# HARBERTON PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Harberton Parish Council
at 7.30pm on Tuesday 13 October 2026 at Harbertonford Village Hall
*NB the meeting was moved to Harbertonford Football Club due to a double booking in the village hall*

**In Attendance**

| **Harbertonford Councillors** | **Harberton Councillors** | **Others** |
|---|---|---|
| Cllr Beamish: Present | Cllr Camp: Present | D.Cllr McKay: Present |
| Cllr Bowley: Present | Cllr Day: Present | C.Cllr Hodgson: Present |
| Cllr Davies: Present | Cllr Hambly: Present | Clerk Ms Radford: Present |
| Cllr Finch: Present | Cllr Paine: Present | Public: 1 |
| Cllr Palmer: Present | Cllr Morris: Present | |
| Cllr Stirrup: Present | Vacancy | |

**Public Session** No matters were raised.

**1. Apologies** There were no apologies.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

2.1. Register of Interests Cllrs were reminded of the need to update their register of interests if any had changed.

2.2. Declaration of interests Morris and Cllr Camp declared an interest on item 7.1.1. As this matter was for information only, it was not necessary for either cllr to leave the meeting.

**3. Reports** for information from:

3.1. County Councillor (c.cllr)

3.1.1. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) The general view is that it is unlikely that the Government will pursue LGR in Devon. Devon County Council's officers and members can realign their focus. The c.cllr has been looking at divesting the DCC from fossil fuels and investing in local renewal energy and local housing projects instead. Such investment would contribute both to increased energy security and respond to the climate emergency. The Environment Agency is looking at developing a business case for consideration.

3.1.2. 20 MPH Speed Limits Officers have agreed to attend 20's Plenty seminars.

3.1.3. Safe places in heat waves A number of towns and parishes are looking to replace or adapt bus shelter roofs so that these can become safe places during heatwaves. It was commented that use of public transport declines during hot weather, potentially due to greenhouse effect of Perspex bus shelters.

3.1.4. Flood investment Grants submitted for flood defence works in Harberton parish had not been successful. The team is looking at alternatives.

3.1.5. Combined County Authority (CCA) Plymouth is interested in joining the Devon and Torbay CCA. A Mayoral Election could be in place by November next year. The CEO for Active Travel England will be visiting Devon and Torbay to share information about opportunities for creating safer routes and improving road layouts.

3.1.6. Emergency Planning Skills Mapping and Networking The c.cllr encouraged cllrs to attend the training being offered by Devon Communities Together in the coming weeks.

3.1.7. Library improvement grant Cllrs were invited to contribute any ideas for innovations in delivery of library services - such as Libraries in phone boxes, for example.

3.2. District Councillor (d.cllr)

3.2.1. LGR and CCA The d.cllr made similar comments as the c.cllr; reorganisation of local government in Devon is deemed to be too difficult to resolve, and the likelihood of LGR proceeding is unlikely. Thousands of hours of officer time has been given to this. The Government might revisit LGR in the future, but likely in the next parliament. As Plymouth considers joining the Devon and Torbay CCA , there is concern about lack of voice from the District Council.

3.2.2. Extreme Weather The d.cllr is asking local communities what they are doing to improve their flood preparedness, as the implications of an 'unprecedented El Nino' weather pattern leads to an increased likelihood of flooding events.

3.2.3. Local online marketplace: Amazen The not-for-profit local market place will be launched before Christmas.

3.2.4. Budget Setting and monitoring budgets in the face of LGR has been challenging. The d.cllr has had it confirmed that there will be funding for playparks, regardless of whether they are owned by the council or not.

**4. Minutes**

4.1. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Harberton Parish Council 8 September 2026

4.2. Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee of Harberton Parish Council 6 October 2026

**RESOLVED:** i) To sign the minutes at 4.1 as a correct record without amendments
ii) To note the minutes 4.2 and mark as 'REVIEWED' no proposed amendments were made before they be published as a draft, for sign off by the Finance Committee at its next meeting in January.

