had been identified as meeting the criteria. When she visited the solicitor's office, optimistically expecting a few hundred pounds she was stunned by the news that the bequest was £800,000! This has enabled them to dramatically expand the operation over 15 years with new research and training centres.

They are privileged to have the royal patronage of Queen Camilla, who opened the new building in 2019 as the then Duchess of Cornwall.

The charity has two separate areas of work – the bio-detection side where dogs are trained to detect diseases such as cancer from urine samples displayed on carousels. As the carousel rotates the dogs focus on the samples that contain the aroma of the disease. It takes 18 months to two years to train a puppy, they come into the centre for three days a week starting at 8am and going home with their volunteer at 4pm. Each dog does three 20-minute intense sessions a day and they get rewarded with a treat each time they pick out a positive sample. The rest of the time they interact with other dogs and get taken for walks – they love doing the work and they go home very happy dogs.

The other side of the establishment is the Medical Alert Assistance Dog Centre, where dogs are paired with individuals who have complex medical conditions which can lead to life-threatening emergencies. The dogs are trained to alert their client 20 minutes prior to an impending crisis allowing the person to remove themselves out of danger, take medication etc.

Each dog has to have a good temperament, enjoy the work and be easy to train - many of the dogs are rescues but the centre does have its own breeding programme and they are currently on their third litter. Queen Camilla named a dog from the latest litter 'Freddie', after one of her grandsons, and Freddie is now under training to be a medical alert assistance dog. It costs approximately £29,000 to train a dog and they have a nine-year working life. The bio-detection dogs tend to be labradors but the medical assistance dogs are more varied depending on the need of the client.

Fiona then spoke about the science behind the project. Humans apparently have around 5 million scent receptors in our noses while dogs have up to 300 million. This gives them the capability to detect a spoonful of sugar in a body of water the size of two Olympic swimming pools. For the bio-detection work, the samples are taken to a laboratory where the dogs are expected to give an accurate, non-invasive early diagnosis. In the body, when cancer attacks a cell, it causes it to break down and as it does so it releases bio-products called volatiles which the body removes either in the breath or urine. The dogs are trained to respond to that particular smell – each disease has a specific odour signature and the dogs can detect these at a very low concentration.

Fiona then explained how this research would be applied in the real world because you wouldn't have dogs sniffing samples at the doctor's surgery. The aim is to develop an electronic version that can detect these odours. For ten years they have been working with someone from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to develop an electronic version of a dog's nose and it is hoped that this technology will be available within two years.

The charity works in collaboration with international commissions, universities and NHS trusts. It's all evidence-based research which has been peer reviewed and, broadly, publications are available on cancer, neurological bacterial and viral studies. They have done promising studies on prostate cancer and currently they are working on colorectal bowel cancer, Parkinsons disease, bacterial respiratory infection and viral including covid. Fiona told us that the dogs can detect the most aggressive forms of prostate cancer with 71% accuracy. She told us that each study can take up to five years and cost around £500,000.

Medical alert assistance dogs work on a one-to-one basis with people who have complicated, sometimes life-threatening conditions, particularly those that cause sudden unconsciousness. There are 17 different conditions that they currently are able to monitor with up to 96% accuracy. One condition, Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS), which causes sudden unconsciousness, can result in hospitalisation for every six events. When the person has an assistance dog it has been proved to reduce visits to hospital to one in 152 events, drastically improving their quality of life. We were then shown a number of very moving case histories demonstrating how much people's lives have been transformed by medical alert assistance dogs. It's been calculated that a medical assistance alert dog can save the NHS £33,000 over its lifetime for someone with POTS.

That concluded Fiona's talk and, following answering a number of questions, she was thanked by Chair Ed and warmly applauded by the audience.

Harbury Society Programme:

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

Saturday 13th June – Harbury Carnival.

Thursday 2nd July – A visit to Warwickshire Lavender Farm, Bubbenhall.

Tuesday 18th August – Visit to the Court Barn Museum, Chipping Campden.

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

At the end of March, 28 members and husbands enjoyed a performance of My Fair Lady at the Spa Centre in Leamington. Ella Kenrick, who was outstanding in the role of Eliza Doolittle, will be entertaining members when Ladbroke WI organise the Southam Area Group meeting in Harbury Village Hall on Wednesday 10th June.

At our meeting on 9th April, we were pleased to welcome Analiza Jones who talked about the Philippines, 'Culturally Quirky'. She described the seasons which are dry and very wet – we saw some incredible video of a typhoon. Thanks to their Spanish conquerors' religion is mainly Catholic and the siesta is very important! Analiza showed us film of a carnival procession – very upmarket compared to Harbury Carnival. She described eating very different food – Snake cutlets, Pig's trotters, roasted pig, sheep's head, leaves of sweet potato, bamboo shoots.. Rice is eaten for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Annaliza had a table displaying items made from coconut and hand woven bags. A very interesting evening.

On 16th April 21 members enjoyed a Whist drive and a variety of scones in Biblio's café. A very enjoyable afternoon which raised £96.05 for the Esther project. Many thanks to members for their help and support.





At our meeting on 14th May we shall be discussing the resolutions which will be






voted on at the National Federation meeting. On a lighter note, we shall also be celebrating World Cocktail Day. Members are reminded that they are welcome to bring plants and remnants to sell – profits to go to the Esther project. The competition is a bookmark made from any medium – the winner will represent Harbury in the competition at the Group meeting on 10th June.

The National Federation Conference is entirely on-line this year so Harbury WI are hosting a streaming party in the Village Hall on Thursday 4th June from 10am to 4pm. Members are welcome to bring their own picnic.

HARBURY THEATRE GROUP

Celia Stockdale

As we get nearer to our May performance dates, I thought it would be good to hear the voices of Kirsty, one of the actors and Paul Ayers Hunt, who is organising special effects:

Kirsty:

'This play is about the faces we present to the world and our peers - and what happens when the mask comes off over the course of an eventful evening! In rehearsals we have been enjoying getting stuck in to the script, tearing strips off each other verbally as things get more than a little messy…'

Paul:

'Every production has it challenges and some special effects need a lot of mind storming to be able to deliver a convincing performance. God of Carnage has given some challenges that have needed everyday items we all take for granted but put to a different use to produce the desired effect. Without give too much away one special effect has been, well we thought, one of the easy ones! How wrong we were! The stage has been specially built to enable a different approach for the performance, to see more and experience the performance at its best come along and see the show….'

The new staging has been designed by our Stage Manager, Andy Lewin and being built jointly by Andy and Paul. So, all in all, a slightly different kind of experience that you can come and enjoy on 14th, 15th and 16th May.

