

## **Precept**

The precept is the portion of your council tax that is allocated to the Parish Council via the Borough Council. The parish council has agreed to increase the precept only by the rate of inflation this year: from £72,645 to £74,708. The parish council believes it is vitally important to set the precept at a level to enable services to be provided, local groups to be supported and to ensure village equipment can be replaced when it deteriorates beyond repair: in short, to keep Harrold alive and to make sure it stays a great place to live.

## **Street Ranger**

The parish council have hired a permanent street ranger (a Harrold resident) to litterpick/leaf sweep/bin empty. The litter-picking will be on some (but not all) of the main roads and footpaths and is carried out twice a week. While we do now have a regular street ranger twice a week, we also appear to have a small number of regular litter-droppers, so if you see any litter about please kindly do as I do and pop it in the bin; if we all work together then we can keep Harrold looking as nice as possible.

## **Gritting/salting pavements**

The parish council is trialling the salting of the pavements along the length of the High St and around the Medical Practice. The Borough Council only salt the roads and there are normally a handful of occasions during the winter when the main pavements will need doing. At time of writing the weather has been so mild that it hasn't yet needed to be done.

## **Harrold & Carlton Speedwatch Group**

Harrold and Carlton Speedwatch group was set up with the assistance of Bedfordshire Police in 2015, and we host regular speedwatch sessions in the area. We are not so active in the winter months as the days are short and we need daylight in order to record data, but we will be back in regular action once the clocks go back in March. To supplement our work, Harrold Parish Council purchased a digital mobile speed sign earlier in 2018, and this device records data 24 hours a day. The sign is currently situated on the High Street in Harrold, in the 20mph section. The latest data downloaded from the device is from 2nd November to 7th December 2018, and shows that 2/3 of all drivers are respecting the 20mph speed limit, and that 85% of all drivers are keeping at 23mph or less. However, we do still have some people driving at dangerously fast speeds for a residential village, with the worst offenders exceeding 60mph – although we cannot rule out blue-light responders. We would like to thank everyone who does respect the speed limit in our village, and we will continue to work with Bedfordshire Police to monitor the behaviour of people who don't.

## **Councillor vacancy**

We still have one vacant councillor position on the parish council. Councillors attend a monthly evening meeting; it is unpaid but if you're interested in the village then you will find it quite enlightening and you have the opportunity to steer the progress and focus of the parish council.

## **May 2019 elections**

Every four years elections are held so that parishioners can choose their parish councillors. The next elections are in May this year. If there are fewer applicants than positions (as is currently the case) then it's unlikely a vote will happen. We await full details of the election from the Borough Council, who manage the process.

## **New wall by the bridge**

Initial works on the wall by the main bridge started in November 2018 to put the footings in place. The wall is expected to be built in April 2019 but this will be weather dependent. The Borough Council recently replaced the rusty "No Bathing" signs at our request.

## **Grants**

We have recently granted £500 to The Bridge magazine to cover some of their printing costs and £500 to Harrold Good Neighbours for their liability insurance; the parish council views both organisations as important assets to Harrold.

### **Lifebags**

An inflatable lifebag is due to be installed at the Lower Green in the next few months under an initiative from the Bedfordshire Fire Service. It will be stored in a coded box, the same as the defibrillators. The code can be obtained by calling 999. The parish council will add their own signage to it to let people know of the strong currents, hidden pockets of deep water and the recent fatality on that stretch of river.

### **Orange recycling bags**

You can put these bags out with your recycling if your orange wheelie bin becomes full. These are available at Harrold Butchers and at the Coop. Please only take the amount you need; we assist the Borough council in running this service and we only get restocked on an ad hoc basis.

### **Harrold Cemetary – Green Bin – Reminder!**

The green wheelie bin in the cemetery is for green waste only. Plastic trays, cellophane wrapping and black bin bags need to be put in the black bin. Thanks for your cooperation.

### **Harrold Parish Council Facebook page**

If you would like updates on Parish Council activity then please join the Harrold Parish Council Facebook page. Link is below.

### **Reminder – Change of address**

Due to low footfall, we have ended the lease on the Parish Council office on the High Street. Meetings will now be held in the Harrold Centre going forwards. Please note the new address for correspondence below and the new phone number. Please contact me if you wish to arrange an appointment and I will make myself available.

Address for correspondence:

Harrold Parish Council, Brookfield House, 79 Harewelle Way, Harrold, MK43 7DW.

07388 125821. [clerk@harrold.org.uk](mailto:clerk@harrold.org.uk)

[www.harroldparishcouncil.com](http://www.harroldparishcouncil.com)

[www.facebook.com/harroldpc](http://www.facebook.com/harroldpc)

The next meetings are March 13<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup> in the Harrold Centre. We are rearranging the date February meeting due to a double-booking – please email me if you wish to know the date, else I will place a notice on the council noticeboard the other side of the road from the chip shop informing people of the date. All are welcome to attend, and there is a public open forum at 7.30pm at every meeting. Please email the clerk if you wish to address the council as we may wish to add the item to the main agenda. Please note that the clerk role is part time, so you may not receive an immediate response to correspondence; although I do try to be flexible and spread my time through the week.