

# **Watlington Parish Council**

## **Annual Parish Meeting 2021**

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# Annual Parish Meeting 2020/2021

## Reports from the Parish Council Chairman and Committee Chairmen

### WPC CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 23rd April 2021

#### **Current Members of Watlington Parish Council**

Matt Reid (Chairman), Ian Hill (Vice-Chairman, Operations Chair), Andrew McAuley (Planning, Strategy Chair), Nicky Smallbone (Finance, PSFC Chair), Alex Basden, Roger Beattie, Tim Horton, Terry Jackson, Rob Smith, Keith Wolfson, Steve Bolingbroke, Margaret Noon, Richard Dorney-Savage.

#### **Staff to the Council**

Kristina Tynan (Clerk), Rachel Gill (Assistant to the Clerk), Bob Thomas (Watlington Caretaker), Christine Wiltshire (additional office support)

#### **Ongoing Issues, Projects and Actions**

##### Pandemic response

This last year (May to May) saw the ending of the first major lockdown in summer 2020 and the introduction of two further lockdowns in the Autumn of 2020 and the Winter of 2021. The period of time between the lockdowns allowed the District and County Councils time to put proper resources in place that eased the strain on the local volunteer network and parish office response that had been so effective in the first lockdown. As the surplus switch board capacity had been rented on a short term basis, we were also able to close down the Parish helpline once the initial need for general help had fallen away. Everyone appeared to settle into the same routine for the next two lockdowns although risk assessments for staff and parish buildings were reappraised each time to make sure the guidance was updated appropriately. I'd like to record here my thanks for all the businesses, volunteers, office staff and Councillors for carrying on throughout the pandemic and for keeping life as close to normal as the rules would allow. In particular I'd like to single out Jenny Wilkinson for her efforts in keeping the public conveniences both clean and accessible throughout, which meant all the bus and delivery drivers that kept working throughout had the benefit of well maintained facilities.

##### Edge Road

Work finally commenced on Site A in the Autumn of 2020 and progress is reasonably rapid. Simultaneous to the build out of Site A has been the adoption of the safe guarded route in the Districts Local plan which came into force in December 2020. Talks with the OCC Highways consultants (AECOM) around the routing of the Edge Road were already in flight, but this adoption in local planning law accelerated the need to work together with our neighbours in Pyrton in order to find a series of compromises that both parties could live with. Coming out of this joint work has been the creation of a new working group that consists of 3 Watlington Parish Councillors and 3 Pyrton Parish Councillors. This group allows for discussions on the interface region between Watlington and Pyrton that will soon be filled with new developments.

With regards the Watlington sections of the Edge Road, we are still working to try and secure a solution to offset a hard T-Junction at the Britwell Road end of the scheme, but despite appearances this is a non-trivial problem. There is still a window of opportunity in which to solve this particular issue within the scope of the overall Edge Road scheme and we will be keeping local residents up to date with progress. Residents of Marlbrook will be pleased to hear that a new roundabout in the far side of Site B will be serviced by a re-alignment of the B480 Cuxham Road that will feed in from the existing roundabout. The Edge Road itself will then meet this new roundabout by way of a bridge like structure that will take it over the environmentally sensitive brook. Drawing the site further into Site B will also protect against additional ground water run-off from the new developments. Residents of Pyrton Lane will no doubt be pleased to hear that Pyrton Lane will be de-prioritised as a part of this plan and will only be open to walking, cycling and possibly horse riding upon final completion of the road. This will of course give much greater connectivity between Watlington and the large tracts of amenity land that will open up for walkers on the edge of Pyrton. Walking and cycling routes in line with these aims have already been included in the Neighbourhood Plan, but we will look to go further now that the details of the scheme are starting to solidify. We hope that the Icknield School will be with us for many more years, but we appreciate that the County Council will build a state of the art secondary and sixth form in Chalgrove should the planning application ever make it through. The route of the Edge Road will pass close to the existing Sports Hall area of the current site, which will allow for school buses to use the new road rather than Love Lane, but in doing this the new playing fields that will be given over to the school will be on the other side of the road. Should the school leave then the new playing field will be given over to Pyrton Parish Council, but we have secured informal agreement that this will be retained for the use of community sports. The ICC sports field will of course be fenced off, but the land to the north will become something of a new 'community green' area for Pyrton that I'm sure many people in Watlington will also have the chance to enjoy. To put these plans in perspective, some 66% of the land on the Pyrton side of the Parish Boundary will be made over to amenity space of some description and the development on the Watlington side will be limited to somewhere around 100 new homes.

#### CIL Projects

The Parish Council has just undertaken a comprehensive review of its proposed CIL projects list, which has been a job that has required some significant diligence and objectivity, so I would like to thank the all the Councillors that have been engaged in this work. On the back of these efforts we should start to see some CIL projects starting to come forward for project approval in the next year.

#### Climate Change

We continue to support the Local and District Councils in their efforts to hit their Carbon emissions targets and have given two grants this last year to support the excellent work being undertaken by WCAG for both the ongoing Hedgerow project and a thermal scanning pilot project that seeks to identify homes that could benefit from additional insulation.

#### Charlotte Coxe

Due to Covid and the availability of the legal staff at OCC this last year there has been very little movement on the last update, but we are hopeful that when the transfer of the charity to Watlington does finally take place that progress will be rapid.

Thanks as always is reserved for all of you who volunteer your time for some local activity or simply participate in your own way day to day in this incredible community.

Matt Reid

## **Strategy Committee** **Chairman's Report 2020/21**

**Members:** Andrew McAuley (Chair), Matt Reid (Vice-Chair), Ian Hill, Terry Jackson, Tim Horton, Roger Beattie, Steve Bolingbroke, Richard Dorney-Savage

**Co-opted members:** Gill Bindoff

The primary function of the Strategy Committee is to have strategic oversight of council activities and ensure delivery of the Parish Council Strategic Plan (PCSP).

