

Article submitted to The Bridge magazine in January 2021

Parish council meetings

The parish council is continuing to follow advice from our guiding bodies not to hold physical meetings at present. The council will therefore continue to meet using video conferencing for the near future (www.zoom.us).

Flooding

In late December, Harrold and other villages were badly hit by surface flash flooding, followed by flooding of the main river a couple of days later. We are currently arranging meetings with the Bedford BC Flood Risk Officer and Environment Agency to determine what lessons can be learned.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

At the time of writing, we are preparing to submit the final version of Neighbourhood Development Plan for independent examination. One of the three sites was withdrawn from the plan at this late stage (Land at Priory Farm/New Road). Following advice from Bedford BC, the total number of dwellings in the plan has been reduced from 30 to 25, and the remainder reallocated to the remaining two sites in the proportions backed by the public consultations. That's 17 dwellings at Odell Road and 8 dwellings at Orchard Lane. You can find this latest version of the plan on our website.

Following the independent examination, and if no issues are found with the plan, we will prepare for a referendum for the village to adopt the plan this year. The earliest this can happen is May 2021 due to the government's Covid restrictions. The outcome of this lengthy and laborious process, is having control over the location, type and amount of development in Harrold, backed by the public through multiple consultations. Please note that there is no route to avoid all development in Harrold, as the numbers are assigned by the government and passed down to us by the borough council in their Local Plan.

90 dwellings on Odell Road

The council noted the withdrawal of the appeal to the government's Planning Inspectorate from Catesby Estates in relation to planning permission for 90 dwellings on Odell Road. The parish council's objection was, among other reasons, that this was out of step with the Neighbourhood Development Plan as detailed above.

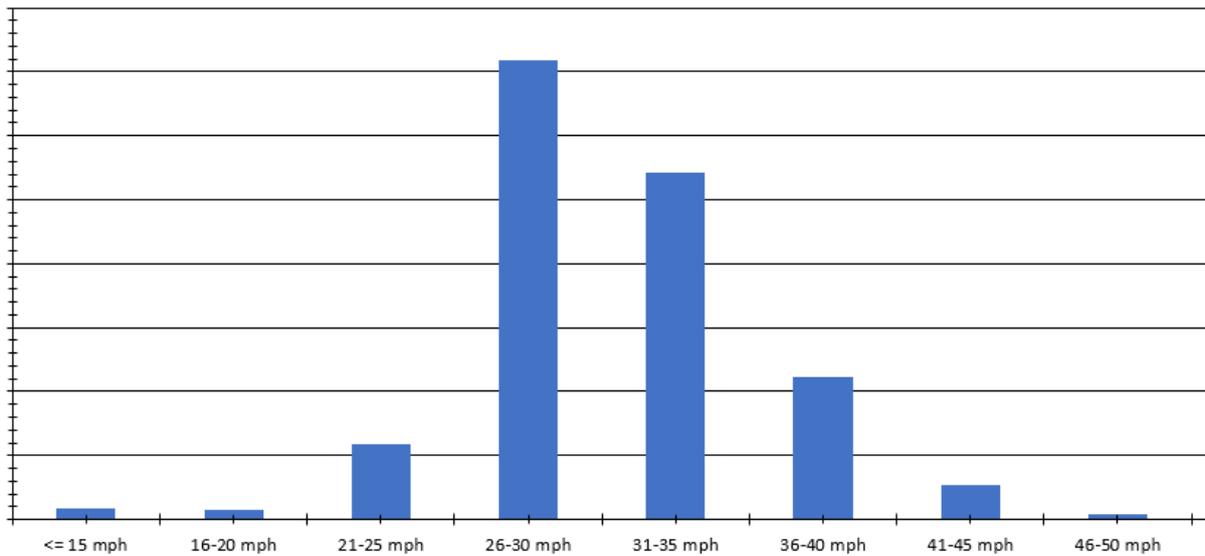
Councillor vacancy

We were pleased to fill the councillor vacancy at the December meeting and we now have a full house of 13 councillors again. Welcome to Councillor Andrew Littlemore.

Speed sign data

We are continuing to collect speed data to determine how severe the speeding issue is in Harrold, as well as using the signs to encourage speed reduction. The sign on Odell Road recorded 17,602 vehicles between 20th November 2020 and 31st December 2020, distributed in the proportions shown in the graph. Disappointingly, almost half the vehicles were breaking the speed limit, with a not-insignificant amount in the buckets at 36mph and above. The police have been sent this data and have agreed to add this spot to their speed-check sites.

Speed distribution



Harrold Parish Council Facebook page

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

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The next council meeting dates are: 10th February, 10th March and 14th April. These are expected to be held using Zoom for the near future, but please check the agenda of each meeting for details.