



Harlaxton Parish Council

Chair: Andrew Cartlidge

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Parish Council Meeting 7:30pm on Wednesday, 29 July 2026 Harlaxton Village Hall, 3 Church Street, Harlaxton, NG32 1HU

Minutes

1. Meeting Opened: 7:30pm
2. In Attendance: Cllrs Phillips, Smith, Clawson & Cartlidge. Also welcomed LCC Cllr Vernon and SKDC Cllr Leadenham.
3. Apologies (Non-Attendance): Cllr Wicks's apology was accepted.
4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests: Cllr Smith is a member of the Sports and Social Club Committee. Cllr Cartlidge is a member of the Sports & Social Club and Village Hall Committees, and a company they work for is one of the Sponsors of the Harlaxton Cricket Club.
5. Resolution to approve minutes of the PCM of Friday, 19 June, 2026. Unanimously approved.
6. Public Forum (15 Minute Presentation/Discussion):
 - 6.1. Representatives of Gonerby Youth Football Club addressed the Council regarding the potential use of the Manor Drive sports field. The Club reported that it had approximately 250 players across its age groups and was experiencing increasing pressure upon its existing playing facilities. It wished to explore the use of the Harlaxton field for one 9v9 pitch, exclusively for an under-12 team. Games would predominantly take place on Sundays. The Club was accustomed to sharing facilities with cricket clubs and could arrange for the first three or four fixtures of the football season to be played away from home, allowing the cricket season to conclude. Approximately 24 children could be involved in each fixture. The importance of responsible car parking, avoiding obstruction of surrounding roads and retaining unobstructed emergency access to the field was emphasised. The Club advised that it used parking signs at other venues and would attend during the first few weeks to ensure that parents and team officials understood the parking arrangements. The Council was receptive to the proposal in principle, provided that the pitch did not encroach upon the cricket square or other areas required by Harlaxton Cricket Club. **Action: Gonerby Youth Football Club to provide a written proposal confirming the proposed commencement date, days and times of use, pitch size and position, number of teams, anticipated vehicle numbers, parking management arrangements. Any use of the changing facilities would need to be discussed separately with Harlaxton Sports & Social Club.**
 - 6.2. The villager volunteers responsible for maintaining the flower beds also addressed the Council. Their representations and the subsequent discussion are recorded under agenda item 23.
 - 6.3. A resident raised concerns relating to Tree Preservation Order enquiries, which is to be followed up by Cllr Leadenham, the position of the bus stop near the crossroads, which is to be followed up by Cllr Vernon, the condition of the footway between Gregory Close and the village shop, which is to be followed up by Cllr Vernon, maintenance of The Drift verge to be discussed at a future Parish Council meeting, and the release of SID data, for which permission has been granted and would be issued in due course.
7. Update from County Councillor Vernon
 - 7.1. Update on LCC meeting from 12 December – no further update at this time. Cllr Vernon to pursue LCC Highways.
 - 7.2. Cllr Vernon provided an update regarding local government reorganisation in Lincolnshire. The announced proposals would result in two new unitary authorities, one covering the wider Lincolnshire area and another covering the City of Lincoln and some surrounding areas. The changes were presently expected to take effect on 1 April 2028, subject to any legal challenge or alteration to the implementation programme. Cllr Vernon emphasised that no immediate changes were being made to the present allocation of responsibilities between Lincolnshire County Council and the district councils. The future electoral ward arrangements had not yet been settled.
 - 7.3. Cllr Vernon also advised that each County Councillor had been allocated £3,000 for community grants. Applications could be made for projects benefiting the local community. Separate strategic grants of between £3,000 and £15,000 were also available for suitable projects with wider community benefits. The proposed accessible WC at Harlaxton Sports & Social Club appeared to be the type of project that might qualify, subject to the relevant criteria and other funding arrangements. **Action: Cllr Vernon to forward details of the community and strategic grant schemes to the Parish Council.**