The Strategy Committee has been able to continue its work despite the restrictions imposed by the regulations governing meetings during the COVID-19 crisis. However, it has struggled to fully understand its role and how best to carry out its remit. The Parish Council's Strategic Plan (PCSP) was adopted in January 2020 and forms the basis around which the Council should prioritise its work. The PCSP is aligned with the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP) and aims to deliver on the core aspirations of the community. Funding for many of the key areas of development will be through the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies paid by the developers of the major sites in Watlington and some minor developments within the Parish. These payments are 'one offs' and must be allocated according to priority need. There has been much debate on how this is best achieved and how projects should be prioritised and funded. It is acknowledged that there is a distinct difference between the day-to-day management of the Parish and its facilities (handled by the Operations Committee and the Parish Office) and the longer-term funding and development of new facilities and projects for the benefit of the community. However, there remains a difficulty in identifying how best to prioritise and thus fund new initiatives. The introduction of a new working group, The Major Projects Working Group, will focus on the identification of prioritised and costed projects that meet the aspirations of the community as detailed in the PCSP. All proposals will have to be submitted with a business plan detailing plans, costing, funding streams and timelines. Recommendations can then be taken forward to Full Council. The growth of the town over the next five years will increase the pressure on the Parish Council to provide facilities that are fit for purpose, meet the needs of the community and are fully funded. The role of the Strategy Committee in setting priorities and ensuring proper management structures are in place will be vital to the success of growth of the town.

As chairman I would like to extend my gratitude to all the members of the Strategy Committee for their hard work and conscientious, balanced and meticulous approach to business of the committee. I would also like to thank those members of the committee who have stood down over the past year. Their time and effort have been very much appreciated.

Andrew McAuley

## **Planning Committee**

### **Chairman's Report 2020/21**

**Members:** Andrew McAuley (Chair), Rob Smith (Vice-Chair), Matt Reid, Ian Hill, Terry Jackson, Nicky Smallbone, Alex Basden.

**Co-opted members:** Gill Bindoff, Tony Powell

This year, 2020-2021, has probably been the most unusual in local parish council planning history. Due to Covid-19 regulations all meetings had to be conducted using virtual meeting software and all site visits had to be curtailed. Despite these restrictions, the planning committee continued to meet monthly and considered a wide range of planning applications. The focus of the committee has been on the delivery of the community's development priorities as outlined in the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP). The lack of an up-to-date District Council Local Plan, for a majority of the year, meant that planning committees across the District were being asked to scrutinise applications without detailed policy guidance being in place. The intervention of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, as reported in last year's annual report, led to the eventual adoption of the Local Plan in December 2020.

The Planning Committee met thirteen times over the twelve-month period. The number of applications for consideration by the committee was on a par with previous years despite the restrictions due to the pandemic. Applications spanned all types of development including the major developments on sites B & C as well a diverse range of applications within the core area of the town and beyond. It is worth noting that there were a higher number of applications for household extensions and the erection of garden rooms/home office accommodation. This trend would seem to reflect the needs of residents due to the changing nature of work and the move towards greater home working.

Committee members were able to continue to participate in a large number of meetings with representatives from OCC, SODC and developers as well as representing the Parish in front of the SODC Planning Committee via virtual means. The new working regimes for many organisations, in particular SODC, did mean that decision times and deadlines were often extended, and the Parish Council has not always agreed with SODC's planning decisions however, the working relationship between the Parish Council and SODC Planning department has remained excellent throughout.

Work continues with OCC on the details of the routing of the Watlington edge road. The proposed route meets the objectives set by the Parish Council and safeguards the centre of town and the residents of Marlbrook. Funding is guaranteed and the timescale for completion remains 2023/24.

**Andrew McAuley**

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN ADVISORY BOARD (NPAB):**

### **Annual Report:**

There has been a change of membership during the year. Peter Richardson left Watlington to live in another part of Oxfordshire following several years of very dedicated work on the Neighbourhood Plan. His contribution to the development of the Plan and to the ongoing work has been invaluable. Vacancies for representatives from the wider community have been filled by Fiona Danks and David Robins and there remains one vacancy to fill. The vacancy for a parish councillor has not been filled yet following the resignation from the NPAB of Matt Reid.

The NPAB continues to be represented on the Parish Council's Strategy and Planning Committees.

The main work of the NPAB has been advising the Parish Council on the delivery of the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan and on its review. The Board has been keeping an eye on the progress of the housing development on the Bloor Homes site and has made comments on the planning conditions which need to be met. In particular, the NPAB has looked at the detailed proposals for landscaping on the site and for the protection and encouragement of wildlife. A discussion has been held with the Ecologist working for Bloor Homes and a meeting on site has been arranged with her. The Board has also been involved with the Parish Council in meetings with the County Council on the route of the edge road and has had an input into the latest proposals. The route now broadly reflects the route indicated in the Neighbourhood Plan.

The review of the Neighbourhood Plan has made progress during the year. When it is finalised, it will run to 2035. The three sites allocated for housing development in the Plan are now approved by SODC and building has started on the Bloor Homes site at Britwell Road. The aim is not to make many changes to the Plan but to strengthen some policies in the light of how effective the policies have been in delivering the Plan's objectives. It is also important to make sure that the Plan reflects the Climate Emergency which the Parish Council has declared and also makes better provision for nature recovery and wildlife. The NPAB is getting advice on good ways to achieve this by the national body which has Government support for neighbourhood planning. The objectives have been reviewed and a draft is almost ready to be shared with the community so that people can comment on them. Unfortunately, it's not possible to organise any indoor events yet but we may be able to do something outdoors soon to chat to people and find out what they think we should be doing to make improvements to the Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan is not just about housing development and the NPAB is working with the Parish Council on protecting the historic character of the town and on improving local facilities and services:

- A new appraisal of the Conservation Area in the centre of Watlington will be carried out in the summer and a management plan will be put in place. This will be agreed with SODC.
- A survey has been carried out to provide up to date information about housing in the parish and what kinds of housing local people need.
- The Transport Group is working on options for improving public transport and is investigating the possibility of developing a community transport scheme, as well as sharing schemes for bikes and electric cars.
- A start has been made on finding ways to improve the local network of footpaths, bridleways and cycleways. The aim is to be able to provide a range of attractive and safe routes for people of all ages and abilities to use to get around the town and into the countryside.
- There is a shortage of facilities for sport and recreation in Watlington and the WNDP is preparing to conduct a survey to get some up to date information about the facilities which people use now and what they would like to have in the future. As the population will grow a lot when all the new housing is occupied it is really important to look at all the options for increasing the facilities there are now and planning to increase the range available up to 2035.