**5. Report Matters Arising from the Minutes** *Not otherwise on the agenda and for information only*

5.1. Brockhills Cross Footway (Clerk) No update.

5.2. Harbertonford Bus Stop maintenance update Cllr Finch had visited the bus stop and identified what needed to be fixed. It was confirmed the parish council would purchase any materials needed for repairs. **Action: Cllr Finch** to source slates and other materials required.
5.3. Road Warden Scheme advertising (Clerk) Ongoing. Noting that advertising will only take place when it is clear what is being advertised and how it would be supported by the council.
5.4. Traffic calming measures on A381 (Clerk/Cllr Davies) Ongoing.
5.5. Bus turning circle signage (Cllrs Day/Morris) New signs have been erected, however the problem is not resolved. There was a query when the Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) is due to meet and if a scheme for yellow around the turning circle will be considered. **ACTION: The clerk** to follow up queries about the HATOC process with Devon County Highways (Highways).
5.6. Community Emergency Hub (Clerk) Having received approval from Harberton Parish and Harbertonford Village Halls, the Clerk has registered both as Community Emergency Hubs. Registration has been acknowledged by Devon Communities Together, and the kits will be delivered next week.

**6. Parish Councillor Vacancy** There has been no interest in the vacancy.

**7. Planning**
7.1. Notice of Planning Applications under consideration, for information
7.1.1. 2619/26/CLB Certificate of lawfulness for proposed works to a Listed Building for internal 'opening up' works to inform future applications at Higher Luscombe Farm Cottage, Harbertonford. The application was noted and no comments were made.
7.2. Planning applications for consideration
3479/25/TPO TPO 1016; T1: Chestnut – dead, split in two, remove at Winsland House Farm, Dartington **It was RESOLVED** to SUPPORT the application.
7.3. Receive a report on planning or appeal decisions The clerk gave a verbal report to cllrs on decisions of the Local Planning Authority.
7.4. Receive a report on enforcement cases (for information only) A hard copy of the caseload was circulated for cllr's information. There are now 18 active cases on the caseload, as 3 new cases were added in August and one in September 2026. New cases allege works, or change of use of land, without planning.

**8. Monthly reports**
8.1. Finance Committee update Cllrs were informed that a meeting of the Finance Committee had taken place on 6 October 2026 at which the 2026/27 Quarter 2 budget report and bank reconciliation was reviewed. The bank reconciliation showed a balance of £70199.03 including reserves. The Clerk had produced a forecast for estimated income and expenditure for the remainder of the year. There were no concerns. The Finance Committee had made recommendations on awarding a grant from the Community Benefit Fund and on the Clerk's Time Off in Lieu for consideration at item 9.
8.2. Sustainable Harbourne Valley update The fruit pressing at Harbertonford park had been a success.
8.3. Neighbourhood Plan update A report will be made to the November meeting, following the steering group's meeting planned for next week.
8.4. Harberton Playing Field Association (HPFA) It was reported that the playing field is being used to exercise both dogs and horses. A message has been circulated via the village email and more signs will be made to discourage this. There was a discussion about encourage more committee membership and engagement in park management. **ACTION: The clerk** will forward a copy of the most recent HPFA constitution for cllr Stirrup to review. During discussion it was queried if establishing a play parks working group of parish councillors would provide some structure to park management, drawing from a 'friends of the parks' group of volunteers for working days, fundraising and consultation on park improvements.
8.5. Harbertonford Play Area update It was reported that work is underway in designing replacement sign to welcome people to the park, reminders for simple rules (i.e. no dogs) and to share information about use, ownership and maintenance. The recent apple pressing day drew a lot of people into the park.
8.6. Harberton ARK update No update
8.7. Tree Warden Update The Tree Warden had attended the recent AGM at which a new £50m grant fund was announced that would enable landowners with sites of 5 hectares minimum to apply for tree planting schemes.
8.8. Parish and Town Cluster update The Cluster has not formally met since the Government's announcement on LGR, however local clerks agreed to continue to meet regularly to discuss shared/joint initiatives.
8.9. Clerk's update
8.9.1. Road at Monkey Oak Cllrs were informed that the Clerk has written to the Neighbourhood Highways Officer to report erosion of the road between Monkey Oak and Riverside Mill. The Neighbourhood Highways Officer has visited the site and has raised a task for contractors to attend.

**9. Finance Committee Recommendations**
9.1. Community Benefit Fund Grant for Harberton Village Website A grant request of £260.28 had been made to cover the cost of the Harberton Village Website hosting package and necessary associated domain names for the next two years.
9.2. Clerk's Holiday and Time Off in Lieu It was noted that the clerk used 14 hours of toil and 30 hours of holiday in Quarter 2, requesting the remainder be carried forward. No overtime was worked in the quarter.

**It was RESOLVED:** **i)** to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and award a grant of £260.28 on receipt of grant acceptance.
**ii)** to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and approve the clerk's request to carry 6 hours TOIL into the next quarter, noting the clerk has 26.4 hours of holiday left in the year.

