

## Summary of Volunteer Activity in Harvington, Worcestershire

Harvington in south Worcestershire is a semi-rural village, 3 miles north-west of Evesham, with a population of approximately 1700 people. It currently boasts two churches (Baptist and Anglican), two pubs (The Golden Cross and The Coach & Horses), a post office, a farm shop and a convenience store. There is a regular bus service between Stratford upon Avon and Evesham that passes through the village.

Residents have the opportunity to take part in a wide number of events and activities locally, which are largely run and supported by volunteers. This document is designed to map that volunteer activity, so that it is possible to see:

- a) What activities and services are available
- b) What proportion of the population is already supporting these
- c) How that volunteering is spread (ie is it done by a few people doing many things or a lot of people doing one or two things?)
- d) The approximate age range of volunteers and the extent to which each age group is involved
- e) What organisations or events use the highest number of volunteers
- f) What gaps in provision there may be (eg are there any further activities that volunteers could support which would improve the quality of life in the village?)

It was important to many of our volunteers that they were not identified specifically in this report. Therefore, the information gathered is summarised numerically, without reference to any individuals, to ensure confidentiality.

While every effort has been made to collect and provide accurate information for this report, it is almost certain that there will be some omissions and errors. My apologies for any that occur.

The summary will be presented to the Parish Council, the Opportunity Vale of Evesham project (which has helped with funding some activities in the village) and the Harvington Community Group (a small team of people who look at the quality of life available to Harvington residents and try to identify ways in which that can be improved, particularly for those who may be disadvantaged in some way). The conclusions that may be drawn from the report will help to inform any future initiatives that may be planned.

It must be acknowledged at the outset that Harvington is blessed with many people who are willing to take an active part in village life. Not all of these will be covered by the research done in support of this exercise, as **some people work at just being good neighbours**, quietly and informally helping out when they see a need. They, too, form a valuable part of our community.

We are also aware that **many of our volunteers do not restrict their activities to the village**. They are also actively supporting local and national charities in the area and the local hospitals. Some spend many hours fundraising for worthwhile causes. These activities are not covered by this survey, but it does indicate that our volunteers have a wide impact. It is part of what makes Harvington such a special place – and our thanks go to each and every one of them!

## Introduction

A volunteer is someone who gives their time and energy to an activity without being paid. Some of the volunteer tasks identified above are set up so that the people involved can claim expenses (eg Parish Council work). However, these roles still require time and energy which is not paid for, and therefore the role still qualifies as a volunteer one.

Some of the activities noted in the list below are staffed by paid professionals (eg the pre-school). In these cases, the figures quoted relate to the volunteers who work there *in addition to* the paid staff. Without exception, the paid staff that were consulted expressed great appreciation and gratitude for the contribution made by volunteers.

Although this report is to be based on numerical information, it is recognised that this will never create a full picture of the degree of volunteer activity in the village. Some of the roles require many hours of dedicated work, while others require active participation for a few hours only. So a single volunteer may 'only' have one task – but that task may be ongoing and take real commitment. Others combine several tasks, which may require varying degrees of time and effort. Also, some can only contribute a little voluntarily, as they have heavy family and work commitments.

### a) **List of activities supported by volunteer activity, with number of volunteers involved:**

*NB: This list outlines the number of volunteers involved each task or role. Some individuals undertake many different tasks for a single organisation, and as a result feature frequently on the initial list. Therefore, there are fewer volunteers than there are tasks/roles listed.*

	<b>Number of tasks/roles</b>
<b>Parish Council</b>	9
<b>Harvington Trust</b>	7
<b>Community Group</b>	5
<b>Footpath Warden</b>	1
<b>Harvington Heartbeat</b>	18
<b>Neighbourhood Watch</b>	1
<b>Playing Field Management Group</b>	6
<b>Tree Warden</b>	1
<b>Village News: Editor</b>	1
Distribution team	20
<b>Village Hall: Management Committee</b>	7
Maintenance team	3
Event organisation and support	3
<b>Baptist Chapel: Deacons</b>	7
Weekly Coffee morning	2
TOTs@HBC	4
Youth Group Management Committee	7
Youth Group leaders	7
<b>St James' church:</b>	
Wardens	2
Lay reader	1
Newsletter Editor	1
Newsletter Delivery Team	20
Cross Club	7
Bellringers	10
Cleaning rota	13
Clock maintenance	2

