

## **Article submitted to The Bridge magazine in March 2026**

### **Lockup Restoration Complete**

The restoration of the historic Lock-up on The Green has now been completed and the scaffold has been removed. Residents may have wondered why the structure remained fully covered for such a long period. The reason is because the works involved traditional lime mortar, which needs time and stable conditions to cure properly. The protective covering allowed the repairs to set correctly over the winter, avoiding damage from heavy rain or frost and ensuring a durable finish.

The works were carried out by Herringbone Restoration, with specialist oversight from Priory Heritage Ltd to ensure compliance with Historic England requirements. The project was supported by external funding, with a large proportion of the costs met through a UK Shared Prosperity Fund grant administered by Bedford Borough Council.

The parish council is pleased to see this very important local heritage asset properly conserved for the future.

### **Highways matters**

The parish council requested the borough council install double yellow lines on the High Street at the blind corner by The Oakley Arms due to ongoing safety concerns, including reduced visibility for drivers and vehicles parking on the pavement, which forces pedestrians into the carriageway.

The parish council is still awaiting the borough council to programme and carry out the lining works and the reinstatement of the faded road markings through the rest of the village. At this stage, no date has been provided.

### **Budget/Precept for 2026/27**

Following a detailed budgeting process, the parish council resolved to increase the precept from £100,070 to £102,015. In round figures, the contribution for a Band D property increases from £141 to £145 per year, or 3%. This was mainly due to inflationary pressures on grounds maintenance and strengthening the council's reserves to ensure the long-term maintenance and replacement of Harrold's valued community and heritage assets. These include the following Grade 2 listed structures: the Buttermarket, the Lockup, and the granite war memorial. Other assets include the historic lych gate and village clock, three playgrounds, skatepark, outdoor gym, streetlights, benches and more. Taking a prudent approach to financial planning will help keep these important facilities safe and well-maintained for years to come.

### **Harrold Centre bottlebank**

Following the introduction of domestic bottle recycling, the parish council removed the bottlebank at the Harrold Centre. Income from the bank had reduced significantly over the years due to increased haulage costs and it was no longer as profitable as it once was.

### **Planning applications**

Planning applications the parish council has received recently as a consultee – planning decisions rest with Bedford Borough Council:

| App No.      | Proposal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Location                            | PC Response         | BBC Outcome |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 25/02522/TPO | T1 Beech - Mishapen and encroaching on to the road. Fell. G2 Line of Beech - Lift crowns to 6m above ground level. T2 Sycamore -Remove sucker growth up to the main fork. T8 Pine - Remove lowest branch. T6 Pine: Remove lowest 13 branches to lift crown. | 11 Hall Close                       | No comment          | Awaiting    |
| 25/02487/FUL | Proposed demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a replacement dwelling with associated works including the erection of decking to the rear.                                                                                                | 139 High Street                     | No comment          | Permitted   |
| 25/02226/LBC | Lift and reposition existing structural timber beam located above the fireplace                                                                                                                                                                             | 67 High Street                      | No comment          | Permitted   |
| 25/02496/FUL | One and two storey front and side extensions, garage conversion, detached carport and associated alterations.                                                                                                                                               | Water Meadows School Lane           | No comment          | Awaiting    |
| 26/00012/FUL | Erection of 3-bedroom detached house and associated works (inc provision of new car parking spaces to existing property)                                                                                                                                    | Land At 1 Wood Road                 | No comment          | Awaiting    |
| 25/01835/FUL | Erection of a single self-build dwelling to form end-terrace with associated parking and new boundary treatment.                                                                                                                                            | 21 Wood Road                        | No comment          | Awaiting    |
| 25/00910/FUL | Renovation works, single-storey infill side extension, and conversion of the former Chapel to create ancillary accommodation to the Old School House and a separate dwelling...                                                                             | The Old School House<br>4 The Green | Conditional support | Awaiting    |

## Stay Connected

For updates on parish council activities, follow the Harrold Parish Council Facebook page.

## Next Council Meeting

The parish council has amended future meeting dates to the third Tuesday of the month; this is to enable best fit for all councillors and to maximise attendance. Next meeting dates are 21<sup>st</sup> April and 19<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm in the Harrold Centre Main Hall.

Please check our website for confirmation.

David Brough

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