## **G.Bindoff**

### **Pavilion and Sports Field Committee**

#### **Annual Report 2020/21**

**Council Representatives:** Nicky Smallbone, Roger Beattie, Matt Reid, Alex Basden

**Sports Club Representatives:** Keith Wolfson, Owen Lewis, Neil Boddington

The PSFC committee is responsible for the management of the pavilion building and the playing fields. It is a joint committee formed from Parish Councillors and members of the Sports Clubs. It meets quarterly or as needed.

It has not been possible for the Pavilion to be used for any functions or meetings due to the Covid 19 restrictions. Very few football and cricket matches were able to be played and only some restricted access to the toilets and changing rooms was allowed. The Parish Office was able to apply for a grant from SODC to support the football and cricket clubs and to help with the running of the building including the purchase of Covid 19 PPE and supplies.

One of the boilers has been replaced and the main front door shutters became unreliable so had to be renewed.

During lockdown the recreation ground became a lifeline for residents to take exercise for themselves and their dogs. The Dog Group have continued their poo patrols and we hope this will carry on as unfortunately there are still some irresponsible owners around.

With the easing of lockdown and change in government guidelines it is hoped the pavilion will be open again.

<b>PAVILION AND SPORTS FIELD COMMITTEE</b>					
	Budget	Actual Excl VAT			
Pavilion and Sports Field	2020/2021	30/03/2021	Variance	%	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Pavilion Security + Phone/wifi	1800	944	-856	-48%	
Water for Pavilion	350	658	308	88%	
Electricity for Pavilion	1000	1541	541	54%	
Gas for Pavilion	750	676	-74	-10%	
Building Maintenance/supplies	2000	4315	2315	116%	
Sewerage Unit Service/repair	550	0	-550	-100%	
Business Rates PSFC	440	0	-440	-100%	
Licenses	530	158	-373	-70%	
Pavilion Strimming /gardening	100	190	90	90%	
Planned Maintenance (earmarked)	500	0	-500	-100%	
Sinking Fund to earmarked	625	0	-625	-100%	
Waste Collection Grundon	750	376	-374	-50%	
Sports Field Rent	5000	5000	0	0%	
Insurance	1500	1000	-500	-33%	
Outside Repairs	1000	0	-1000	-100%	
Cleaning	1000	100	-900	-90%	
	<b>17895</b>	<b>14959</b>	<b>-2936</b>	<b>-5</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>					
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>%</b>	
Pavilion Hire	2000	202	-1798	-90%	
WTFC + WCC Energy Recharge	1600	442	-1158	-72%	This is WTFC for Jan, Feb, March so last financial year
WTFC,WCC Rent, Bus Rates,	6000	5769	-231	-4%	This is all WTFC: £4592 dug out, £208.33 March rent, £170 cleaning, £416 rent Sept/Oc
Youth Club	1200	0	-1200	-100%	
Waste Recharge from SC	750	417	-333	-44%	This has been lower than budget and costs covered
SODC Grant	0	20865	20865		
Sport Field Rent WPC	5000	5000	0	0%	
Insurance WPC	1500	1000	-500	-33%	
Outside Repairs	1000	0	-1000	-100%	
Cleaning	1000	0	-1000	-100%	
Total	<b>20050</b>	<b>33695</b>	<b>13645</b>	<b>-5</b>	
Income minus expenditure	2155	18737			
<b>Bank Balances 21/1/2021</b>	<b>£</b>				
Pavilion General Account	13139.87				

## Finance and Staff Committee

### Annual Report 2020/21

**Members:** Nicky Smallbone, Tim Horton, Ian Hill, Matt Reid, Roger Beattie, Steve Bolingbroke

The Finance and Staff Committee meets quarterly or more often if required. It is responsible for the oversight of Council budgets and finances as well as staff employment matters. All meetings were carried out via Zoom.

There will be a sum of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money available, accumulated from the construction of all the new homes being built in the Parish. This money can be used to help deliver the infrastructure needed to support the new developments. The Parish council have also reduced the general reserve held, from six months to three months, freeing up a substantial amount of money to allocate to projects in the town. A sub-

committee and working group have been set up to coordinate ideas and applications for funding.

The precept this year was increased in line with inflation. Grants were made to the Watlington Children's Centre, grass cutting in the churchyard, Watlington Art Week, CAB, Watlington Climate Action Group and the Christmas trees in the town. The Parish Council has a comprehensive grant making policy available to review on our website.

SODC continue to fund the public conveniences and contributions from the Watlington traders help with the maintenance of the car park.

The staff costs were increased in line with NALC guidelines and inflation. Our current staff are an invaluable asset to the community, and they have continued to follow and impose all the Covid 19 guidelines to ensure the safety of our residents.

The Parish Council continues to hold a sum of money from the Young Peoples Fund. This money is to be used to secure a dedicated building for the use of young people. If it is not used within five years from the transfer date, it can then only be spent on charitable purposes following advice from residents of the parish.

The Parish Office will be closed for a period in August for annual holidays.

**Nicky Smallbone**

**Financial Sheet for 2020 2021 is shown on the next page**

# Watlington Parish Council 2020/2021

## Provisional Summary Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ending 31st March 2021

2019/20	<u>Income</u>	2020/21
132626.42	Precepts	137442.21
375.69	Interest on Investments	133.88
575.00	Community Office Lettings	0.00
1468.00	Allotments Rents	2382.98
366.82	Sale of Photocopying	10.00
8012.74	Public Convenience Grant	8012.74
1028.39	Grants	23509.00
1810.83	Misc	1922.76
1820.00	West Room Lettings	300.00
11152.00	Pav Lettings+ Club Rent and Misc	1174.96
11780.00	Car Park Contributions	2100.00
5179.00	Charges for Caretaking	5179.00
14883.87	CIL Receipts	7498.34
<u>191078.76</u>	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<u>189665.87</u>
	<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>	
81511.47	General Administration	62773.32
10195.38	S137 Payments	6564.92
8178.00	Town Hall Grant	8445
	Other Grants	
<u>99884.85</u>		<u>77783.24</u>
	<b><u>Running Costs</u></b>	
102.76	Allotments	1095.15
12531.08	Community Office	10773.46
32904.38	Rec/Grass Cutting/Car Park/Pub Conv	28014.83
11109.40	Pavilion	7384.25
7.09	West Room	0.00
753.00	Neighbourhood Plan	2407.00
2106.96	Planning	0.00
<u>57407.71</u>		<u>49674.69</u>
<u>157292.56</u>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>127457.93</u>
<u>33786.20</u>	<b>Excess</b>	<u>62207.94</u>

## **Operations Committee**

### **Annual Report 2020/21**

#### **Members in 2020-2021:**

**Chairman:** Ian Hill

**Vice-chairman:** Roger Beattie

Alex Basden, Tim Horton, Terry Jackson, Keith Woolfson

**Co-opted members:** Jenny Wilkinson

The Operations Committee is responsible for managing the maintenance programme of the Parish Council's assets, as well as identifying issues for action by the County and District Councils. Despite the Covid shutdown, Operations has had a busy but frustrating year trying to get some progress on many different projects as well as launching a number of new projects.