Tickets online £12 at www.fienta.com/o/carnage or purchased at the Library.

Finally, you can always check our website at harburytheatregroup.com that will give you more information about us and our members and that Becci is currently updating. See you all in May!



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Steve & Maureen Darby

Number 471

The room was all set up in the library as usual but just a few performers had arrived, so Steve asked each performer to do two in the first half and one in the second half if they were able to. As it was, it turned out to be a lovely evening of humour, song and music.

The theme for the evening was, "A bit of what you fancy does you good" and Steve opened the evening by giving out some very good news. Back in December 2024 a tree fell in Leamington, hitting a car carrying a mother, 10-month-old child and father who was driving. Emergency services were able to rescue the mother and child with minor injuries, but the father Dan was in a critical condition and ambulance services immediately put him on life support.

The proceeds of the folk club raffle went to a charity set up to support him and his family. The good news is that after 16 months in hospital and rehab care, Dan is finally able to return home. We all wish him and his family the best for their future and a hopeful return to normality.

First up was a lovely surprise when Maureen and Janny, who was wearing clogs and carrying an open umbrella, sang in Dutch, "Onder Moeders paraplu". It had been a while since the two of them had last performed together and we all enjoyed the expressive humour of the song. Peter McDonald explained his first song by Nanci Griffiths was about the plight of American farmers in the 1930s, when drought was creating "Trouble in the Fields" and was followed by a Tom Paxton song "My Lady's a Wild Flying Dove," dedicated to Margaret.

Pete and Liz sang a Bill Jones song about men left in the lurch for a change and then the famous John Tams song from the TV series "Sharp" called "Over the Hills and Far Away". Bob and Anne took a turn each with Anne playing the violin to Phil Cunningham's "The Gentle Light that Wakes Me" and Bob reminded us it was Maundy Thursday so sang "Now the Green Blade Rises". Keith Donnelly was in fine, humorous form. Unfortunately an Easter Egg somehow got stuck inside his guitar so he couldn't play it, although the audience had to laugh at his attempts to remove the egg.

Further attempts to talk with a plectrum in his mouth created more hilarity – it was another silly Keith performance. The first half finished with Maureen and Liz singing "Cobweb of Dreams" followed by the surprise arrival of Peter Grassby who had been delayed by a Fosse Way diversion.

The short second half started with Keith singing "Jesus at the Airport", Peter McDonald sang "Peace Must Come", Liz and Pete followed with "Messing About on the River", Bob sang a Sydney Carter song and Pete Grassby, as the late arrival, was able to close the evening with three pieces. He was in particularly fine form singing "Upside Down Inside", on his melodeon he played "Rose of Risby" and concluded the evening with "Rolling Down the Fosseway" which described the journey of the road from start to finish and we were all joining in with the chorus.

The raffle raised £50 for TOFS, a charity that supports children born unable to swallow.

Next month Folk club will be run by Michael when the theme is "Dance".

HARBURY TWINNING ASSOCIATION

John Stringer



Members of the association met for our annual Skittles evening, planned and managed by Margaret McDonald, at the Masons Arms near Stratford. The pub provided excellent food for us all. The play was fierce and competitive, and the winning team is illustrated, plus my annual addition to my collection of wooden spoons.

Thanks to Peter McDonald, the association now has a highly professional and easily accessed website at harburytwinning.org.uk. Do take a look to get a sense of our activities and events. You might even think of joining us... There is no need to speak French; many of our twinning partners speak English, and where there is no shared language, there is a lot of fun in making connections.

Our next big event of course is the visit of our French friends from the pretty village of Samois-sur-Seine. Every other year they come to us; every other year we visit them, and enjoy their hospitality. This year it is our turn; from 15th to 18th May, the visitors from Samois will be coming to Harbury and enjoying a tour of the village kindly organised by the Heritage Centre, a garden lunch, a safari supper, a bring and share dinner, and a taste of Morris Dancing. You may conclude that the visit theme is food and drink; you may be right...

HARBURY HERITAGE CENTRE

Bill Timson

This month's article is courtesy of Harbury resident Wendy Willoughby who kindly spent the afternoon with Sue and David Turner talking about her late husband Roy.



Roy Willoughby, who was also known to his friends as the 'Admiral'

Roy Willoughby

How many people in Harbury are aware that narrowboats were once built in the centre of the village? This is the story of Roy Willoughby as told by his widow, Wendy. Roy was once employed by the firm Hancock & Lane in Hunningham which, in the late 60's, was a general engineering company building and installing grain dryers all over the UK. However, in the 1970s and 80s they became a reputable boatbuilding company known for constructing sturdy steel narrowboats for inland waterways.

In 1970, Roy went into partnership with Dominic (Dom) Coles and they rented a barn in Ladbroke to continue building narrowboats. This was a very successful business until, in 1974, Dom Cole set up Colecraft in Southam which is when Roy decided to move with his

family to Harbury and formed the company Willoughby Fabrications making longboats for canal use. Don Osborne, who ran a company called Precision Metal Products Ltd in what is now Fox Close, next to the Gamecock in Chapel Street, rented a workshop to Roy in the same yard. This is where Roy manufactured his own design narrowboats as opposed to them being commissioned by clients. Boats of up to 40' were made in one piece but larger ones were made in two halves and then welded together at the canalside base at Calcutt (between Stockton and Napton).



One of Roy's narrowboats being made ready for transportation on a low-loader near the Gamecock Pub in Chapel Street



'Mint', another of Roy's narrowboats on the canal at Calcutt

The owner of Calcutt Boats, Roger Preen, bought one of Roy's boats and was so impressed he ordered 11 more and, once built, they were all named after different herbs. Obviously, this meant the premises in Harbury were no longer fit for purpose so Roy rented a larger workshop in Rugby, employing approximately 10 people. Roy was clearly a very skilled engineer and patented a stern tube, a watertight cylinder in the hull that supports the propeller shaft and connects the engine to the propeller. This could be fitted to a boat without having to take it out of the water. He also designed a unique stern shape which was more square and provided extra room.

By the end of the 70s, and having completed the commission for Roger Preen, Roy then went back to working on his own, carrying out engineering jobs in a small workshop in Stockton.



What's Happening...

MAY AT THE BELL INN, LADBROKE

FAMILY FUN DAY

Saturday 23rd May | from 12pm

Save the date for this year's Family Fun Day.
Bring the whole family and enjoy a fun-filled afternoon with a Bouncy Castle, Face Painting, Garden Games, Live Music, and a delicious BBQ.

