

## **Harrold Parish Council Chairman's End-Of-Year Statement 2021/22**

It has been another unusual year due to the pandemic, but in June 2021 we returned to physical meetings in the Harrold Centre rather than using videoconferencing. I'm pleased that we have retained a full house of 13 councillors again for the full year. There was a time when we were struggling to recruit councillors, so this is reassuring that we must be doing something right. Your current councillors are: Robert Tickle (Chairman), Richard Barrett, Bob Muller, Jayne Peverell, Pat Pedersen, Sebastian Reger, John Calver, Gaby Green, Eddie Thompson, Heather Paston, Andrew Littlemore, Geoff Turner and Jonathan Robinson.

In November 2021 we finally had our **Neighbourhood Development Plan Referendum** that saw the plan adopted by 318 Yes votes to 53 No. We expect there to be some controlled development as a result of this.

The **Harrold Flood Group** is now operational, in response to the extreme flooding of Christmas 2020, and we are holding an inventory of flood sacks around the village. The local flood groups (Harrold, Odell, Carlton) have access to the new Environment Agency **internet flood camera** by the bridge. Its intended use is to get a view of the flooding on the road and also of the depth gauge. We set aside £7k for **flood channel improvements**; the flood channel protects Harrold from surface flooding from the fields to the north. We now await the borough council and the Environment Agency's feasibility study, which we hope will provide support changes.

The works to upgrade the parish council's 15 **streetlights** to LED is now complete. With so many lights in varied locations, and with different setups, it's been a complex but satisfying project to complete.

The council purchased a third vehicle activated **speed sign**. You can find the three of them at the New Road end of the village, by the school, and up by the Little Odell junction.

The end of October saw disruption on the High St for **Highways works** to resolve the issue of the flooding of the zebra crossing, to repair the surface outside of the Fish bar, and other carriageway repairs.

We added two wooden **picnic benches** at the Harewelle Way playground after a request from residents; although one appears unfortunately to have now gone walkabout.

The winding unit for the **clock** at St Peter's church broke earlier in 2021. Borough Councillor Alison Foster donated £1600 to the parish council from her ward fund, which covered the total cost of the repair.

The parish council has approved a plan for planting **new trees** in various spots across the village. The council then decided to allow residents to part-fund any of the trees as a memorial (cost of £150 plus the cost of the plaque). Please contact the Clerk if you're interested in discussing this.

**Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee – Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June:** Councillors will be hosting a public village event on The Green on the afternoon of Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June to mark the Platinum Jubilee. We have also planted a new tree at the centre of The Green for Her Majesty.

The parish council has been working during the winter to improve the look of the **Lower Green** for residents and to try to reduce anti-social behaviour by opening it up. Clearance works have been carried out and the wooden steps have been replaced. We also had to remove a large oak tree that

had become diseased and the winter storms fatally damaged the alder tree (next to the bench), which had to also come down.

The parish council is pleased to have awarded a **grant** of £600 to The Bridge magazine for printing costs and £2500 to the Harrold Centre as part of ongoing annual support.

I look forward to what the coming year brings; let's hope for a marked improvement on the last one... I'd like to thank the councillors and the clerk for their dedication and hard work.

Robert Tickle      Chairman - Harrold Parish Council

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The next council meeting dates are: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and 13<sup>th</sup> July in the Harrold Centre at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend – there is a public open session at the start of every meeting.