**10. Parish Lengthsman** *Consider an approach to recruitment, and the option of combining forces with other Parish Councils looking to award a similar contract.*

It was noted that the interest in the advertised tender document did not move on to a contract due to the ill health of the applicant. Dittisham Parish Council is also in the process of advertising a lengthsman contract and has not had any applications. There was a discussion on the value of advertising both contracts together to make the combined contract more appealing to applicants, and to increase the number of hours in the Harberton parish contract to be more in line with the Dittisham contract.

It was commented that the clerk had reviewed the booklet produced by DCC as an introduction to the Road Warden scheme noting that some parish councils use hours allocated to the lengthsman's contract to undertake or supervise repairs to the roadway. The clerk had some queries pending with Highways as to how this would be managed within the road warden scheme.

**RESOLVED:** **i)** To work together with Dittisham Parish Council in advertising and recruiting a Parish Lengthsman.
ii) To allocate at least half of available funds to the project, and budget accordingly in January.

**11. Annual Tree Condition Report** *Receipt of the report and consideration of any advised actions*
The Annual Tree Inspection was undertaken by a qualified arborculturalist on 9 September 2026 and report produced. The inspection's risk assessment makes the following observations and recommendation for a group of trees at Harberton Playing Fields:

- Group of trees with reference G1500, Species: Ash. Observations: Two dead and dying small ash within falling distance of recreation ground area. **Recommendation:** Fell 2 x dead marked trees or reducing to deadwood monoliths at approx. 2 m. Medium work priority: Risk is Tolerable but work is advised within a year for sound arboricultural management

**RESOLVED:** i) The clerk to draw together a brief and request quotes for the work.
ii) Cllr Morris to review the brief and location of the trees

**12. Parish Defibrillators** *Update and consideration of future costs: servicing, training and maintenance of phone kiosks*

It was reported that the two defibrillators installed in phone kiosks in the parish came to the end of their Managed Agreement with Community Heartbeat Trust (CHT) in August 2025. Having spent 18 months requesting a continuation of the service and being informed that the delay was due to an administrative backlog, the clerk has now been informed that a Managed Agreement will not be offered as the defibrillators have reached the end of their 8 year warranty. Without this Managed Agreement, the defibrillators would not be covered by the CHT's umbrella cover. Discussing options with CHT it has been suggested that CHT turns over ownership to the parish council to be covered by the parish council's Public Liability Insurance, the parish council pays for any servicing or consumables as and when needed but ultimately looks at fundraising for replacement.

It was noted that although the defibrillators themselves are out of warranty, the batteries and pads have only just been replaced and do not expire until 2030. The regular weekly and monthly checks of the defibrillators undertaken by volunteers would identify any faults or failures, as they do under the prior arrangements.

Cllrs expressed concern about failure in between checks and requirements of the parish council's insurer.

**RESOLVED:** **The clerk** speak with the parish council's insurer on their requirements and report back.

**13. Correspondence**
13.1. E-Circulars for information Cllrs were provided with a list of regular e-circulars received.
13.2. Items of correspondence for information.
13.2.1. DAAT Landing sites - annual re survey - Thursday 10th September 2026 Cllrs are informed that Devon Air Ambulance Trust was due to undertake a site survey on 10 Sept to check that nothing has substantially changed that would affect safety of helicopters, staff or patients. This includes resurveying for potential obstacles or height of trees, access etc.
13.2.2. Your data protection fee Upcoming Direct Debit payment Cllrs are informed that the parish council's annual data controller's registration fee with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) will be renewed automatically at a cost of £52, minus £5 fee reduction for paying by direct debit.

13.2.3. Temporary Traffic Notice - ROAD FROM FORE STREET TO TRISTFORD ROAD, Harberton (TTRO2672763) Cllrs are informed of the road closure notice in place from 2 – 5 Dec 2026 to enable a blockage clearance. A signed diversion will be in place.

