



Harlaxton Parish Council

Chair: Andrew Cartlidge

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Parish Council Meeting

7:30pm on Wednesday, 24 September 2025

Harlaxton Village Hall, 3 Church Street, Harlaxton, NG32 1HU

Minutes

1. Meeting Opened: 7:30pm
2. In Attendance: Cllrs Wicks, Phillips, Smith and Cartlidge. Also present was Cllr Leadenham from SKDC.
3. Apologies (Non-Attendance): Cllr Clawson
4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests: Cllrs Wicks, Smith & Cartlidge acknowledged membership of the Harlaxton Sports & Social Club. Cllr Cartlidge advised that he worked for a business that had previously sponsored the Harlaxton Cricket Club.
5. Resolution to approve minutes of Parish Council Meetings: PCM of 30 July 2025: Cllr Wicks acknowledged they were not present. Cllrs Phillips, Smith and Cartlidge agreed that the minutes were correct and were duly signed.
6. Public Forum (15 Minute Presentation/Discussion): Regular and new villagers were warmly welcomed. The chair advised that there were still two Councillor vacancies on the Parish Council.
 - 6.1. Villager 1: Expressed concern at the number of heavy lorries using the Drift generally, but particularly when the A1 is closed, given the signed 7.5T weight limit at the top of The Drift.
 - 6.2. Villager 1: Expressed concern about the weight limit on the Canal Bridge at the bottom of The Drift, and advised that they had observed some worrying movement between the tarmac and parapet walls, as well as some deterioration in the brickwork at the base of the masonry arch adjacent to the tow path. They have reported this to LCC via FixMyStreet, but had not yet received a response. *[Cllr Leadenham advised that they were now the Acting Chairman of the Grantham Canal Partnership and would bring this up at their next meeting, scheduled for tomorrow, Thursday, 25 September. Cllr Cartlidge advised that this would be brought to the attention of LCC Highways and County Councillor Vernon]*
7. Updates - County Councillor, District Councillor
 - 7.1. County Councillor update on:
 - (i) Overgrown Sloes and Verge cutting on the Drift
 - (ii) Weight Limit on The Drift Canal Bridge
 - (iii) A607 50mph to 40mph
 - (iv) LCC maintenance of land on the corner of Pond Street/Rectory Lane
 - (v) Removal of A607 streetlighting
 - (vi) Clearing of gully pots and below-ground drainage on A607In the absence of Councillor Vernon, these questions remain outstanding. Councillors expressed dismay that these matters, some of them outstanding for some months, remained unaddressed and unresolved.
 - 7.2. District Councillor updates:
 - (i) Cllr Leadenham advised that SKDC has now returned from its summer recess. Remarked that Barrowby is facing further substantial Planning Applications, and there is a Barrowby Parish Meeting tomorrow night [Thursday, 25 September] to discuss how this can be dealt with. Cllr Leadenham is deeply involved with the Sedgebrook and Allington Parish Councils, dealing with the major planning application at Gonerby Moor. SKDC is involved in the major local government reorganisation and must respond by November 2025. Cllr Leadenham confirmed that they are now the acting Chairman of the Grantham Canal Partnership.
8. Financial:
 - 8.1. AGAR/PKF Update: The 2024/25 external review has been completed by PKF, and they had picked up a minor typographic and timing issue, but it was noted as of no importance to transparency and compliance. Councillors considered the response to be overtly awkward, petty, and pedantic, but chose not to make a formal complaint. Admin was instructed to publish the return documentation in the usual way.