WEEKLY DEALS AT THE BELL . . .

PIE NIGHT TUESDAYS

Every Tuesday enjoy one of our delicious Homemade Pies served with a select Pint or a 175ml glass of House Wine for £19.

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donna.care18@gmail.com

He left Stockton in about 2014 and rented a workshop in Tamworth where he continued his small engineering works until his death in 2016.

Roy met a few 'celebs' during his working life, one of which was David Suchet. He did a lot of work on his boat which was moored on the Thames. One day Roy went down, taking his sandwiches for lunch with him, but David insisted on giving him something to eat so he had to sit in his scruffy clothes whilst being served a posh lunch. He worked on Bob Dylan's coach while he was touring England and one day Roy came home and said 'I've been working on that big ugly bloke's boat today'. He meant Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones!

Although Roy was an excellent engineer his business acumen left a little to be desired. Apparently, he rarely charged the 'going rate' for work he undertook. He was a generous man both with his time and expertise and examples of his work can still be seen on and around the canals.



Another example of Roy's work – the ironwork for the bridge over the canal at Calcutt

Other News

Thank you to all the lovely people who attended our Tom Hauley Room coffee morning on the 21st of March. All the profits go towards running the Heritage Centre.

We opened again on Tuesday evening this month and we will continue to do so every month until October. Do come and pay us a visit.

***Opening times in May:* Tuesday 5th 7 to 9pm and Sunday 17th 2 to 4pm.**

***Opening times in June:* Tuesday 2nd 7 to 9pm and Saturday 20th 2 to 4pm.**

Please note the Saturday opening in June due to Father's Day on the 21st.

HARBURY E-WHEELS

Peter Walshe - Trustee Harbury e-Wheels
harburyewheels@gmail.com www.harburyenergy.co.uk

Harbury Author Guilty



John Stringer, writer of this year's Murder Mystery 'Cinderella', was guilty of creating a hugely fun and silly evening In the Harbury Village Library.

He also scripted himself as the dastardly murderer!

Not content with playing the back end of a pantomime horse (but why was he wearing horse ears?) he was accompanied by more innocent performers Sue Bushill and Moira Rollason as the Fairy Godmother and Wicked Stepmother, together with the stylish Ugly Sisters Trevor Montague and Terry Hunt.

The sell out audience, encouraged by myself as a decrepit Dandini, were set the task of working out who was responsible for the foul deed and the majority chose 'the horse'.

Many thanks to all for supporting e-Wheels and raising £484.

With luck the guilty author is spending his time in jail writing another Mystery for next year!

HARBURY TENNIS CLUB

Colin Mercer
https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/HarburyTC

The lighter and warmer nights have arrived and we're seeing more members "Springing" into action. The Banbury Winter League season finished in April with pride of place going to Harbury "A", winning its final match to remain unbeaten in Division 2 and secure promotion as Champions. The "B" team finished its fixtures in Division 3 and occupies 4th place (of 6). Not such a good season in the Weekend league, the team finishing bottom of Division 2 and being relegated.



The Summer League fixtures have started, and we have two teams in the Banbury Summer League and one in the Warwickshire Seniors League. The B team has already played its first match in Division and on a very windy evening lost at home against Banbury West End C. Lucy Ewen, Wendy Lewin, Josh Blyth (making his debut for the club), Jordy Pratt and Colin Mercer had some very close matches, with several going to a tie-break before losing overall by 3-6.

The Friday coaching re-started after Easter and coolsportz coach Ian Shorrocks is running sessions for Juniors (4.00-6.00) and Adult Beginners/Improvers (6.00-7.00), Lianne Candappa is taking the Ladies' group from 9.30am – 10.30am. All sessions are open to non-members, and you can come along for a free trial. For more details of any of the sessions, or individual lessons, please contact Lianne at: Lianne@coolsportz.co.uk or phone/text her on 07919 104093.

The Club offers affordable tennis and welcomes players of all ages and standards and offer a 4-week free trial. For more details contact Colin at sucolmercer@me.com

HARBURY PRE-SCHOOL

Staff and Committee

Ofsted Outstanding Provider

A New Term





It was lovely to see our existing Pre-Schools returning after Easter and hearing about what they had been up to since we had last seen them. We also welcomed four new children who are settling in well with their new peers.



This term has seen the weather getting a bit warmer so our outdoor bulbs are starting to grow. The garden was still looking a bit bare, so the children have been very busy planting plants into planters as well as growing their own sunflower seeds in individual plant pots. They have used pens to mark up their pots so they can be easily identified. They have also been doing a fantastic job of keeping everything watered and alive.

We would like to thank the corner shop in Harbury for donating some daffodils. The children have been looking at the daffodils closely and recreating them on to card using paint and by cutting up egg boxes for the centres.

We Went to Market



As well as plant growth, we have been looking at where our fruit and vegetables come from. The children visited the Harbury Market before Easter armed with pictures of fruit and vegetables to find on the stalls. They were excited to hand over the money to the stall holders in return for some fruit and vegetables.

Back at the setting, they cut up their purchases brilliantly and then ate them for snack. We have been reading 'Handa's Suprise' and 'Oliver's Fruit Salad', to learn more about were our food comes from and why it is important for us to eat up our vegetables!

We have also been looking at different fruits and recreating them using paint. We have some fabulous colourful paintings.

Outside Play

Now the weather is warmer we have been busy finding creative ways of using natural resources alongside the resources which we currently have.





The children used carboard tubes, tracks and plastic bricks to make some fantastic ramps. They have been testing them out using toy cars and had the idea of using plastic bricks over the track to make a tunnel.

We have also been making footprints using large pieces of paper and our feet.

A sunny day proved a great opportunity to make shadows with our bodies. It was fascinating to the children to be able to wave at our shadow while it waved back!



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.

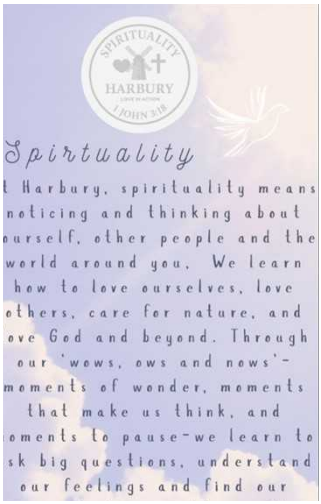
"Let us not love with words and speech but with action and in truth" 1 John 3:18

Autism Awareness Month

During Autism Awareness Month, our school community has been celebrating the uniqueness and gifts of every individual. Through story time, collective worship and class discussions, children have been learning more about autism and the importance of understanding and inclusion. We have explored the lives of inspiring individuals such as Greta Thunberg and Chris Packham, recognising how their passions and interests have helped shape the world in remarkable ways. These activities have helped us reflect on our core values—showing Love and Inclusion by embracing differences, Trust and Collaboration by learning from one another, and Perseverance in celebrating the strengths within us all.



