



# HARDEN Village Council

# Community Newsletter



MARCH 2021

## Coping through the pandemic

We hope you're keeping safe and well during these difficult times. We know the past year has been tough, and it's more important than ever that we pull together as a village and look out for each other. Huge thanks to everyone who's assisted resilience efforts, through volunteering or checking in with neighbours.

If you need advice or support to do with Covid, you'll find information at [bradford.gov.uk](http://bradford.gov.uk) and local support at [www.hardencongs.org.uk/harden-hub](http://www.hardencongs.org.uk/harden-hub).

Harden Village Council continues to work for you, to represent local needs and provide a voice for the village. We continue to meet monthly online, to take forward local issues. Details are on our noticeboard outside the post office and [hardenvillagecouncil.gov.uk](http://hardenvillagecouncil.gov.uk). Our clerk Ken Eastwood can be contacted on **07850 049 487** or [clerk@hardenvillagecouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hardenvillagecouncil.gov.uk).

## Our neighbourhood plan: your chance to comment

We're encouraging everyone to have a look at our neighbourhood plan and provide your views by 11 April. You'll find the draft plan and a simple consultation form at [hardenvillagecouncil.gov.uk/npconsultation](http://hardenvillagecouncil.gov.uk/npconsultation). You can also sign up for an online **Q&A at 6.30-7.30pm, on 24 March**. If you can't get online, call **07850 049 487** to request a hard copy.

This important document will shape Harden's future development and show the village's priorities and aspirations. Work on the plan has drawn on views fed in through our previous survey and drop-in events. This consultation, closing 11 April, is the final chance to input before the plan goes to a referendum vote.

## Bradford's local plan – input now

Bradford Council is also now consulting on preferred local options for its draft

'local plan'. This includes land allocations for up to 60 homes in Harden, including on green belt land. For information and to comment on the proposals, see <https://bradford.oc2.uk>. The closing date for comments is 24 March.

## Covid vaccinations

Vaccinations are now being rolled out across Bradford District to priority groups. If you are in one of these groups, you will be contacted – please act immediately and attend your appointments. See [bradford.gov.uk/health/health-advice-and-support/covid-19-vaccine](http://bradford.gov.uk/health/health-advice-and-support/covid-19-vaccine) or [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

## Village Council budget

The Village Council has approved rolling over an expected underspend, to enable delivery of projects held up by Covid-19.

The Council is funded by a precept, collected as part of council tax bills. The precept in Harden will remain unchanged in 2021/22 at £37,755.



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Budget allocations include: repairing xmas lights; speed reduction; signage and wayfinding; environmental maintenance; completing our neighbourhood plan. Our budget and action plan for 2021/22 will be on our website from April.

## Caring for our environment and protecting our future

A year ago, Harden Village Council became one of the first rural councils to declare a climate emergency. We joined Bradford and hundreds of councils, and Parliament, in recognising the urgency of addressing rising carbon emissions, preventing pollution and protecting nature.

We wanted to highlight how rural communities can help to achieve 'net zero' emissions, build local resilience and create a greener future. This fits with what local people have been telling us on how much you value our green spaces and character as a rural community.

**Gerwyn Bryan, Harden Village Council Chair, said:**  
*"It has become clear that action is required locally as well as globally and we believe it is right for Harden to play its part. There is a lot we can do individually and together. We will be looking making it easier for people to walk, cycle and use public transport, reduce waste, and enhance green spaces and biodiversity."*

While Covid-19 has affected initial plans, we have still been incorporating sustainability into our work and our neighbourhood plan and taking some initial steps to make Harden greener and healthier, such as reviewing sustainable travel issues (see below).

### We're encouraging you to get involved by putting forward ideas on:

**Trees & biodiversity** – where might we plant trees and hedges and help nature thrive? How can we contribute to this as volunteers, gardeners and guardians of green spaces?

**Sustainable travel** – how can we enable people to walk, cycle and use public transport more and reduce car journeys?

**Reducing waste** – how can people and businesses be supported to reduce waste and plastic use?

We're especially keen to hear from groups, clubs and businesses.

## Transport and traffic issues

Local concerns about traffic, transport and speed have been raised regularly with the Village Council, including through our neighbourhood plan consultation. We know many of you are worried traffic has increased, bringing noise and pollution, and there are many

concerns too about the speed of traffic and the danger this poses, especially to people on foot, bicycle or horses.

To investigate, last year we commissioned a study, looking at traffic levels and speed, and potential improvements. This confirmed that traffic is rising, with some roads very congested. About half our traffic is through-traffic; half starts or ends in Harden. The report confirmed speeding is rife: most drivers break the limit, and we have average speeds that put people at risk.

We have been using this to explore possible steps, with neighbouring villages and Bradford Council's highways team. With them, we are considering options such as improved walking and cycling routes, a 20mph limit scheme, and whether bus timetabling might be improved. There's work to do to consider what will work best for our village: we will update again soon.

## Christmas lights

In December, the Village Council provided a grant to Harden Children's Gala Society to replace the Christmas lights. The new lights looked fabulous and attracted positive comments.

Unfortunately, our lights over the road developed a fault; these will be repaired in time for this year.



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