

So, it's the beginning of the 18th century and we've been getting through monarchs at the reasonable rate expected at that time. The last years of William and Mary just crept into the new century before Anne came along. All these happenings were, no doubt, making headlines on social media all around Europe but in the hamlet of Harpley, there were other priorities. Somebody, the writer isn't sure who, suggested building some barns and that's what happened. It has to be realised that, over three hundred years ago, structural engineers weren't that plentiful so things like barns ended up being built to last and last, they did. Fast forward to the latter part of the 20th century and the once magnificent and sought-after agricultural buildings had become surplus to requirement. They were looking dilapidated and feeling very sad with themselves.

It's now 1992 and plans to convert the barns into five dwellings have been accepted. First of all, the "added later" parts of the agricultural complex were removed. Following this, numerous internal walls were added, doors and windows inserted where needed and some considerable landscaping to complete the works. Unlike the original specification requiring horse drawn access, these properties are now accessible by motor vehicle. Some of the original "horse friendly" stone cobbles are still visible in the shared courtyard.

During this time of redevelopment, the Tudor farmhouse and adjacent workshop were still being used as estate administration offices. The 21st century came along and the estate, together with the need for estate offices, dwindled away. The Tudor farmhouse was divided into two houses and then shortly after the workshop was converted into another dwelling. Again, there was some landscaping to allow vehicular access to these three properties.

Well, there you have it. So, monarchs come and go, world wars come and go and everything seems constant. Then in a few short years, the hamlet of Harpley doubles in size. All this development has certainly shaken Harpley up. Perhaps it needs to rest for a while and then see what the 22nd century has to offer.....