In spite of the Covid limitations, the recreation ground and sports fields have been the focus of a lot of work this year. Completed tasks are:

- Half-pipe replacement of plywood boarding on landing decks;
- Refurbishment of the skate bowl, including a bold new design painted on the bowl;
- Clearing of remains of old fencing between the recreation area and cricket field preparatory to hedge improvements;
- Agreement between dog walkers and sports clubs on use of field perimeter area by dog walkers, with new signs due to be installed shortly;
- Replenishment of the wood chips for the zip wire.

Work on our roads is largely the responsibility of the County Council, where we have had some success getting progress on long outstanding projects including traffic calming measures on Pyrton Lane for which we have pushed progress by agreeing to organise the initial planning needed for the work to go through OCC approval. The operations committee has also been active in traffic projects, including:

- Installation of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) where we now have the devices but are unable to get them installed because of a shortage on the necessary poles;
- Repainting of Hill Road Car Park with an increased number of short stay bays to support our local shops and businesses, as well a new bicycle rack;
- Warning signs on Prospect place to reduce risk to pedestrians and cyclists;

Other tasks where the committee has made progress are:

- Completion of the refurbishment of footpath 13 leading from the Goggs towards the Willow Ponds, which throughout this winter remained walkable for first time in many years;
- Replacement of the dog bin contractor and an increase in the frequency of collection which has also achieved a significant saving in cost for the Council. We are now looking at whether additional bins are required;
- Naming of the streets in the Red Kite Views development between Britwell Road and Cuxham Road.

These specific items are not the sum total of the committees activities, with many others in various stages of progress. On the 37 projects on our list at this time last year, 12 were rated as high priority, 7 of those have been completed, 2 are in progress, 2 are awaiting a decision from OCC and 1 has been adopted into OCC's own programme. This year we start with 39 projects of which 16 are high priority, including the 4 carried over from last year. In addition to specific tasks on the project list, we of course also have ongoing activities.

Although all of this work has fallen under the aegis of the Operations committee, we are indebted to the huge support we have received from volunteers. The community gets great benefit from those who are willing to devote some of their free time to supporting the community, in tasks ranging from keeping the road verges outside their homes in good condition to much wider support through the sports clubs, organising volunteer dog fouling patrols, and reporting problems to the Parish Office. One of these volunteers stands out for her widespread contributions, namely Jenny Wilkinson. I thank her particularly but all volunteers at any level for the valuable contributions they make to keeping the parish the attractive place it is to live in. Of course, we would also achieve very little without the positive and active support of Kristina Tynan and her staff who take the committee's ideas and proposals through to successful completion, and the Committee thanks them for their invaluable contributions to our work.

**Ian Hill**

### **Town Hall Trust Body**

**Membership:** Tim Horton (chair) Terry Jackson (Vice-chair), Ian Hill, Matt Reid, Alison Morgans (co-optee) and Mike Young (co-optee)

The experience of the Town Hall has matched all public buildings since the first 'lockdown' in March 2020 and hence it has been closed for all regular and occasional gatherings in the Main Hall. It has however been invaluable in serving (through Angela Clark's business) an excellent range of fruit and vegetables throughout this difficult period. It has given a vital supply of goods when travel has been discouraged and exhibited the value of our using our ancient market charter! We have worked closely to provide some extra facility for use in the Undercroft and a small 'office' space so remote orders could be processed. The three times a week market permitted some income from lettings to be conserved.

The Trust bodies has been able to proceed with several projects despite lockdown. The most important has been the introduction of an electric boiler. Following the breakdown of the gas installation after some 30 years. The use of this energy supply allows for a simplification of the small storage space, such that a small WC (on ground floor level) might be introduced. In addition, we have placed new elegant rails to assist in entering the building. New estimates for upgraded lighting and other electrical have been provided – and together with action on brickwork - further upgrades should be achieved this year.

We shall be giving new attention to promoting the use of the Main Hall as lockdown eases.

This begins with the Hall as a prominent venue during May's Oxfordshire Arts Week. Later on, will be talks and musical events, leading up to Christmas.

We want to place on record our appreciation for the support the Parish Council gives towards the detailed improvements – introduced and planned. Also, our appreciation is given to Bob West (who attends our meetings as a technical adviser) and to the support of the office and caretaker (Bob Thomas) for many special actions this year.

<b>TOWN HALL ACCOUNTS 2020/21</b>					
	<b>Budget 20/21</b>	<b>Actual to Year End</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Variance %</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Caretaker services	£ 4,330.00	£ 4,330.00	£ -	0%	
Town Hall Open/Close	£ 849.00	£ 849.00	£ -	0%	
Water Supply	£ 240.00	£ 172.50	-£ 67.50	-28%	
Electricity	£ 150.00	£ 2,405.63	£ 2,255.63	1504%	£2000 added for estimated electricity bill
Gas + Boiler Service	£ 1,700.00	£ 387.77	-£ 1,312.23	-77%	
Running Costs	£ 600.00	£ 2,656.72	£ 2,056.72	343%	
Maintenance of Town Hall	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,342.00	-£ 658.00	-33%	
Planned maintenance sink fund	£ 2,000.00	£ -	-£ 2,000.00	-100%	
Insurance	£ 2,025.00	£ -	-£ 2,025.00	-100%	
Legal Fees & Land Registry	£ 200.00	£ -	-£ 200.00	-100%	
Planning Application Fees	£ 190.00	£ -	-£ 190.00	-100%	
Website	£ 100.00	£ -	-£ 100.00	-100%	
Audit	£ 60.00	£ -	-£ 60.00	-100%	
Misc	£ 146.38	£ 993.92	£ 847.54	579%	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£ 14,590.38</b>	<b>£ 13,137.54</b>	<b>-£ 1,452.84</b>		
<b>Income</b>					
Rental for Town Hall	£ 6,822.00	£ 6,107.00	-£ 715.00	-10%	
Misc income	£ 229.00	£ 10,189.99	£ 9,960.99	4350%	
WPC Grant	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ -	0%	
Sinking Fund Income	£ -	£ -	£ -		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£ 15,051.00</b>	<b>£ 24,296.99</b>	<b>£ 9,245.99</b>	<b>61%</b>	
	£ -				
<b>INCOME MINUS EXP</b>	<b>£ 460.62</b>	<b>£ 11,159.45</b>	<b>£ 10,698.83</b>		
<b>Total Bank Balance 29/1/21</b>					
<b>Accounted by :</b>					
General Reserves	£24,635.54				
Sinking Fund	£15,800.00				
<b>Total</b>	<b>£40,435.54</b>				