13.2.4. #41 2026 DALC e-bulletin Cllrs are informed that this e-bulletin includes a helpful summary of changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, now that the new framework has been approved and published. Those considered noteworthy by DALC include the following: a) A strengthened presumption in favour of development within settlement (it also includes a new national definition of a settlement). b) Expanded the geographical coverage of 'well connected' train stations to those in the top 80 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) by Gross Value Added from the top 60. Within 'well connected' stations there will be 'default yes' for development. The top 80 TTWAs can be found here. c) Permits local plans to set higher energy efficiency standards than national building standards. d) Greater protection of 'key community assets' such as pubs, recreational facilities and music venues. e) Strengthened protection for National Parks and National Landscapes. f) Stated neighbourhood plans must 'have regard to' national decision-making policies, not 'accord with' them as in the previous draft. g) Strengthens support for proposals promoting good health, preventing ill-health or reducing health inequalities (such as the provision of new recreation facilities, meeting places and opportunities to grow or purchase healthier food). h) Explicitly recognises need to consider the safety of women and girls in design.

13.2.5. Taxi Fare Review Cllrs are informed that South Hams District Council is undertaking a review of taxi fares and is inviting comment on the consultation before 22 Oct 2026. Parish councils are encouraged to share the consultation with any groups would be affected.

13.2.6. #42 2026 DALC e-bulletin Cllrs are informed that this e-bulletin includes a link to the invitation to share views on the proposals for Plymouth City Council to become a constituent member of the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (CCA) and the creation of a Mayoral Strategic Authority. Anyone is invited to submit your views on whether Plymouth should join, the benefits and opportunities you think it could bring, any concerns you have, the move to a directly elected mayor and the priorities you think a larger authority should pursue.

13.2.7. South Hams Town and Parish Council Update Cllrs are informed that this update also provides links to the open consultation on Plymouth joining the CCA and on whether the CCA should seek to become a Mayoral Authority. The bulletin continues to provide information that a Mayoral Strategic Authority would be led by a directly elected Mayor, with responsibility for devolved strategic powers and funding relating to areas such as transport, skills, economic development, housing and strategic planning. Local councils would continue to operate as they do now, retaining responsibility for local services and decision making. The consultation seeks views on both the potential benefits and any concerns associated with this change. A link is provided: https://devolutionindevon.commonplace.is/ The bulletin also advises that a call for sites for the new Local Plan has been extended until 14 November. The Local Authority asks cllrs to encourage any landowners in the area that might be interested in proposing sites to get in touch. The Local Authority is looking for land that could potentially be used for housing, Gypsy & Traveller sites, employment, retail and leisure, renewable energy, or nature and biodiversity. Those interested should follow this link: https://cfs.plymouth-swdevon.urbanintelligence.co.uk/events

13.2.8. River Hub is live Friends of the Dart is circulating news that a new section of its new website site, 'River Hub' has been launched. The site brings together all available data on storm overflows on the River Dart, how often it spills, whether its treatment works has the capacity its permit allows for the people it serves, the spills that happen in dry weather with no rain to excuse them, and whether an improvement is planned. Where there is a known problem and no clear plan to fix it, River Hub shows that gap. Information is freely available here: https://riverhub.friendsofthedart.org/explore/spills

13.2.9. Town & Parish Council Briefing: Recording and Presentation Slides SHDC has circulated a recording of the 1.5hr briefing on '*Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution Update'* and '*National Scheme of Delegation*' along with presentation slides . The clerk can forward to cllrs on request.

13.2.10. A new guide for your home, and a new website Cllrs are informed that Friends of the Dart has launched a new website www.friendsofthedart.org and published the 'Household River Care Manual' with room by room advice about practical actions that households can take to protect the Dart. There is a page for homes that aren't on mains drainage, with advice on septic tanks. Residents are encouraged to make a household pledge. Friends of the Dart is also fundraising for River Guardians, a network of local volunteers who each look after their own stretch of the Dart or one of its tributaries, with training in spotting and reporting pollution. If you would like to be one, the page explains how it will work. Testing results, reports and responses to government consultations are now in one place under Resources

13.2.11. #44 2026 DALC e-bulletin Cllrs are informed that this bulletin includes information about Security and Safety Presentation that was made by Devon and Cornwall Police at September's 'Connect' event for members. Officers gave an insightful presentation providing advice, guidance and reassurance on personal, physical and cyber security matters - not just for councillors' work life but also their day-to-day life. The e-bulletin shared a couple of tips, discouraging cllrs from campaigning alone, setting up SOS alarms on smart watches or phones, and setting up council meetings so that cllrs face the public, rather than sitting with their backs to them.

13.3. Items of correspondence for consideration

13.3.1. Dogs on a lead The Parish Council is asked to clarify whether dogs could be let off the lead at the bottom of Woodcourt Road as it is their understanding that the lane is not classified. This follows discussion on

social media about places in which dogs could be walked off the lead in Harbertonford, so to avoid the parks and other areas that are closed to dogs.