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8. Update from District Councillor Leadenham
Cllr Leadenham confirmed that South Kesteven District Council had issued an apology regarding the premature collection of some council tax direct debit payments. The apology had been forwarded to the Parish Council and shared through the village social media groups.
 - 8.1. Update on Regulation 18 proposal by SKDC [Land to the west of The Drift]
Cllr Leadenham advised that no outcome had yet been published following the Regulation 18 consultation. The Regulation 19 stage, which would present the proposed submission version of the Local Plan, had also been delayed. Councillors and residents expressed concern regarding the limited transparency of the Regulation 18 process. Individual representations were not generally visible to other respondents, and it was unclear whether there would be a public meeting or other opportunity to consider the consultation responses before decisions were made regarding proposed land allocations. The Council considered that the allocation of land for development was a significant decision that should be subject to proper public scrutiny before the allocation was incorporated into the emerging Local Plan. **Action: Cllr Leadenham to seek clarification from SKDC regarding the anticipated Regulation 19 timetable, the process by which proposed allocations would be determined and what opportunities would be provided for public and Parish Council scrutiny.**
9. Planning Application S26/0307 Section 73 variation of Condition 2 & S26/0398 Drainage Condition 3, Ref the land to the west of The Drift [ref James Perry of Elba Homes]
The Council noted that planning application S26/0307, concerning proposed changes to the approved house types, had been withdrawn. It remained unclear whether the applicant had withdrawn the application independently or following advice from the Planning Authority. Planning application S26/0398, relating to the discharge of the drainage condition, remained outstanding. Cllr Leadenham advised that his attempt to secure consideration of the drainage application by the Planning Committee had not been accepted. Recent changes to SKDC procedures meant that District Councillors could no longer require an application to be called in to committee without the agreement of the relevant planning officer. The Parish Council reiterated its serious concerns regarding the proposed drainage arrangements, their practical deliverability and the absence of a clear and sustainable means of disposing of surface water from the site. The Council asked Cllr Leadenham to pursue committee consideration of the application with the planning officer. **Action: Cllr Leadenham to raise the Parish Council's continuing concerns with the planning officer and pursue Planning Committee consideration of S26/0398 with appropriate vigour.**
10. Finance
 - 10.1. Invoices/Expenses
The following invoices were considered:
Tidy Gardens & Grounds Ltd, invoice 26112, comprising two June maintenance visits: £636.00 including VAT.
Tidy Gardens & Grounds Ltd, invoice 26128, comprising one July maintenance visit: £318.00 including VAT.
Harlaxton Cricket Club, invoice 01/26, for two cuts of areas 12, 13 and 14: £274.00.
Harlaxton Cricket Club, invoice 04/26, for two further cuts of areas 12, 13 and 14: £274.00.
Total approved for payment: £1,502.00.
Resolved unanimously that all four invoices be approved for payment.
11. Flooding
 - 11.1. Manor Drive Flooding: The Chair confirmed that the agreed insurance settlement of £15,000 had been received. The claim had originally attracted an offer of approximately £3,000, which had been increased incrementally over approximately three years to £15,000. The Chair thanked all councillors who had contributed to pursuing the claim and particularly acknowledged the substantial work undertaken by Cllr Phillips.
 - 11.2. High Street: The Chair reported that correspondence continued with LCC Highways regarding the outstanding drainage, gully, culvert and flooding matters affecting High Street and the Trotters Lane area. Despite repeated requests for a substantive and consolidated update, LCC had made no meaningful progress.
12. HSSC:
 - 12.1. Play Area: The annual RoSPA play area inspection was expected later in the year. The inspection date was not known, as inspections were undertaken without a fixed appointment.
 - 12.2. Village Fayre on Saturday, 5 September 2026: Cllr Smith confirmed that preparations for the Village Fayre were in hand. An appeal had been published requesting donations for the tombola. A car boot sale would also form part of the event, with enquiries being directed to Sue Carr or Cllr Smith. The Council recalled that up to £250 had previously been allocated towards publicity and the band. Harlaxton Sports & Social Club would confirm the expenditure incurred against that allocation.
 - 12.3. Accessible WC: The project remained dependent upon securing grant funding. Cllr Wicks had been considering the preparation of the necessary grant applications. The Council noted Cllr Vernon's advice that the project might be eligible for a strategic community grant. **Action: Grant opportunities to be progressed.**
 - 12.4. Pothole Repairs: Cllr Cartlidge reported that he and Zak Walker had repaired four potholes within the HSSC car park during the preceding weekend. Approximately four or five potholes remained to be repaired. The Council recorded its thanks to Zak Walker for his time and assistance in particularly hot weather.