## REPORT FROM OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### INTRODUCTION

As County Councillor, I represent Chalgrove and Watlington Division, which is made up of some fifteen parishes across South East Oxfordshire. It is my pleasure to present this report to you and if there is anything I can help with, all my contact details are on the OCC website.

In addition to representing the interests of residents in this Division and my place on Full Council, I am Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services and, in this capacity, chair several related committees.

## COVID-19

Obviously, the past year has been dominated by dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic. It has had a huge impact on how we as a Council have delivered our services, with most of our offices being closed and many staff working remotely online, dealing with residents as well as holding many internal meetings. All Council, Cabinet and other committee meetings have been driven online and members' attendance at local Parish Council meetings has followed suit.

An upside to this has been the discovery that much of our work CAN be delivered far more efficiently via online systems, though not all, as personal contact is still vital in areas such as children's services. Nevertheless, significant savings in travel costs have been achieved if nothing else.

The long-term effects of Covid on how we conduct our business are yet to be felt but we intend to take forward the positive lessons we have learned by implementing such things as hybrid meetings to minimise travel time and costs, and selective home-working for our staff.

Some of the savings achieved during the pandemic include:

- A potential £306,000 saving in utility bills. This is the result of many of the county council's buildings being closed for several months due to COVID-19, and to anticipated increases in utility rates not materialising.
- A saving of £400,000 is expected because of reduced spend on travel, printing, stationery, expenses and other areas.
- In Adult Social Care, additional funding from the Hospital Discharge Scheme will save £1.3m. Additional funding from NHS England is expected to be made available nationally to support the on-going cost following discharges from hospital since 19 March 2020. This means council funding for care now being met by the Hospital Discharge Scheme (HDS) can be released on a temporary basis. Responsibility for on-going assessed care needs will revert to the council with assessed contributions from people towards the cost of their care once the HDS ends.
- The total council contribution to the Better Care Fund pooled budget in 2020/21 is £102m. The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a programme spanning both the NHS and local government which seeks to join up health and care services so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing and live independently in their communities for as long as possible. By increasing the focus on maximising use of residential and nursing beds available through existing contracts, minimising the length of any vacancies, and looking for creative ways to meet needs at lower cost while also helping service users be as independent as possible, it is anticipated that it may be possible to reduce spend by around 1% in the second half of 2020/21. This would save £500,000.
- In Children's Social Care a total of £903,000 will be saved due to a revised model of implementation for the new family safeguarding model of delivering care, which is being introduced during 2020/21. A delayed implementation from summer to autumn due to COVID-19 has meant lower running costs in this year; redesigning and reducing

set-up costs; reducing the project team that is supporting the implementation. However, the council is maintaining its frontline investment in the new service so that it can still improve services for children and families.

- The council allocated £200,000 in 2020/21 to carry out an assessment and redesign of youth services. COVID-19 has prevented the council from progressing this work as services for children in need of immediate help and protection had to be prioritised during the lockdown, while youth groups were not been operational in this period. However, the council has designed a proposal for the assessment that can take place this year, for which £25,000 is earmarked, and it will be looking for groups/organisations to bid to undertake this work. A saving of £175,000 will therefore be achieved.
- Community Support Services have remained open throughout the coronavirus pandemic which has required the use of different approaches to support people to meet social distancing requirements. During the remainder of 2020/21, this has enabled the council to identify an alternative base for its community support service in Didcot which has merged with Wantage. Everybody who received a service at Didcot will still do so. This will save £75,000, but also offers the opportunity to explore alternative delivery models for Community Support Services in the future.
- In highways and transport, £500,000 relating to various schemes will be charged to capital (project) budgets instead of from day to day spend in revenue budgets.
- Extra money as a one-off was allocated for 2020/21 for additional vegetation clearance and sign cleaning. A total of £175,000 of additional 2020/21 allocation is being offered back as a potential saving. This does not affect the council's normal level of service.
- Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue propose to save £200,000 by delaying plans to replace older diesel vehicles with electric vehicles by one year. The ambition is to have a full fleet of electric cars for general and operational use. It will have no impact on service delivery but will delay the reduction in emissions from the fleet.

### **Local government structure**

During summer 2020, independent experts took a fresh look at the different options for local government structures that could emerge for debate among communities and councillors in Oxfordshire as the nation awaits a Government blueprint for the future. Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council recently commissioned a piece of work to look at the various options that may be viable in the county. This followed a motion unanimously agreed by county councillors in July.

Both councils asked experts at PwC to complete the work. PwC are currently acting in an advisory capacity to Government and other local authorities undertaking similar pieces of work.

The report sets out a high-level appraisal of three options for local government reform in Oxfordshire:

1. Optimising the existing two-tier collaboration
2. Establishing a new single unitary authority
3. Establishing two new unitary authorities, based on a 50/50 split of the population to meet Government criteria around size

It is important to note that this review does not seek to make recommendations about the future of local government in Oxfordshire. Instead, it examines three options, which have been modelled using existing published data, and is designed to provide a useful basis for a positive conversation about how we can work as a local authority family across Oxfordshire to achieve the best outcome for residents.

Oxfordshire currently has one county council providing services such as social care for adults and children, highways, libraries, fire and rescue, trading standards, registration services (births, deaths, and marriages). Oxfordshire County Council is also the local education authority.

Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council provide services such as waste collection, environmental health, planning, leisure, and housing.

We await direction from central government as to how these options may be moved forward.

### **Budget for 2021/22**

Full Council agreed a balanced budget in February 2021 that will provide continued investment in key services and avoid any cuts to frontline delivery. Locally, councillors' Priority Fund budgets have been reduced, spreading the usual £15,000 over a two-year period, effectively halving the amount we have available to support local initiatives but also ensuring that we still have some means to continue our support for these projects.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Above all please take care, stay safe and follow the advice.

