

Minutes of the Arden Neighbourhood Forum Meeting

Thurs 19th March 2026 – 7pm – The Red Cow, High Street, Market Harborough.

Present:

John Fannon (JF), Steve Jones (SJ), Don West (DW), Lynn Thacker (LT), Sarah Nimmo (SN), Sarah Sharland (SS).

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Pippa Underwood, Carol Thay (HDC).

2. Minutes of last meeting

Any outstanding actions from the previous meeting minutes have been carried over into these minutes.

3. NHP progress update

a. Draft plan status

- JF has been making progress on the next draft of the NHP and this is progressing slowly towards being in a position for forum members and Your Locale to review. This includes various maps and appendices that form the evidence for the policies.
- JF circulated updated greenspace review to committee members for comment.
- JF continues to collaborate with other NHF chairs to ensure the plans align and do not conflict with one another, though there are likely to be some differences.
- HDC are very keen for the NHPs to be completed because they offer some protection against speculative development in Market Harborough, especially as the new Local Plan is not yet in place.
- HDC recently voted to submit the draft Local Plan as-is for inspection.

b. Funding situation

- HDC has offered £8k of surplus to pay Your Locale to assist with getting the NHPs completed. This is spread across all 4 forums and so is nowhere near the £8k per forum (e.g. £32k) that would have been provided by Locality prior to funding being withdrawn. There are some things that Your Locale will no longer commit to, including hosting an event to present the plan(s), sending out letters for formal consultation and collating comments on the plan(s).
- We may need to investigate other potential sources of funding to cover other costs, such as for hosting an event.

Actions:

- JF to continue to update the draft NHP and circulate when ready to members and Your Locale for comments.
- NHF chairs continue to meet and collaborate on NHPs.
- JF and other forum chairs to continue to meet with HDC/Your Locale on the nature of their involvement, given the funding available.

4. Other Non-NHP updates

a. AGM date

- An AGM is required shortly as the last one was in March 2025. JF will send out a list of possible dates to committee members.
- It was mentioned that this should be quorate (six forum members must be present) for any decisions at the AGM to be valid. JF will encourage as many members to attend as possible to try to ensure this is not an issue.

Actions:

- JF to send out possible dates for AGM to committee members.

b. Town Council Update

- The petition for a CGR that was created by the 4 NHFs was successful with approx. 1800 signatures. HDC were therefore compelled to undertake a review into whether Market Harborough should have a Parish (Town) Council. This consultation has now started and includes an initial consultation phase that is open until 13th April 2026.
- The consultation and associated information are available for residents, businesses and community groups to respond to at <https://www.harborough.gov.uk/cgr25>. We would encourage everyone to complete the consultation.
- Arden NHF will submit a response, and a draft was shared with attendees. The draft is available [here](#).
- HDC will also be undertaking a non-binding poll on 30th April for all residents of the unparished area that are on the electoral register. This will require residents to vote at their local polling station.
- The NHFs intend to run a campaign in favour of a Town Council via social media, the HTH website and other avenues during April.

Actions:

- NHFs to run campaign in favour of a Town Council.
- Members encouraged to complete the consultation and vote on the 30th April.

c. LCC proposals for walking/cycling improvements along Rockingham Road

- SJ has drafted a response to LCC proposals for improvements to walking and cycling along Rockingham Road. See [here](#).
- It was agreed that SJ will submit this on behalf of Arden NHF.

Actions:

- SJ to submit response to LCC on behalf of Arden NHF.

d. Planning Applications

- JF has not been keeping an eye on planning applications from HDC recently due to other commitments.
- If anyone else is interested in viewing local planning applications, then these can be viewed at <https://pa2.harborough.gov.uk/online->

applications/search.do?action=advanced. For Arden specifically, enter Ward as “Market Harborough Great Bowden and Arden” and Parish as “Market Harborough”.

Actions:

- JF will continue to review whenever time allows, though this is not a priority currently.

5. AOB

- SJ raised the subject of improvements to the station approach. Two possible options were discussed, one to fully pedestrianise the current approach road to the front of the station, the other to allow access only for taxis and Network Rail vehicles. There was general agreement that improvements are much needed as this area is not particularly appealing to those arriving in the town by rail.
- SJ also mentioned the “Green Wheel” and plans to use S106 funds earmarked for Greenways to deliver parts of this. It was suggested that a working group could be formed to identify any potential locations within the Arden area that could be part of this.