Spirituality

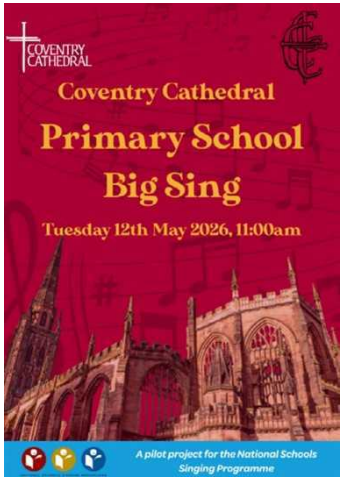


Spirituality is at the heart of our life as a Church of England school, yet it is not always easy to define. Working closely with our partners at Diocese of Coventry, alongside All Saints Church Harbury and our Foundation Governors, we have carefully developed a shared policy and understanding of what spirituality means within our community.

For us, spirituality is about the ongoing journey of reflection and connection—encouraging children and adults to pause, wonder, and explore life's deeper questions. It is rooted in our Christian vision and lived out through our values. We describe it as developing awareness of ourselves, others, the world around us, and God—often expressed as "looking in, looking out, and looking up." We also use the language of "OWs, WOWs and NOWs" to help children recognise spiritual moments—times of awe and wonder (WOWs), moments of reflection and challenge (OWs) and opportunities to make the most of being in the moment. (NOWs).

Through collective worship, reflection time and everyday moments in the classroom, we nurture this sense of awe and wonder. Our close links with All Saints and the guidance of our Foundation Governors ensure that our approach remains authentically Christian, while also being inclusive and meaningful for every member of our school family.

Coventry Cathedral 'The Big Sing'



We are super excited to share that Year 2 and our School Choir will be taking part in the Coventry Cathedral Primary Schools Big Sing 2026, held in the magnificent setting of Coventry Cathedral.

The children enjoyed their first few rehearsals, led by talented singers from the Cathedral's Music Department. It was a joyful and energetic session, with pupils enthusiastically learning songs from Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat. Their confidence grew with each rehearsal and it was wonderful to see their excitement.

Everyone is now looking forward to the main event, when over 500 children from across the region will come together in song, celebrating music and community. We warmly invite families to join us - tickets are free.

HARBURY SCHOOL PTA

Alice Mellings

Fundraising

25th April we had our annual Tom Hauley Bake Sale where Laura set up her amazing cake stall. Thank you to all who came and supported the PTA and to the church for letting us have the hall.

Dates for the diary

- 22nd May – Sponsored Walk – This is one of our most loved afternoons of the year.
- 19th June – Father's Day Event TBC – Any ideas or any way you could support us with this event please email HarburyPTA@gmail.com
- 27th June – Open Gardens – Earthworms and the PTA will be opening the school gardens

Lottery





We would love to give the local community another opportunity to sign up to the PTA Lottery, with the chance of winning monetary prizes each month (excluding August) with a rollover in September! Last September the winner won £179!! Here are some of our lovely winners who support the PTA Lottery.

This is an easy way to support our school and have a chance to win some cash. For just £2, you can get a number in the school lottery, with the option to buy up to 4 numbers. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd numbers drawn, and 50% of all proceeds go directly back to school. The more participants, the bigger the prizes. Don't miss out!

Please fill out the paperwork below and drop it in to Harbury School's reception to be in with a chance of winning each month! Contact us on harburypta@gmail.com if you have any questions

PTA Lottery Sign Up Sheet

Charity number 1040927

Name_____ Telephone no. _____

Email address _____

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**: Business **Account name**: 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



As previously reported, the Crime Prevention team visited us in February and left various useful bits of kit for helping us all look after our property - including equipment for post-coding portable items. In addition to making the equipment available during 'Repair Cafe' sessions, some of the items are now available to take away whenever the Library is open. You will find a selection of items on the top shelf of the jigsaw bookcase - it's in the cafe, opposite the counter.

On 5th and 12th May we have the last two sessions of 'Community Art Therapy' run by New Age Care. These sessions are free to attend. Each session lasts for one hour from 1.30 to 2.30pm. They are part of a four week 'taster session' covering free expression, paper weaving, using recycled materials for art and 'reflective words' through collage. No experience needed, just come along and give it a go.

We have a new writing competition for children. In conjunction with Amanda Randall and Harbury Swifts Project, we are launching a competition for children to write an acrostic on 'SWIFTS'. The deadline for entries - at the Library - is 24th June. The winners - one in each category Key Stages 1 & 2 - will be announced at Swift Awareness Week which we are hosting in the Library on 27th June. For more information see Amanda's article in this issue. Amanda will launch the competition at the school assembly 18th May.

I mentioned last month that, as a community space, we are happy to welcome community groups who need a space to meet during our normal opening times. Clearly, we cannot accommodate groups when Biblio's is open or other regular groups are in. But if you're interested in exploring options, do get in touch. Harbury WI took the initiative last month and held a cream tea for about twenty of their members and, in so doing, raised a handsome amount for charity - The Esther Project. Well done Harbury WI!



GARDEN JOTTINGS

Christine Dakin from Bridge Nursery

What does the Chelsea Flower Show mean to you? Eye-wateringly expensive tickets, crowds, celebrities and up-market garden accessories or the best of new gardens and plants? There is a kind of kudos to be able to say that you are going to Chelsea. It's an experience I'm pleased to have had but I'd rather go to one of the smaller shows such as Malvern.

Many years ago, there was the Festival of Gardening held at Westonbirt Arboretum. It was on for three months; there was a maximum allowance of £20,000 to create a show garden. There was a wonderful range of quirky conceptual gardens as well as more traditional ones. It was a beautiful setting and no crowds. Sadly it wasn't repeated.

Meanwhile, back in the real world there are things to be done:



Bedding plants and dahlias can go out later in the month, house plants might need fresh compost and a larger pot, sow sweet corn, hardy cucumbers, dwarf French beans, more peas/mange tout, and lettuce, and, as always, there might be a weed or two to remove before it self-seeds everywhere.