Kind regards



**Steve Harrod**  
County Councillor  
*Chalgrove & Watlington Division*  
Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services  
**Oxfordshire County Council**

## Reports from Local Organisations

### REPORT FROM FOWL to WPC APRIL 2021

[Friends Of Watlington Library]

As with all organisations in Watlington, the Covid pandemic has had an enormous impact on the library and on all FOWL's activities to support and promote it. The library remained closed from the beginning of the national lockdown in March 2020 until the end of September 2020, when the library opened for reduced hours under strict Covid guidelines including track and trace, book quarantining and limited numbers and time within the library. The library was then closed once again during the November national lockdown, briefly open in December and now has just recently opened following the third lockdown and almost 4 months of closure.

During this time, we decided to suspend membership of FOWL, although a number of members continued to pay their subscription and make donations, for which we are extremely grateful. We are now in the process of relaunching membership as the library begins to open up. Closure of the library was acknowledged within our commitments to OCC and we have not had to make a financial contribution for the financial year 2020-2021.

Throughout the pandemic FOWL Family Activities group continued to offer Storytime every two weeks on Facebook. This coming Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> will be our 30th session. The 29 sessions so far have had a combined viewing figure of over 7,000 – which gives a clear indication of how much this venture was valued by the families of Watlington. We have maintained links with the community through participating in the Hidden Arts Trail and having other exhibitions in our window, plus the ongoing wonderful window art of our Trustee Jen Skene. To that end, we have plans in place for full participation in ArtWeeks in May this year, with a local artist exhibiting in the library and the intention for the library to be an information hub during the festival whilst adhering to all Covid restrictions.

We have remained in contact with our members, suggesting talks and online content on our Website early in the pandemic and also through a number of informal Zoom talks. In November, we rescheduled our major talk with Lord Jay of Ewelme onto Zoom following its postponement last March.

Despite the pandemic, we were able to successfully run our photography competition to create another Calendar for Watlington showcasing our town - and plans continue to do the same this year. This will be a major source of funds moving forward, as we navigate how we can fundraise and meet our commitments in a changing landscape. At the moment, it is unclear when events will be able to resume within the library.

The events of the past year have demonstrated to us all how valuable the library resource is to the people of Watlington. Our volunteers have continued to offer their time and commitment when needed and have taken on the additional roles relating to Covid restrictions with aplomb. As always, we remain extremely grateful for their dedication to our community library.

We now have a dedicated email address for contact: [friendsofwatlingtonlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofwatlingtonlibrary@gmail.com)  
Dr Anna Tilley Chair: FOWL April 2021

### **Report from Friends of Watlington Hill**

Friends of Watlington Hill is a volunteer group affiliated to the National Trust and meets on the Hill on average about once a month. The bulk of our work parties involve cutting back and collecting cut material. This is to maintain the bio-diverse chalk grasslands which would very quickly become covered in wood and scrub if left whilst maintaining a percentage of scrub and tree cover for they too are important for a balance.

Unfortunately, because of the Coronavirus epidemic the National Trust has not been able to offer opportunities for Countryside Volunteering since March 2020 until this April. There is a cautious program in place now to resume volunteering during weekdays at selected sites including Watlington Hill with limited numbers to comply with Covid-19 legislation.

If the weekday sessions prove successful it is hoped that the Friends of Watlington Hill will be able to meet for a work party on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May, but this is provisional; numbers will be limited to six and places must be booked in advance.

For more information please contact Keith Jackson [keithc.jackson@btinternet.com](mailto:keithc.jackson@btinternet.com) or Terry Jackson [tjacks@waitrose.com](mailto:tjacks@waitrose.com).

### **ANNUAL REPORT from the WATLINGTON BRANCH OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION 2020 - 2021**

The pandemic has brought about many changes to the branch this year and to fund raising activities. There were no organised visits to places of interest, no Pub Quiz and no Grand Draw in August. The quarterly Newsletters have continued to help keep in touch with members.

VE Day in May saw us in the middle of lockdown 1. However, it was a wonderful sunny day and the occasion was marked, not with processions or dancing in the streets but by people either sitting outside their houses or by others walking around the town at a distance. Bunting and flags fluttered, and shop windows were decorated appropriately. There was a postcard display, and an air raid warden's uniform modelled in a garden. Pictures and flowers adorned windows and strains of the Last Post echoed around the town. Although very different from the first VE day in 1945, it was still celebrated.

Remembrance Day, fell this year during the lockdown 2, so again there was no parade, march past or service at The Cross but organisations and schools still bought wreaths which were laid by the Poppy Appeal organiser, the RBL President and the Chairman of the Parish Council quietly before 11am to avoid any gathering of people. As on VE Day many people stood outside their houses whilst the Last Post and Reveille were sounded in different areas of the town. There was also a fly past of helicopters from RAF Benson.

A huge effort was made by the community to raise awareness and funds for the Poppy Appeal. There could be no house to house or street collections, but several boxes were placed in shops and pubs. Poppies were sold on three Saturdays preceding Remembrance Day from tables under the Town Hall. A group of people met and made poppy covered masks which were also sold with the proceeds being generously donated to the Poppy Appeal. The Adwell estate also donated funds raised through the sale of Christmas trees.

The WI made thousands of knitted or crocheted poppies which were mounted on boards or wound through the trees near The Cross. The Rainbow Nursery encouraged their pupils, and many others, to draw poppies and put them in windows. All these initiatives left us in no doubt that it was the time of year for Remembrance, and a magnificent £6,300 was raised for the Poppy Appeal. Although this was lower than the usual sum raised here it is still much larger than many towns the same size as Watlington in a normal year. The Committee are most grateful to everyone who contributed in any way.

The Committee have met on Zoom, but the year ahead is still uncertain and difficult to plan. It is hoped to be able to hold the Grand Draw in August and that Remembrance Day will be a more normal occasion this year.

**Tessa Mogg**

**Secretary, Watlington Branch of the Royal British Legion.**

### **Annual Report from Watlington Town Football Club**

It has been a very difficult year for football - and other sports - as a result of the Pandemic, having endured long periods of lockdown, with no opportunity for people to take part in their favourite sports. Often even informal as well as formal football activities were prohibited.