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- 12.5. Car Park White Lining: No quotations had yet been obtained for repainting the car park markings. The Chair reported that the existing surface dressing was extensively crazed, broken and loose. Further potholes and areas of deterioration were therefore likely to develop. The Council noted that any new white lining could be damaged or removed by continuing pothole repairs and might consequently have a limited service life. The timing and value of undertaking the white lining would therefore need to be considered alongside the remaining repairs and the general condition of the car park surface.
13. Harlaxton History Society Information Panel: The Council considered the visualisations supplied by Harlaxton History Society showing the proposed information panel positioned near the telephone box, bench and Obelisk. Councillors generally supported the principle of locating the panel within the Obelisk area. It was considered that this would provide a visible and accessible position where residents and visitors could stop and read the panel. Concern was expressed that the illustrated position between the telephone box and bench might appear congested. Alternative positions on the opposite side of the bench or further around the Obelisk were discussed, particularly if any of the adjoining flower beds were subsequently removed. The land was understood to form part of the highway verge and was not owned by the Parish Council, even though the Parish Council carried out the grass cutting. The History Society would therefore need to obtain the necessary permission from Lincolnshire County Council before installation. [Post meeting note: Planning Approval via SKDC may also be required]. The Parish Council confirmed that it had no objection in principle to the panel being positioned in a suitable and reasonably prominent location within the Obelisk area. **Action: Harlaxton History Society to provide a further visualisation showing the panel in an alternative position around the Obelisk and to pursue the necessary permission from Lincolnshire County Council [Post meeting note: And South Kesteven Planning].**
14. Pearson Gregory Field Working Party: Cllr Wicks continued to coordinate the proposed Working Party. No further substantive update was available at the meeting.
15. Highways:
- 15.1. Community Speed Watch: Additional volunteers to assist with Community Speed Watch sessions would be gratefully welcomed. A further appeal for volunteers would be made through the village communication groups.
- 15.2. SID: The SID was understood to require a replacement battery and might also benefit from being turned around or moved to a different approved position. **Action: A request to be placed on the SID WhatsApp group seeking assistance with replacing the battery and potentially relocating the SID.**
16. HVH Licence Agreement: No update was provided under this item. The matter was deferred.
17. James Murden Book: Two collection or sales boxes were available but still required suitable wording before being placed at Harlaxton Manor and the village shop. Cllr Phillips brought further copies of the book to the meeting. Copies remained available at £2.00 each. **Action: Suitable labels to be prepared and the boxes delivered to Harlaxton Manor and the village shop.**
18. Trotters Lane Sand Bin: The replacement sand bin remained awaiting installation at the bottom of Trotters Lane. Cllrs Wicks and Clawson would undertake the installation when weather conditions were more suitable.
19. Hedge Cutting 2026: It was agreed that quotations should be obtained for the usual annual hedge-cutting work, including the relevant hedges along the A607, Gregory Close, Pearson Gregory Field and around the sports field off Manor Drive. A separate quotation would also be requested for cutting back the publicly maintained section of hedge between Gregory Close and Trotters Lane. This hedge was again encroaching upon the footway and had last been substantially cut back by volunteers approximately two years previously. **Action: Quotations to be obtained for the normal annual hedge cutting and, separately, the Gregory Close to Trotters Lane hedge.**
20. Grass Cutting 2027: The Council agreed that the 2027 grass-cutting arrangements should be considered earlier than in previous years, with contractors appointed before the end of 2026 where practicable. The Chair would check the remaining term of the current arrangement with Harlaxton Cricket Club for cutting the sports field and associated Parish Council areas. If the existing three-year arrangement was approaching its end, fresh quotations would be sought for a further three-year period. [Post meeting note: The three-year term was 2025, 2026 and 2027]. A resident asked whether the Parish Council intended to continue funding the cutting of the wide verge on the eastern side of The Drift in 2027. The Council noted that the present arrangement had been approved as a temporary measure for 2026 only and that no decision had yet been made for 2027. It was reported that LCC had not maintained the wider verge for a considerable period and that the Parish Council had incurred expenditure clearing back established brambles and vegetation. **Action: Cllr Vernon to convey the strength of local feeling to LCC Highways, ask whether LCC would resume or contribute towards the maintenance of the verge and copy the Parish Council into the correspondence.**
21. HPC Website with LCC. LALC Webmaster Service: The Parish Council website remained hosted within the Lincolnshire County Council system and was technically difficult for councillors to update. The Council had previously purchased blocks of webmaster support from the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils as follows: 29/07/2024 10hrs at £18/hr = £180 + VAT, and 06/04/2023 10hrs at £17/hr = £170 + VAT. Only a small amount of the existing allocation remained. LALC had quoted: Five hours: £100 plus VAT & Ten hours: £200 plus VAT. Resolved unanimously that a further block of ten hours at £200 plus VAT be purchased to support future website updates.
22. Periodic Inspection of Electrical Installation at the Phone Box and 2 No. Defibrillators: Requests for quotations had been sent to three electrical contractors and followed up on several occasions. No quotations had yet been received. **Action: Continue seeking quotations for the required periodic electrical inspections.**