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



NATURE NOTES

Martin & Amanda Randall

Harbury.nature@gmail.com

Earlier this year, we went to a very informative talk about Curlews given by Jan Guilbride from the Banbury Ornithological Society. Jan leads the Curlew Recovery Project in South Warwickshire and the Cherwell Valley in Oxfordshire.



Curlew (Martin Randall)

The Curlew is the largest European wading bird. With its long down-curved bill and long legs, it is instantly recognisable. Its evocative, liquid, bubbling call can be heard along coasts and estuaries in winter and on moors, meadows and pastures in summer and has inspired folklore, poetry, art and music.

The UK currently holds approximately a quarter of the world's Curlew population. However, this population has been in long-term decline since the 1970s and has almost halved in the UK over the last 20 years. The species is now on the Red endangered list. In lowland southern England the population has declined to about 500 pairs, with many colonies on the verge of local extinction.

It may come as a surprise to know that breeding Curlews were once abundant in South Warwickshire. Locally, Curlews breed around Napton-on-the-Hill and Tysoe, and represent some of the most southern and fragile breeding populations in the UK. While most Curlews are associated with northern moorlands, these "lowland" Curlews are a vital part of the biodiversity in South Warwickshire and the nearby Cherwell Valley. Nowadays, there are fewer than 10 pairs across the whole of this region and the chance of hearing their haunting cries locally has become increasingly rare.

Breeding Curlews in our area seek out unimproved grassland, which is a rare habitat. They favour damp, rough pastures and traditional hay meadows. Ideal breeding sites have wet areas for feeding and dry areas for nesting, with minimal disturbance. The historic "ridge and furrow" fields common around Napton and Tysoe provide micro-habitats where moisture collects in the furrows, offering soft ground, ideal for the Curlews to probe for invertebrates with their long bills.

Curlews usually arrive at their breeding grounds in late February or March but this year they were reported back in the Cherwell Valley on 23 January. They lay their eggs in a nest on the ground, known as a 'scrape', typically choosing tall vegetation for cover, such as tussocks of grass or rush. The adults incubate the eggs for about four weeks before the young leave the nest, staying with their parents for a further four weeks before fledging.

The Curlews in South Warwickshire face greater significant "lowland" pressures than in upland areas. The shift from traditional haymaking to early silage cutting (often in May) can destroy nests and chicks before they are fledged. Drainage of damp fields and the conversion of pasture to arable land results in habitat loss, reducing the available foraging ground for chicks, who need "wet flushes" to find soft-bodied insects. Predation is also a problem: in these fragmented lowland landscapes, eggs and chicks are highly vulnerable to foxes, badgers, buzzards and crows.

With Curlews on the brink of local extinction, there are several active conservation initiatives in the area. Volunteers from the Banbury Ornithological Society's Curlew Recovery Project work closely with local farmers to identify nest sites. Once a nest is found, they erect temporary electric fencing to protect it from mammalian predators such as foxes. This expensive measure gives excellent results, but could not happen without the aid of some significant fund raising. The Curlew Partnership said that, in the last five years, nests protected using temporary electric fencing resulted in a 74% hatching success rate, compared to the national average of 25%.

Organisations, including the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, have also collaborated with landowners to support Curlew-friendly farming practices such as delaying mowing dates, and paying farmers to leave any fields where nests are found for longer before the hay is cut, to allow the chicks to hide from buzzards. The provision of damp areas, wet flushes or small,



Cowslip flowers near Mill Street (Martin Randall)

shallow pools has also been encouraged to give feeding areas for chicks. If mowing is imperative, farmers help by cutting from the inside of the field outwards to give chicks a chance to escape.

Local residents in Tysoe (which has an active "Making Space for Nature" initiative) and Napton-on-the-Hill are encouraged to report sightings and calls to help monitor the birds' success.

If you visit the area, remember to keep dogs on leads. From March to July, ground-nesting birds are easily spooked. Even if a dog doesn't catch a bird, the parent leaving the nest allows the eggs to cool or be spotted by crows. This also applies to our local skylarks and other ground-nesting species!

There are some unimproved pastures nearer to our village, unfortunately under threat from development. Two small fields off Mill Street in Harbury are subject to planning permission for housing. They hold a relatively rich



Cowslips (Martin Randall)



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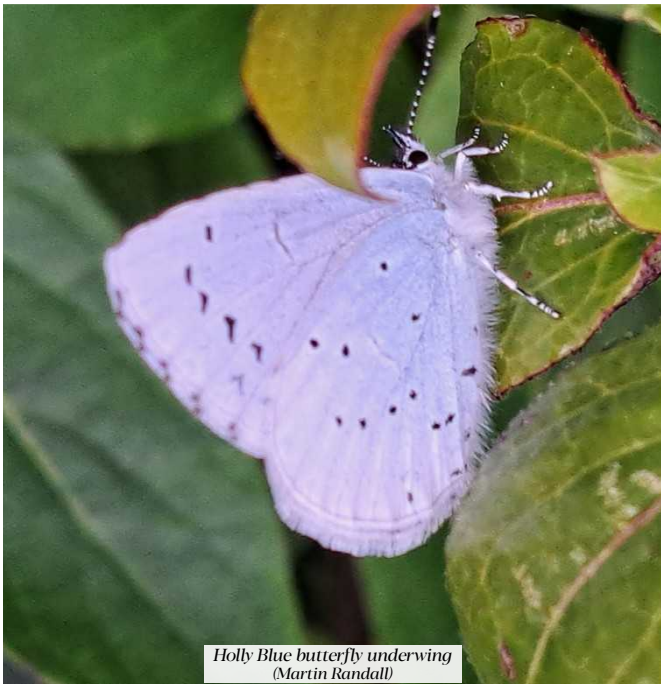
flora and are the home of many butterflies. The field behind the old petrol station has the remains of ridge and furrow agriculture from the middle-ages. At the time of writing this article (mid-April) we saw cowslips flowering on some of those ridges. It would be a great pity to loose these important habitats from within the village.

Last month we wrote about birds that have increased in numbers recently, one being the Raven. Several people have since told us that they have heard, and seen, Ravens locally in our area, which is further evidence of how this species is doing.



Holly Blue butterfly underwing (Martin Randall)

We are always pleased to hear about interesting wildlife that people have seen in and around Harbury and Ladbroke. When writing this article, in mid-April, we have had several reports of blue butterflies being spotted around here. We have also seen blue butterflies in our garden. These early blue butterflies are Holly Blues; the first blue butterflies to emerge in



Holly Blue butterfly (Martin Randall)

spring. The Holly Blue is distinguished from all the other blue butterflies by the delicate black spots on its powdery pale blue underwings - other blues have orange spots. The upperwings are a bright blue and you can identify the sexes because the female's forewings are edged with an inky black. Holly Blues tend to fly higher up around bushes and trees for nectar, whilst Common Blue butterflies prefer open grassland and tend to fly at ground level.