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- 8.2. Invoices/expenses: Cllr Wicks read through the invoices received: BDG [mowing for the Parish responsible grassed areas] £500 + VAT, ROSPA inspection of the Play Area £96 + VAT, Village Link [distributes the Village Voice] £22.63, Crimson Kings [cutting back of the overgrowth around the HSSC car park] £550 + VAT, Bates Environmental [clearing of the two silt/gravel traps along the surface water drainage pipe under the HSSC car park] £485 + VAT, Cllr Cartlidge receipts for expenses [village fayre display boards, Regulation 18 flyers for every house, bedding plants for village planters] £156.61. These were discussed and approved for payment.
- 8.3. Finance: Cllr Cartlidge advised that the HSBC current account was healthy with a current balance of circa £22k, but with various pending expenditures until March 2026. The balance of the precept of £11k was expected in October 2025, which should leave a year-end balance of at least £15k, depending on the progress of ongoing projects. Cllr Wicks commented that the interest on the current account was negligible but that HSBC did offer a higher interest account of circa 4.5% for 3 and 6 months. After some discussion, it was agreed, subject to eligibility for Parish Councils, to open an HSBC higher-interest account with £5k for 6 months and consider longer-term plans when the 2026/27 budget and precept were discussed later in the year.
9. Harlaxton Meadows [Land to the west of Swinehill]: Cllr Leadenham advised that they were not aware of any ongoing matters at SKDC, stating that there were so many issues with the land and the SKDC rejection had been robust.
10. Regulation 18 proposal by SKDC [Land to the west of The Drift]: Cllr Cartlidge expressed thanks to the Harlaxton Action Group for their work in bringing this issue to the attention of the Village and for their continued guidance and support to the Parish Council. Cllr Leadenham advised that there was no current update from SKDC on the proposed allocation, and not to expect any response from them until next year.
11. Village Flooding [Manor Drive works]: Cllr Wicks advised that the Lincolnshire County Council's contractor carrying out the major resurfacing work of Manor Drive had provided highly competitive quotes for resurfacing the HSSC Car Park covering both the area affected by the drainage repair of 2023. and the wider car park. However, Cllr Wicks expressed concerns about accepting the wider quote due to the absence of appropriate edging around the perimeter and the block paving against the building, which may leave HPC with other significant associated works to complete the exercise to a satisfactory standard. Taking into account the mass gravel-filled hole to the front left of the car park, the contractors' revised costs were £4,418.72 + VAT for the repair to the edge of the car park [*HPC had previously received quotes of 9.5k + VAT in 2023*], and £17,281.63 + VAT for the whole car park. Councillors discussed the two options and decided that while occasional patch repairs to the main car park remained achievable, the cost of total resurfacing the wider car park, although an attractive figure, was an excessive expenditure and currently beyond the Parish Council's means. It was agreed to adopt the LCC's lower quote for resurfacing the front edge of the car park only, subject to their confirmation in writing that the deeper, gravel-filled corner would also be brought up to standard and made good.
Cllr Cartlidge advised that AXA were still disputing liability for the surface water drainage across the front of the HSSC car park due to their misclassification of the route as a culvert rather than a drainage pipe. Their current offer remains at £15k, despite the cost of the works to date being in excess of £18k, plus the pending cost to repair the HSSC car park and adjacent Manor Drive. Councillors were asked whether HPC should continue to pursue the claim or accept the £15k full and final settlement. It was agreed to continue pursuing AXA to cover the claim.
12. Harlaxton Doctors' Surgery update: At the request of a villager, HPC had written to the Welby Practice to enquire about the levels of service to be offered at Harlaxton. Their two responses were read out in full, and it was agreed to publish these on the HPC website and FB pages. In summary: No increase in opening hours. GP presence to remain half-day weekly. No full-time nurse or phlebotomist. Pharmacy hours unchanged. Councillors expressed their dismay at the inadequate services offered at Harlaxton.
13. Village Shop/Post Office: Cllr Leadenham advised that, despite requests to maintain some form of local service, The Post Office had advised that it was not going to. It has been reported that the building has now been sold, but there's currently no confirmation of to whom or for what use.
 - 13.1. James Murden's Book: The Harlaxton History Society may take custodianship of the books, but the question remains whether the sale revenues must still be directed to the play area at the Recreation Land [off Manor Drive] as was the original intention. To be discussed at a future meeting when the HHS has considered/responded.
14. Village Fayre: Cllr Smith reported that it was a successful event with proceeds split between the MND and Dementia Society. Cllr Wicks advised that bar takings were lower than last year, which was disappointing given the considerable effort that the HSSC put into organising the event for the village. Cllr Wicks also reported that, due to unforeseen winds, the marquee was damaged and deemed a total loss. Feedback provided by Councillors and villagers present: The BBQ ran out of burgers and sausages far too soon. The Pizzas were very expensive.
15. Highways:
 - 15.1. A607: 50 to 40mph speed reduction - LCC has still not implemented this. HPC to pursue the completion of this work. Consideration should be given to introducing one or more speed indicator devices on the A607 when the limit is finally reduced. Cllr Leadenham advised that, due to changes in local government, grants may be available for this purpose. Despite requests, there is no update on a meeting with LCC Highways Rowan Smith to discuss village matters. HPC to chase County Councillor Vernon.