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23. Obelisk/High Street Planters:

The Council thanked the two volunteers who had maintained the village flower beds over recent years. One volunteer explained that she had been advised to stop gardening for health reasons. The other volunteer was also unable to continue undertaking the present level of planting, weeding and watering. The particularly hot and dry weather had substantially increased the workload. During prolonged warm periods, some beds required watering every day or every other day. Repeated appeals for practical assistance had produced compliments but very few offers to help with the work. The beds discussed included:

- the raised central bed near the telephone box
- the two beds beside the Obelisk
- the bed incorporating the High Street sign
- the bed near the bottom of Trotters Lane
- the bed near the post box and Pond Street
- the two raised planters near the bus stop

The volunteers considered that the raised central bed might remain manageable with limited assistance, but the more remote beds and the bus-stop planters were increasingly impractical. Particular concern was raised regarding the bed near the post box and Pond Street. Part of the bed could only be maintained while standing in the carriageway, and the established box hedge restricted both access and planting space. The Council considered several options, including:

- seeking other village volunteers
- approaching residents living close to individual beds
- inviting sponsorship of particular beds
- placing an appeal in the Village Voice
- undertaking a letter drop to nearby properties
- obtaining quotations for limited contractor maintenance
- using more drought-tolerant and permanent planting
- removing the bus-stop planters
- removing and turfing over some or all of the beds if no workable maintenance arrangement could be found

No expenditure was approved, and no final decision was taken regarding the removal of any individual bed. The Council agreed to make a final appeal to residents, particularly those living close to the flower beds, to provide practical assistance with watering and maintenance. Without meaningful practical help, some or all of the beds are likely to be removed and turfed over.

Actions: Publish a final appeal through the meeting minutes, village social media and the Village Voice. Consider a direct letter drop to properties near the flower beds. Seek indicative quotations for limited contractor maintenance. Return the matter to a future meeting once the response from residents and likely costs are known.

24. Any other business:

24.1. Mobile Dessert Trader: The Council considered the recent use of the Village Hall car park by a mobile dessert trader without prior permission. The trader had subsequently moved to Strood Close, where it was understood to be trading from the highway rather than Parish Council-owned land. Its operation at that location was therefore not a matter for the Parish Council. Councillors expressed differing views regarding whether the trader should be permitted to return to the Village Hall car park. Concern was raised regarding parking, proximity to neighbouring properties, generator noise, passing buses and children crossing or congregating near the road. The Manor Drive car park was considered a safer and more appropriate location because it provided greater parking capacity, an adjoining play area and open space, and greater separation from nearby housing. Other mobile traders had previously been permitted to operate from that location. It was agreed by a majority that the Parish Council should write to the trader:

- welcoming the business to continue visiting Harlaxton;
- offering the opportunity to trade from the Manor Drive car park; and
- requiring appropriate public liability insurance and environmental health certification before permission was granted to trade from Parish Council land.

24.2. Cllr Smith raised concern regarding the watercourse carrying the Mow Beck between the Pond Street and High Street area. The channel had become heavily overgrown and had apparently not been maintained for several years. It was unclear whether responsibility rested with LCC or SKDC, but there would be some expected Riparian responsibility to the adjacent landowners. **Action: The Parish Council to write to LCC and SKDC to establish responsibility for maintaining the Mow Beck channel and request that the responsible body resumes the necessary clearance and maintenance.**

25. Next scheduled Meetings

Annual Meeting of the Council - Wednesday, 30 September 2026 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall

26. Closed Session [if required]

27. Meeting Closed: 8:53pm