HARBURY GENERAL NEWS

HARBURY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR UPDATE

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

Sitting down to write my monthly piece for Harbury and Ladbroke News, I have seen a flyer from Gladman with a proposal for another housing development in Harbury. This has reminded me that I need to share another update regarding how Stratford District Council is working to tackle this issue….

Five-Year Housing Land Supply (yes again!)

Our District continues to face significant challenges in maintaining a robust five-year housing land supply, which is a key national planning requirement. Where this cannot be demonstrated, the Council's ability to refuse speculative development is substantially weakened. For further details please see my last two articles in Harbury and Ladbroke News.

This has had very real implications for communities such as Harbury, where recent planning applications have illustrated how difficult it may be to resist development proposals, even where there are strong local concerns. In simple terms, without a confirmed five-year supply, national policy – favouring development - carries greater weight than local planning policies including Neighbourhood Plans.

Addressing this remains a priority for the District Council. Work is ongoing to bring forward deliverable housing sites and to strengthen the Council's position so that it can better defend decisions, especially with the threat of appeals, and support plan-led development.

To support this work, a recent decision has been taken to appoint external expertise. A six-month contract has been awarded to Keystone Project Solutions to provide dedicated project management for the "boosting land supply" project. This will help drive progress, improve coordination, and ensure risks are actively managed.

This is a critical step in regaining greater control over where and how development takes place, and in reducing the risk of unplanned and speculative proposals affecting our area in future.

Recycling Success – some good news!

I am pleased to report that Stratford District Council achieved the highest household recycling rate in England for 2024/25, according to figures published by Defra.

The District recorded a recycling rate of 63.9%, an increase of 2.9% on the previous year, moving us up to first place nationally. This is an excellent achievement and reflects the continued commitment of residents across the District to recycling and reducing waste.

This success is the result of a strong partnership between residents, the District Council, our waste collection contractor (Biffa), and the facility where recycling is processed (Sherbourne). Continued investment and improvements in recycling infrastructure mean the service can adapt to new materials and remain efficient in the future.

Recycling plays an important role both environmentally and economically. By reusing materials such as paper, glass and plastics, we reduce the need to extract new raw materials, helping to protect natural habitats and conserve resources. It also uses significantly less energy than producing goods from scratch, which in turn reduces carbon emissions and helps tackle climate change. In addition, recycling is generally more cost-effective than disposal, helping councils manage waste more efficiently and allowing savings to be reinvested into local services.

Please do continue your excellent efforts!

Further information on what can be recycled, including additional items collected locally, is available here: www.stratford.gov.uk/waste-recycling/our-recycling-collection.cfm

You can also search for specific items using the District Council app or via the A–Z guide online:

www.stratford.gov.uk/waste-recycling/a-z-of-recycling-and-disposals.cfm?frmAlias=/a%2Dz%2Dof%2Drefuse/

Livestock Worrying and Responsible Dog Ownership

I would like to highlight an important issue for our rural communities, particularly given the number of farms and livestock in our area. Stratford District Council is again supporting Operation Recall, a national initiative led by Warwickshire Police to raise awareness of livestock worrying and promote responsible dog ownership.

At this time of year, the risk is especially high, as pregnant ewes and young lambs are particularly vulnerable. However, livestock worrying can occur at any time and often leads to serious injury or death of animals, with significant emotional and financial impacts on farmers.

The District Council's Rural Crime Advisors are continuing their work locally by visiting areas where incidents have occurred, speaking with residents and providing advice on safe dog walking. This includes sharing guidance from the National Sheep Association to help dog owners better understand the risks.

It is important to be aware that the law in this area has recently been strengthened. Under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953, it is already a criminal offence for a dog to worry livestock. New legislation going through Parliament will extend police powers, including allowing officers to seize dogs involved in attacks, collect evidence more effectively, and take action even where livestock has not been physically injured but has been chased or put at risk. Penalties may also be increased. In practical terms, the most effective way to prevent incidents remains simple: dogs should always be kept on a lead when near livestock.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind residents of the importance of cleaning up after their dogs. Dog fouling is not only unpleasant but can pose a serious risk to livestock. Dog waste can carry parasites, such as those which cause abortion in sheep and cattle, with potentially devastating consequences for farmers.

Most dog owners act responsibly, but even a small number of incidents can have a significant impact in rural areas like ours. A little extra care can make a real difference in protecting both

animal welfare and local livelihoods. This is also a chance to remind all dog owners (me included) that not everyone feels comfortable around dogs and that some dogs can be very anxious around bouncy, confident dogs. Being a responsible dog owner means not just picking up the poop but also considering how others (and their dogs) may react to our dogs.

If you would like further information, or feel your area would benefit from a visit from the District Council's Rural Crime Advisors, you can email: community.safety@stratford-dc.gov.uk Farmers who would like 'Dog on Lead' signage can contact Warwickshire Police at: ruralcrimeteam@warwickshire.police.uk

New Council Website Launched

I am pleased to share that Stratford District Council has recently launched a newly redesigned website, alongside a wider Digital Strategy aimed at improving how residents access services online.

The new website has been shaped by feedback from residents, as well as how people actually use the existing site, to make it simpler and more intuitive to navigate. The aim is to help residents, businesses and visitors find the information they need more quickly and easily. In my opinion it is vastly better!

The updated design is more modern and mobile-friendly, with improved accessibility and clearer pathways to commonly used services. This should make everyday tasks - such as reporting issues, making payments or finding local information - more straightforward. The Council's newsroom has also been refreshed to provide clearer and more up-to-date news and updates.

The new website is now live and can be accessed at: www.stratford.gov.uk



HARBURY CARNIVAL GAMES WEEK 2026 THIRTY YEARS YOUNG

Mike McBride, John Broomfield

Pub Games

To help you get your teams together we would like to give you earlier notice that we are going ahead with the games and the venues have been set. We have a new landlord in the Gamecock who will be introduced to the Harbury Carnival shenanigans before the events.

Last year we had NINE teams take part and hopefully we will have a few more this year. Although we try and have some outdoor games those of you who have come along in the past will know that we can move inside should the weather not be "flaming June". Over the years we have had hundreds of people (and many generations) join us to play a variety of games.