Hopefully we are now on a better path, and football has been open since late March, with the junior and men's leagues having restarted in early April. The club's Soccer School, for 4-7-year-olds, has just restarted and is thriving again.

The club has 8 youth teams operating currently, and most have been able to play a number of rescheduled league games, with the season expected to finish at the end of May. This is of course much later than usual.

The men's first team are taking part in a late-season cup competition and are progressing well. The men's Reserves (second) team have just completed their season, finishing Runners-up in Division 2, which should mean a promotion to Division 1 next season, a level occupied by the first team just 2 seasons ago. The Old Boys (35+) team are aiming to complete a full season of matches by the end of the month. Interest is on the up again, but the club is unable to add teams to meet demand due to lack of space at the Sports Field.

Work is going on behind the scenes to improve facilities as well as look into what opportunities there are to address the very concerning lack of space at the site for our existing teams to play in. With the Sports Field split in two between football and cricket, there is only enough space to meet half of the club's current and predicted future need, and this is causing a lot of operational difficulties, not to mention having to turn away players, and not run teams, because they cannot be accommodated on this space.

The result is that local players don't have anywhere to play football, and they either move to other clubs or give up playing. The club is trying to address this urgently and it continues to offer opportunities when they arise, but ultimately the only longer term solution is extra space.

Everyone at the club is looking forward to the new season that is due to start in late summer, with a hopefully uninterrupted run of games throughout next season, and the opportunity for everyone to enjoy once more the game they love !

For any enquiries, please write to the club at:

[watlingtownfootball@gmail.com](mailto:watlingtownfootball@gmail.com)

### **Rainbow Corner Day Nursery Parish report 2021.**

Like for the rest of the world 2020 changed Rainbow from its normal busy routine to a very different looking environment, however, with a huge amount of work and reorganisation we managed to work out a way to protect the nursery and its staff and to offer our key worker families continued provision, this continued throughout the first lockdown with 5 staff working every day to look after key worker children in a new and safe way, the rest of our staff were furloughed using the government job retention scheme.

From June 1<sup>st</sup> after another huge effort from staff to totally rearranged nursery into 5 zones we reopened for those families that needed childcare, we kept one zone to continue to care for our keyworker families from 8-5 and 4 other zones for children attending 9-3 to offer the parents who wanted their children to return to nursery life. This was to protect both children and staff with small zones of 1 adult with the required ratio of adult to child and to avoid additional staff coming in to cover lunch breaks. A huge amount of additional daily and weekly cleaning was also arranged. Even with a few small grants this situation was not financially viable for nursery, but we continued until September to try our best to offer the community a childcare opportunity, as all other local groups stayed closed. Even with some extremely kind donations from our parents last year, it is no surprise that our 2020 accounts show a sizable loss and only time will tell as to how quick Rainbow can bounce back financially.

Since September 2020 we have been open normally with just a few exceptions like keeping 3 bubbles to continue to help stop the possible spread of the virus, we rearranged entrances and exits to make three separate ones for each zone, kept our staffing as static as possible which has meant most staff have not been able to take their 2020 holiday, which is starting to have a knock-on effect this year. We have welcomed lots of new children this year and despite all the media worries about children and how the pandemic has affected them they have all settled really well, thanks in part to some of our new changes like smaller groups, parents saying goodbye at the door instead of the prolonged opportunities we used to offer parents and using our online parent system to communicate on a very regular basis sending photos/videos and messages from nursery to home and vice versa.

Thanks to the fundraising money we worked so hard to raise in past years we were able to revamp the preschool garden adding a new climbing frame and artificial grass which has

meant the children could be outside a lot more and in all weathers, gaining plenty of fresh air as instructed by the public health organisation. This year again thanks to our past fundraising money we have also managed to have bespoke awning sides made for our preschool covered area giving us an additional outside room which has helped us keep to smaller groups of children and more fresh air.

We send huge thanks to all the Rainbow staff as during this pandemic and especially in all the main lockdowns they have had not only worked incredibly hard but also risked their own health and those of their families to continue to offer high-quality childcare and education to all those families who have needed it, while keeping everyone safe and well throughout without wearing full PPE as this was not advised when working with the very young, but I am sure you will agree with me that this was still a very worrying time for staff as evidence on this has not been very clear.

We thank all our parents for their continued support and understanding and to those parents who kindly made donations to try and help us through the worst of the pandemic.

Although we are working hard to arrange a new rationale to help us on the road back to normality we will continue to abide by all the government timelines and advice and continue to do all we can to keep Rainbow children, staff and parents as safe as possible and provide the best a nursery can offer in these uncertain times.

Debbie Hemmins  
Nursery Manager



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## **Watlington Club report 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

It has been a difficult year for the club as we were not able to provide our usual sporting, leisure and social facilities to the community. We spent much of the year closed but managed to open up for some periods per the government guidelines. We have, though, been successful in obtaining central government grants that we have used to shore up local businesses.

Significant time was spent by Trustees in managing the coronavirus lockdown requirements as well as the many easing and tightening of restrictions. Less time was needed managing the sporting, leisure and social activities.

Early in the pandemic, when it became clear that significant lockdowns were going to be in place, we decided to embark on several big projects that we had discussed for years. We used the time productively and managed to make significant progress in upgrading our facilities.

### **New branding as well as new website, membership database and social media**

For many years the club's branding and marketing had been very poor. To the extent that even some local residents didn't know what the club did. New branding with associated logos was developed. Following that, we launched a new integrated platform with website and membership. More lately we have launched FB and Instagram social media. Through our new website we have improved the visibility of a wide range of locally available leisure and exercise classes.

### **Overflow car park**

The overflow car park had deteriorated over the years and was in no fit state to use. The surface was covered with weeds and full of rubbish that had been dumped there. We decided to refurbish it with the aim of offering leases to local residents. As a result, we have been able to increase the supply of safe and secure parking in the town. The surface was dug and replaced with a new one. We added a secure electric gate and low-level lighting for security.

It's now fully open and we are in the process of adding Electric Vehicle charge points.

### **The Scout Hut**

For decades, this building was used solely by the Scouts. In recent years, the usage became very low and the state of the building deteriorated further due to lack of investment and maintenance. We agreed with The Scouts that they would move out and relocate to the Rec where they spent most of the time anyway. We agreed to pay for storage for them, so the transition progressed smoothly.