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- 15.2. Community Speed Watch: Cllr Wicks reported that the CSW sessions are ongoing, with recent vehicles exceeding the 30mph limit on The Drift doing 40mph including a taxi.
- 15.3. Anglian Water pipe in Culvert below High Street: HPC had reengaged with Anglian Water, but they have since gone quiet yet again. HPC to follow up with County Councillor Vernon.
16. HSSC:
 - 16.1. Car Park [hedge cutting, Drainage]
 - (i) Cutting around the car park edge has been completed by Crimson Kings, however this has left exposed a deteriorating timber fence, and the SKDC-provided bag of sand for the creation of sandbags for flooding. Cllr Wicks proposed buying a large bin for pre-filled sandbags to be located at the bottom of Trotters Lane with a combination lock, costing circa £543 + the cost of a combination lock. This was unanimously agreed. Cllr Leadenham advised that he may be able to source a lockable sand bin. Purchase on-holding pending further advice from Cllr Leadenham. Cllr Wicks noted that the contractor had not completed the plugging of some of the cut-back shrubs around the fenceline. The option of requesting the contractor to return for the phase 2 spraying at £150 was discussed and agreed. Cllr Cartlidge expressed concern about the poor state of the exposed fencing. Cllr Wicks was asked to research quotes for repairs/replacement.
 - (ii) Following the completion of the new gravel drain across the top of the sports field, there hasn't yet been sufficient rain and flooding to generate flow into the Coopers Plantation drainage channel.
17. Play Area [RoSPa Report]: The 48-page inspection report has been received with minor maintenance advised, all in line with Cllr Wicks' monthly reports. Cllr Phillips volunteered to assist Cllr Wicks with the maintenance.
18. Grass & Hedge Cutting: The hedge cutting contractor has been appointed and they have acknowledged, but haven't yet proposed a date to do the work. Cllr Wicks advised that ideally, the hedge cutting should be done promptly to avoid damaging the grass along the edge of the sports field and Pearson Gregory field. It was agreed to start requesting quotes for the 2026/27 grass cutting, ready for the November PCM.
19. Any other business
 - (i) Cllr Wicks: Still working on the improvement to the Pearson Gregory Field. The Manor will be repairing the Bowls Club fence that they damaged last year. Quotes are still being sought for the repairs to the front of the HSSC roof and Chimney stack. Dog bin yet to be installed on the corner of Rectory Lane and West End.
 - (ii) Cllr Phillips: A defibrillator check is required. Cllr Cartlidge to assist. Following an approach by a villager on a planning matter, it was agreed to respond to confirm that HPC cannot comment until notified by SKDC of a planning application.
 - (iii) Cllr Cartlidge: Deterioration of the Grade 2 listed obelisk and remedial work required. Agreed to approach SKDC for further advice.
20. Next scheduled Meetings
Parish Council Meeting Wednesday, 26 November 2025 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall
21. Closed Session
22. Meeting closed at 9:04pm.