This year they will start Monday 8th June through to Thursday 11th June, commencing at 7.30pm each evening.

The schedule this year will be:

Monday 8th	Harbury Rugby Club	Aunt Sally
Tuesday 9th	The Crown Inn	Table Skittles
Wednesday 10th	The Gamecock Inn	Horseshoes
Thursday 11th	Harbury Village Club	Quiz

While there is a maximum of 12 players per team, only four players are needed for each game so there is nothing to stop a team having just four players as long as they are happy to turn up to play every evening. This gives plenty of flexibility for friends, neighbours, and colleagues etc. to get together and enter a team, so why not come along and enjoy the fun?

Depending on the number of teams, the games usually take less than two hours.

Points are allocated for each event and the team with most points at the end of the four nights will be presented with the Harbury Pub Games shield.

We do ask for an entrance fee of £1 per person per team.

Entry forms will be available in the local pubs and club in May or you can contact me on 01926 612421 or John Broomfield on 01926 614258 to register or if you have any questions.



HARBURY SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE UPDATE

Mike McBride, On behalf of the Harbury Senior Citizens Benefit Association

Summer Outing

We decided not to go too far afield for our summer trip and chose Shrewsbury as we have not been there before. The trip will be on **Wednesday 17th June** and we will be leaving the Village Hall at 8.30am.

Quoting from the Shrewsbury website it says:

"Shrewsbury is the county town of Shropshire, in western England. It sits inside a loop of the River Severn, and its Tudor centre is lined with half-timbered houses. The medieval, red-brick Shrewsbury Castle houses the Shropshire Regimental Museum, where military artefacts include uniforms and weaponry. St Chad's Church is defined by its unique circular nave, and St Mary's Church has elaborate stained-glass windows. It is ideal for wandering and window shopping"

We will be sending out invitations in early May. So that we can get a good idea of the numbers of people who will be coming we would like you to return them to Harbury Library by **Saturday 23rd May**.

If you want to know anything about the outing, please contact Julie Clarke on 612066 or me on 612421.



PONDER IN THE PUB

Rev Andy Batchelor

An opportunity to discuss life's big questions from a secular and Christian perspective.

We meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, 6.45pm for 7pm (close at 8.30pm) at the Crown Inn, Harbury.

The topic for the 26th May: The Pope, tyrants and the 'Just War' debate. Everyone is welcome. Please do join us.

HARBURY GARDEN WALKABOUT
SAT 27TH & SUN 28TH JUNE 2026

Peter Walshe, Trustee, Harbury e-Wheels

We have over 20 gardens open this year (11am - 6pm on Saturday 27th June and 12 noon - 6pm on Sunday 28th June) some with teas, coffee, cakes, lunches and art/photography exhibitions. SO PUT THE DATES IN YOUR DIARY NOW!



It is a special weekend which should include respectively, a Painting and Photo Exhibition and Swift Awareness Week in the Library, the Harbury Heritage Centre and Earthworms Garden Area at Harbury Primary School.

We will also be focussing on the seven things that you can do to promote wildlife in gardens AND Michael Luntley will be organising appropriate poems that will appear in various gardens (with owners' approval) plus an occasional short reading in a few places.

Entry is by Programme and these will be available in the Library from Monday 22nd June (cash or card, £5 an adult, valid for the same person both days) with proceeds to Harbury e-Wheels. If you need to book before that you can use TicketSource (search What's On 'Harbury Garden Walkabout 2026') and collect your programme from the Library on the day.

An extra attraction are tours of Harbury Windmill by Jeremy Atkins on Saturday 27th June (booking via TicketSource only from Monday 1st June, £5 donation to e-Wheels).

Any questions (or if anyone else would like to include their garden) please contact Peter Walshe on 07446 779879 or peterdouglaswalshe@gmail.com.

The free cakes are fabulous! And the conversation and friendly chatter make Tom's Teas a lovely way to spend an hour or so once a month. Why don't you drop in and see what you are missing! It's a great opportunity to meet new friends or catch up with old ones.

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.

Following the first four Tom's Teas, which were all very enjoyable and very 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

- **Monday 18th May**
- **Monday 15th June**
- **Monday 20th July**

You can be sure of a warm welcome.

HARBURY SWIFT VILLAGE

Amanda Randall

Contact Harbury Swifts: swifts.harbury@gmail.com

Thank you to the new Swift Champions and to everyone who has agreed to monitor Harbury's swift population again this year. With your help, we hope to add to our knowledge of the swifts that make Harbury their home. If you have any questions about the survey, please email me (address above).

Once they have arrived, we will monitor the swifts from May until late July. The ideal time of day to do this is during periods of peak low-flying swift activity, which is usually between 7.30pm and 10pm, before dusk. So over the next three months, on evenings when conditions are dry and still, expect to spot people standing on the streets, staring up at Harbury's rooftops and making notes! Listen out for the 'screaming parties' of swifts as they investigate potential nest sites.

As I write, I have heard that some swifts have already arrived in the south of England. The first group of arrivals are the experienced adult birds that have bred in previous years. They will not be looking for a new place to nest, unless their old site has been destroyed. They return straight to the site where they bred previously, and get on with the business of nesting. Hopefully, by the time you read this article, Harbury's adult swifts will be here, too.

The second wave of swifts returning to the UK, a couple of weeks later, will be juvenile birds who are on the look out for a nest site. These birds may well be interested in the Harbury nest boxes, so we will be watching them closely. Some of these boxes have swift attraction callers located nearby, and we are hoping that these callers will draw down juvenile birds and encourage them to investigate. If you have one of the callers, now is the time to switch it on, not too loudly, during early morning and later in the evening.

A third wave of non-breeding juvenile swifts will arrive later in the month and will join the screaming parties of swifts investigating nest sites for future years, when they are old enough to breed.

The UK-wide Swift Awareness Week will take place from 27th June to 5th July, which coincides with the Harbury Garden Walkabout on Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th June. On Saturday 27th there will be a Swift-themed drop-in activity for children in Harbury Library between 2-4pm. There will be more details about this in next month's Harbury & Ladbroke News.

To celebrate our swifts, Harbury Library and Harbury Swift Group are also organising a competition for children to write and submit a swift acrostic poem. In an acrostic poem, the first letter of each line spells a word. The word is the subject of the poem, Swifts! Details of this competition will be announced in school on 18th May and more information will follow via the Library's Social Media. There will be two separate categories, one for Key Stage One and one for Key Stage Two, with a prize for the winner of each category. The deadline for entries to the competition is 24th June, so there's plenty of time to get composing! All entries will be on display in the Library during Swift Awareness Week, and the winners will be announced then.