A major refurb was done to the structure of the building. We have preserved an important old building that is part of the heritage of the town as well as providing a young vibrant local business with much needed room to expand. Orange Bakery worked with the club to put a joint plan together that would see them use it as a bakery. They refitted the inside of the building. It has now opened and is supplying bread for their High St. shop.

### **Bar/Restaurant**

The Social put the bar/restaurant up for sale and the sale was agreed with The Taj Clubhouse. Despite the very difficult environment for hospitality businesses, they decided to open and initially offered delivery and takeaway services. The kitchen has been much improved, and the bars redecorated. We have worked closely with the Taj to allow them to stay open and provide another catering option to the town during lockdown. Service has recently also included the beer garden and the bar/restaurant will open in May as per government guidelines.

We are working in partnership to enhance the offerings the club can offer to the members and wider community. Discounts for club members are already in place.

We have modernised some of our private rented accommodation to improve the stock of high quality rented living space in the town.

Our aim now is to get the club fully open and to resume the full range of sporting, social and leisure facilities.

<https://www.watlingtonclub.co.uk/>

## **Watlington in Bloom Report for Annual Parish Meeting**

Due to Covid 19 the community work of Watlington in Bloom has been limited in the last twelve months however we have planted plants donated by the owners of the Well House

in the new Pollinators triangle on the junction of Brook St., Cuxham Road and Britwell Road. This area was also edge with an area of weed membrane topped with pebbles and cobbles so there would be no great loss if lorries ran over the corners as they are wont to do. We also purchased 3 planters, plants and compost for along Brook Street just before the first lockdown. The bank at the Fire Station was planted in autumn with some narcissus and tulip bulbs which are starting to give a show and during the early spring we have received some kind donations of snowdrops 'in the green' which have also been planted on the Fire Station bank. Because of lockdown we were unfortunately not able to run our popular Open Gardens Day event in 2020 but with contributions of photographs and videos from local gardeners we managed to produce a virtual Open Gardens Event in two parts:

Part One:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLWICcvDX7U>

Part Two:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ft\\_WYV8Y6Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ft_WYV8Y6Y)

We hope to be able to hold an open garden event later this year and are encouraging our gardeners to consider how they are attracting or helping wildlife in their gardens and then pointing these out to visitors on the day. If you are interested in joining in with Watlington in Bloom or opening your garden later in the year please contact Terry at [tjacks@waitrose.com](mailto:tjacks@waitrose.com) Meanwhile we will continue to care for the public plants watering, trimming, weeding and helping Nigel Mogg with the It's Your Neighbourhood Group – Mansle Gardens, plans for which are currently under discussion. We also continue to help with the First Sunday Task Force Volunteers street weeding and litter picking.

## **Watlington Cricket Club WPC Annual Report 2021**

There are very few things more important to us than cricket at WCC, but the health and wellbeing of our membership and community is one of them.

For that reason, the last year has been a very cautious one, where we have taken our responsibility to protect our immediate and wider communities the best we can. Obviously, exercise, socialising and time outside in the fresh air and green surroundings are valuable factors in our mental health, so we have done as much as we can for our girls, boys, women and men to get out and play.

We cancelled our indoor training sessions last winter/spring a few weeks before the country went into lockdown. We continued essential grounds maintenance in line with government and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) guidance, making sure we were ready to resume when conditions allowed.

The ECB gave the go ahead for cricket to resume cricket in mid-July. Unfortunately, this was too late for our Junior and Women's cricket to resume, as well as our social sports; Aunt Sally, Darts and Pool.

We did have a mini senior competition, 6 games instead of the usual 18+, which gave us a chance to play some cricket in a safe way. We went above and beyond the minimum

requirements, mainly due to our Cricket Ground, playing fields and pavilion having easy and increased public access and use.

We thank the Parish Council, in particular Kristina, Nicky, Roger and Bob for helping us to get the pavilion Covid-safe. We would also like to thank WPC for using Covid grants to cover the loss of rental income while WCC and others have been unable to use the facilities.

Despite losing our Junior, Women and Social Sports seasons, there were some positives. We attracted 15 new senior players over last season, many from Watlington where people had moved to the area, or had changed work patterns, priorities or lifestyles.

This is a trend we are continuing to see, picking up new players of all ages, genders and abilities, who are keen to join our friendly and inclusive club, with facilities we put so much care and effort to maintain and improve.

Along with our growing 'new' membership, we are seeing our first juniors make the transition into senior cricket, which is a milestone we are all very proud of. We plan to enter a third Saturday senior team next year to ensure they all get a chance to play and we are looking at short term solutions to provide a second ground to facilitate this. But with the many new houses in Watlington and surrounding areas, we expect our 'trend-bucking' growth to continue to the point where short-term solutions will not be sufficient to allow cricket and football to operate with the existing facilities.

Unfortunately, the 'once in a generation' opportunity to secure extra pitch space at no cost for our successful community clubs has been missed by the Parish Council, although they seem to recognise the need and are casting their net seeking to find other land they can buy to increase our urgently needed facilities in the short term.

We look forward to seeing spectators at our ground when the restrictions allow.

For any more information about our club, please visit our website: [www.watlingtoncc.co.uk](http://www.watlingtoncc.co.uk)

The Thursday Club opened for the last time in March. This day centre has provided a wonderful service to the community for many years. Once a week, in the West Room, those less able in Watlington and the surrounding villages met friends for entertainment as well as an excellent lunch cooked by volunteers. However, the requirement for this service has gradually declined to a situation where there were more paid staff and volunteers than members attending. Knowing that the pandemic would prevent opening in the near future, and due to the vulnerability of members, the Directors reluctantly made the decision to close the Thursday Club indefinitely. We are grateful to the paid staff, all the volunteers, those who gave talks over several years and also to the members who attended.

Due to the pandemic the last time the Drop In at 32b The High Street could open was in March, 2020. Since then, it hasn't been possible to open and still observe the necessary shielding and social distancing and we have no premises outside where tea and coffee could be served. The Directors have met virtually and hope that it will be possible to open again in the months ahead when restrictions are finally lifted.

However, chiropody takes place every Wednesday morning in the Drop In with suitable gaps between clients for sanitising. There are two volunteers present to make sure everyone remains safe and

social distancing is observed. We are very grateful to those who have enabled this service to continue. Appointments can be made by ringing Sue Yeowart on 01844 278606.

Tessa Mogg

Vice Chairman of WADAC

**END OF REPORT**