13.3.2. Harberton Parish crisis planning Cllrs are informed of correspondence asking if the Parish Council has a community crisis plan in place to manage instances such as wildfires or flood events. The enquirer asks questions such as: Do we know where our water supply comes from, is it vulnerable to power cuts, and how long might a supply of fresh water last? (Is it stored in a reservoir?) Is there scope for generating and storing electricity locally? Do we have first responders in the parish for any given crisis? The clerk has responded providing an update on the flood resilience workshop held in 2025, the intention to hold a secondary workshop, that an application has been made for Emergency Hub kits and asks the enquirer if they'd be interested in volunteering to join an effort to co-ordinate work.

13.3.3. People's Emergency Briefing Cllrs are informed of an invitation from Sustainable Harbourne Valley (SHV) to attend a screening of the of the People's Emergency Briefing film on the threats to British life from ongoing damage to nature and to our climate. Following the 50-minute film, SHV will host a structured local discussion on what this means for our community, including implications for local preparedness, resilience and long-term planning. The parish council has been forwarded a carbon footprint impact report for Harberton Parish, that provides local information to contribute to that discussion. The screening event has been arranged to take place on the same date and time as the November meeting of the Parish Council, the Parish Council may wish to send a delegation to watch the film and participate in local discussion, or alternatively, may wish to pursue its own screening on an alternative date.

13.3.4. Harbertonford Cllrs are informed of correspondence from a resident commenting that the pavements in Harbertonford are becoming very overgrown. As those pathways are now halfway across covered with vegetation, could village volunteers be asked to help in a tidy up.

13.3.5. Community Litter Picking Groups in Your Parish South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council are reviewing and updating records of community litter-picking groups operating across both districts. The councils are seeking to establish a directory of community litter picking groups should other volunteers be interested in joining them. The Parish Council is therefore asked to provide any information about active groups known to them, to confirm if there aren't any, or to share information if there has been interested in establishing a group in the area. Information will help district councils understand where additional support, promotion or community engagement may be beneficial.

**RESOLVED:** **i) The clerk** to make an enquiry to highways on the classification of the road off Woodcourt Road.
**ii)** For cllrs to attend the People's Emergency Briefing at Harbertonford Village Hall on 10 November, and to rearrange the November meeting of the parish council to take place the following week (Tuesday 17 November)
**iii)** It was noted that SHDC had cleared the pathways and no further action is required.
**iv) The clerk** to share information about the litter picking group in Eastleigh.

**14. Finance**

14.1. To note receipts and payments made between meetings there were none.

14.2. To consider payments as per the October payment schedule **It was RESOLVED** to make the payments:

- 2610_1 to Cat Radford, Payslip dated 22 Oct 2026 includes Clerk salary £575.81, Neighbourhood Plan Salary at £66.44 minus £3.80 PAYE deductions = £638.45 no VAT
- Payment 2610_2 to Cat Radford, Clerk Oct expenses claim for mileage at £ 4.11, broadband for Oct at £7.50 = £11.61 no VAT
- Payment 2610_3 to HMRC Shipley for PAYE incurred on Oct Salary ESTIMATED = £37.59 no VAT
- Payment 2610_4 to Harberton Parish Hall for Neighbourhood Plan meeting on 19/10/26 = £15 no VAT
- Payment 2610_5 EXPECTED Lloyds Bank for banking service charge = £4.25 no VAT
- Payment 2610_6 to Harbertonford Village Hall Room hire for Finance Committee meeting on 06/10/26 = £25
- Payment 2610_7 to Dart Forest Trees for invoice D054, Annual Tree Inspection at £495 plus £99 VAT= £594
- Payment 2610_8 to South Hams District Council for invoice 22418750 Annual play area insurance and inspection fee 2026/27 at £500 (£250 per play area) plus £100 VAT = £600
- Payment 2610_9 to Devon Association of Local Councils for invoice 7924 Attendance of Jacob Day at the Being a Good Councillor 1 webinar at £15 plus £3 VAT = £18
- Payment 2610_10 to Information Commissioners Office for annual Data Protection Fee = £47
- Payment 2610_11 to Harbertonford Football Club for room hire on 13 October 2026 = £25 no VAT

**15. Date and location of next meeting** Tuesday 17 November 2026, Harberton Parish Hall.

It was noted that during the meeting the Devon Air Ambulance had landed on the football ground, and the light had worked as expected.

Meeting closed at 21:10