Harbury Swifts will be represented at the Harbury Parish Council stand at the Carnival on 13th June, so do come and see us there. More information to follow in the June edition of the Harbury & Ladbroke News!



HARBURY VILLAGE SHOW – 12TH SEPTEMBER 2026

Gordon Robbins

The schedules for the 2026 Village Show are ready! They can be downloaded from: hlnews.co.uk/harbury-village-show.html, and paper copies are available from Harbury Library, The Post Office and The Milk Shed, so grab your copy and start planning!

In the adult section, there are 30 categories for vegetables, 06 for fruit, 20 for flowers and pot plants, 04 for flower arrangements, 17 for food and 07 for art and craft, and 05 for photography.

In the children's section for the under 8s there is the opportunity to grow, make and create,







Previous page and above: Some entries from last year's show, demonstrating the diversity of categories

while for the under 12's their talents can be shown in growing, photography, baking and painting.

Reading old copies of the show schedules dating back to early part of the 20th century, it's clear that the Horticultural Show was a major social event of the year. The rules stated that dancing was to be strictly prohibited till after 4.00pm! To echo the 'Good Old Days' this year we will be joined by the Cubbington Silver Band, so if you feel moved to waltz away to their excellent playing before the 4.00pm deadline, no one is going to stop you!!

We will always welcome new members to the committee, so if you are interested in supporting us, please contact Gordon Robbins g.d.robbins@outlook.com. Being a member of the committee does not exclude you from entering the show.

HARBURY LOCAL MARKET

Steve Ekins

We are taking a break of three months for the Summer.

Our next Market will be Saturday 26th September 10.00am until 12.30.

September's local Community Group that we are supporting, is Harbury Junior Football Club.

Up to 30 stalls selling everything from Curries, Cakes, Meat, Dog Treats to Art and Craft.

Free entry, come and join us for a tea or coffee and a bacon roll.

Councillors Corner will be there 10.00 – 11.00am to answer any question you have.

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

Our Sponsor HARBURY PARISH COUNCIL

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY

Gill Holden & Nicola Thompson - Poppy Appeal Organisers

Poppy Appeal Collection 2025

We recently heard news from the Royal British Legion about donations which were made via our District QR Code and Toucan App. The total amount including cash collections in our district (Harbury, Ufton and Chesterton) for 2025 now stands at £2,639.48.

We are very grateful to all those who donated and we look forward to this year's appeal launching in October 2026.



SOUTHAM GARDENING CLUB

Emily Jamieson

Monday 18th May

Southam Gardening Club, 7.15 for 7.30. Growing Vegetables, Roger Umpleby.

Communal Hall, Tithe Lodge, Little Park, off Park Lane, Southam. All welcome. Non-members £4.50. Refreshments, from 7.15pm, included.

[NB Plant sale - please bring plants to sell in aid of the club and bring a bag to carry home your purchases]

Full details on the Gardening Club web page at https://tinyurl.com/4jnteww3 or Tel 01926 813986 or 815086.

CARERS4CARERS – YOUR LOCAL SUPPORT GROUP FOR FAMILY CARERS

Lisa Barnett

We meet on the fourth Friday of the month (second Friday in December), 10.30 –12.00 at Kineton Village Hall. Loved ones are welcome and can join our Companionship Group during the meeting.

Friday 22nd May: Warwickshire Vision will be joining us to share the support they offer people in Warwickshire who are sight impaired. There'll also be time for chat and refreshments.

For more information or help with transport, contact Gillian on 07947 893504, email kcarers4carers@gmail.com, or visit www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk (new website under construction).



READERS' LETTERS

Dear Editors

I would like to thank everyone for the incredible support you have shown me and my family. Your messages, cards, flowers and condolences have meant more than I can fully express. During such a difficult time your thoughtfulness has brought me comfort and has reminded me how fortunate I am to live in such a caring village community.

I truly appreciate each and every gesture - it has helped carry me through more than you know.

I am also especially grateful to my clients who have been very understanding during this period.

Thanks to everyone's generous donations we raised an incredible £1,000 for Prostate Cancer, which Kevin, who fought the disease for many years, would be sincerely grateful and proud. Our sons, Rob and Alex, will also be partaking in a sponsored bike ride in October from Bilbao to Madrid which will raise even more for the good causes.

With heartfelt thanks

Jackie Biddle and family

Dear Editors

John Hancock

Since John's death on 20th March, I have been overwhelmed to receive numerous cards, letters and gifts of flowers. All contain wonderful tributes to John not just as a doctor but as friend and contributor to the life of our wonderful village. Always modest, he would have been astonished that he was so loved and valued. I have been very touched by everyone's kindness and support which has been so helpful at a difficult time. John has been buried amongst the trees and wildflowers at Sun Rising Natural Burial Ground in the heart of the South Warwickshire countryside he loved so much. If anyone would like to make a donation in his memory, our son Stephen has set up Just Giving pages for Medecins sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders) and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

www.justgiving.com/page/dr-john-hancock-wwt

www.justgiving.com/page/dr-john-hancock-msf

Sharon Hancock

Dear Editors

We'd like to warmly thank everyone for their kind messages of condolence on the death of my mum Audrey. That she was well loved in the village was evidenced by the number and variety of people who came to All Saints to celebrate and remember her long life - what a generous and caring village.

Thank you to Rev. Andy for a wonderful service and to all those friends who quietly got on with serving refreshments afterwards, we are very grateful.

From donations on the day £146 was given for The British Heart Foundation in addition to those given online.

We felt Audrey would have really enjoyed the occasion and joined in the singing with gusto!

With our thanks,

Lesley & Brian Jones and family

foodbank

LOCAL FOODBANK donations of non-perishable items as listed below which supplies the surrounding area, including Harbury, can be left at:

Harbury Village Library Foyer	e-Wheels driver	Harbury Co-op
(Wight School when open)	Wight School car-park on Mondays between 11.30am - 12.30pm	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.

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HARBURY VILLAGE HALL	**HARBURY VILLAGE LIBRARY**	**TOM HAULEY ROOM**
Booking Secretary Tel: 07563 044772 *harburyvillagehall@googlemail.com*	**Michael Luntley** *communityhub@harburyvillagelibrary.org.uk*	**Moira** *thr@allsaintsharbury.org*

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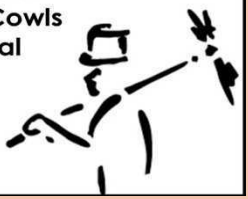

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