Flowers		12
Lay helpers for services		26
Bereavement support group,	2	
CAMEO teas	5	
Church opening rota	25	
Craft and coffee group		2
Gardening team	9	
Pastoral committee	8	
Social committee	5	
Women's Network	1	
<b>Harvington Church of England First School:</b>		
Governors	8	
Parent Governors	4	
PTFA Association	10	
After-school clubs/groups	8	
Class support volunteers (eg reading)		23
<b>Children's Groups:</b>		
Rainbows	5	
Brownies	5	
Guides	2	
Pre-school	6	
Youth Group (already counted as part of Baptist Chapel total)		
<b>Special Interest Groups:</b>		
Art Group	5	
Book Groups (Chapter & Verse and Bookworms)		2
Garden Club	6	
Handbell ringers	2	
Harvington Singers	3	
HATS	4	
50+ Lunch Club		13
Songbirds	1	
Sports Clubs:		
Cricket	5	
Football	2	
Ukulele Club	1	
WII (from Jan 2014) Harvington Phoenix Ladies' Group		10
<b>Occasional or Annual events:</b>		
Wychavon Games	3	
Village Orchard events		3 – 5
Village Hall one-off social events and special performances		3 – 5
Baptist Chapel: Men's and Women's prayer breakfasts		2
St James' church:		
Christmas Fayre		26
Summer Fete	97	
Social events in Blakenhurst etc)	2 (+ cake makers	
Holiday clubs for children	6	
Lent lunches for Children's Society	11	

Christian Aid Week collection	13
Harvington Wheelers	
Annual ride in aid of local churches	7

**Total number of tasks/roles**      **562 +**

b) **The proportion of the population involved in volunteering**

Based on the information gathered, there are **265** different people currently volunteering for activities in Harvington. This is approximately **15% - 16%** of the population.

c) **How the volunteering activity is spread**

Of the above number, three are actively involved in 10 or more activities, while 168 are probably only volunteering for one activity in the year. 24 people undertake between 5 and 9 different tasks. Those who undertake several roles tend to do them for the same organisation (eg their church or the school) – although a significant number are engaged in supporting more than one group or activity.

d) **The age groups of volunteers**

- Not surprisingly, a large part of the volunteer activity is accomplished by retired people (approx. 100 - 120 retired people are in this survey)
- There is, nonetheless, a large number who are also still in employment and who also volunteer. They tend to limit their commitment to a few activities (eg supporting the school), but this is by no means always the case
- Several leaders of groups for young people (eg Guides) contribute to the Summer Fête and the Christmas Fayre. Often the young people in their organisation assist with this on the day, although they have not been included in the totals here. In addition, there is a group of about 10 teenagers who volunteer at these events, often because their families are involved.

e) **Highest concentrations of volunteer support**

The organisation in the village which uses the most volunteer time is St James' Church. There are 19 different teams or roles to be covered here, involving 82 people. It is also noticeable that many of the volunteers contribute towards more than one aspect of church life, often taking on several roles.

It should also be noted that not all of the volunteer activity associated with both churches in the village is in support of the buildings or the religious services held there. There are also church activities focussed on providing help for villagers in need in the wider community or offering a social outlet for anyone in the village who would like to attend (eg the Baptist Chapel coffee morning or work with the youth groups or, at St James', CAMEO teas, social events at Blakenhurst or the work of the Pastoral Group).

It is interesting to note that the three volunteers who individually cover the largest number of volunteer roles in the village are linked with one or the other of the two churches in the village – and all three are retired from paid employment.

The single event that uses the most volunteers is the Summer Fête. Principally organised as a major fundraiser for St James' church, the event has grown over recent years to involve many groups and individuals in the community. In 2012, a team of around 100 people was involved in operating the various stalls and in organising the various competitions that take place. Many of these are active members of St James' church, but not all of them.

**The school** also draws on quite a large group of volunteers. Although many of those actively involved are parents of the present pupils, it is also worth noting that a substantial number are retired, and give of their time to keep in touch with the younger members of the community. The school has a superb reputation (supported by excellent reports from OFSTED) and those adults who are involved all speak with great enthusiasm about the satisfaction they get from being able to help.

f) **Gaps in provision?**

That is for you to decide!