

Annual Parish Meeting

Reports from Organisations and Trusts

Watlington Town Hall Trust Body

Members in 2018/19: Tony Williamson, Terry Jackson, Bob West, Roger Beattie (as Councillors) Alison Morgans and Tim Horton (co-opted from the community)

External inspection

The Trust Body has concentrated on some essential and desirable upgrades of the building in 2018/19. This began following the close-up inspection of the upper external areas that included the panelling of the bell tower, the clock face, the weathercock, sundial, tiling and brickwork. (The Conservation Area officer of SODC accompanied in a cherry-picker!) Pleasingly most features were found to be in acceptable condition, there is a small amount of work to do on some tiling and brickwork is poor in small upper areas (as well as at lower levels)

Internal work

The trust body has resolved to introduce heating etc. by way of an electrical boiler. (A new boiler is required to replace the old gas installation that has served the building well but emits some discharge into a sensitive area of the Town for air quality).

Designs to improve the electrical cabling in the hall to allow better lighting has been completed and are subject to a planning/conservation application. In addition, the Trust body desire the installation of stair lifts in the 'old' staircase area (to the Hall and the toilets). It is confident that grants will be forthcoming for this work – but it needs to meet exacting listed building standards.

After several years investigation and monitoring, the board resolved to replace the lower parts of the plaster on both walls of the 'old' staircase with new (lime) plaster. This will afford the walling to 'breathe' as some moisture inevitable permeates the old brickwork. We hope to limit the impact upon normal activities in and around the building during this work.

A noticeboard

The small noticeboard will be replaced shortly by a much larger one. This will give scope to permanently tell the story of the Hall to strangers, advertise the Hall's availability – and to provide better for local general use under the Clerk's supervision.

Lettings and licensing

Letting income is at a satisfactory level – but there is currently more opportunity for daytime use. It is now possible to sell drinks at events through the new licensing arrangements. The trust hopes this will stimulate greater use – especially for small parties and the Town's many social and special-interest bodies.

Provisional Financial Statement

TOWN HALL ACCOUNTS 2019		
Budget 2018/2019	2018-2019 Budget	Year End 31/03/2019
Expenditure		
Caretaker services	4330	4330
Town Hall Open/Close	849	849
Water Supply	190	224
Electricity	820	1124
Gas + Boiler Service	1700	1455
Running Costs	740	467
Maintenance of Town Hall	1000	42
Planned maintenance sink fund	2000	2000
Insurance	1884	2010
Legal Fees	0	250
Licencing Fee	0	190
Website	130	0
Misc/Land Reg	220	289
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13863	13230
Income		
Rental for Town Hall	7500	6822
Misc income	60	229
WPC Grant	8000	8000
Grant from Doris Field		500
Sinking Fund Income		
TOTAL INCOME	15560	15551
INCOME MINUS EXP	1697	2321
Total Bank Balance 31/03/2019	£ 33,381.21	
Accounted by :		
General Reserves	£ 19,581.21	
Sinking Fund	£ 13,800.00	
Total	£ 33,381.21	

Thanks

We wish to record our thanks to our caretaker, Bob Thomas. Jenny Wilkinson has done valuable work in supporting cleaning work. Rachel Gill and Kristina Tynan have vitally handled all booking arrangements with skill, ensured good accountancy and offered excellent advice and guidance to the Trust Body. The Parish Council has supported the Hall with a grant that well reflects needs for short-term and very long-term aid and should ensure the safeguarding of a treasured place into the future. We wish to pay tribute to Canon Tony Williamson – chair for the most part of the year – who gave much time to the building and reflection within the Trust Body. His re-arrangement of management is we hope proving a success.

WATLINGTON AND DISTRICT AGE CONCERN

Age Concern first came to Watlington in 1991 as a Drop In at No 33 High Street, next to the library, where people could meet for a drink each weekday morning from 9.15am to 12.30pm. The Drop In continues but has moved to 26b The High Street, behind Tutu delicious. It could not operate without the many volunteers who help each week and at events like the Christmas Fair where there is a stall of second-hand goods to help boost our funds. The Drop In Centre offers the cheapest coffee in town, a professional chiropodist holds a weekly clinic and an ongoing table top sale offers many bargains to help with the ongoing costs of the centre. All ages are welcome, you don't have to be over 50!

Soon after the Drop In began a Day Centre was run from the School each Thursday. This is now the Thursday Club which has moved to the West Room at Old School Place. Here there are 2 paid staff and several helpers who give their time each week and two volunteers cooks who produce delicious meals. There have been talks once a month for the last few years given by various local residents and they have been interesting and very varied. Please check the Watlington Times and Council website for these and come and enjoy them.

Since the County Council grants were greatly reduced and the Parish Council grant removed altogether it has resulted in WADAC running at a considerable loss each year. We have significant savings, but interest rates are low and the income from these does not make up for the grants. Our expenses are rents for the two premises we use, insurance, electricity and wages. Several generous donations have been received this year for which we are very grateful. We are loathe to spend our savings which will last for around 5 years and feel that while there is a demand for the services WADAC offers in Watlington and for the surrounding villages we would like to keep going. All donations and grants would therefore be most welcome and the old saying goes "Use it or lose it" applies so please support the Drop In and the Thursday Club in any way you can.

Sadly Tony Williamson, the Chairman, died this year. He worked tirelessly for WADAC and is much missed.

Daniel Thompson has taken his place and Tessa Mogg remains the Vice Chairman. Doreen Hobbs has been the Secretary and Treasurer for many years and does so much for WADAC.

Watlington Library

And the Friends of Watlington Library; FOWL: Registered Charity 107468

Report to Watlington Parish Council AGM May 2019

Watlington library continues to thrive under the stewardship of our wonderful librarians, Libby Willis and Dawn Lawley. We are extremely fortunate in Watlington to have them. They have helped to make the library an important social hub within our community.

The Friends of Watlington Library (FOWL) have had a busy year with many well supported functions culminating in a 21st Anniversary celebration with the author Sir Philip Pullman. Sir Philip gave a wonderful talk to a packed audience at St Leonard's Church; many thanks to Reverend Daniel Thompson for his hospitality. A varied programme of events has included some new ventures, such as a photography talk, that have encouraged new faces into the library that we hope will return. Increased activities for families under our Family Activities group has varied from subsidised interactive theatre, regular Storytime's, and interactive workshops and they have all proved immensely popular.

Continued collaboration with the Ashmolean has led to a wonderful Viking Activity Day and the provisions of new information panels about our Watlington Hoard Replica and we look forward to continued collaboration with the Ashmolean in the year ahead.

FOWL continues to be concerned about the Charlotte Coxe Trust, which owns the library and 33 High Street. We fervently hope that progress will be made in the long-awaited transfer of the Trust from the County to a Watlington body, in the coming year.

FOWL's current Partnership Working Agreement with the County Council is entering its third year. This agreement means that FOWL provide volunteers to support the librarians and produce about £4,000 annually as a financial commitment towards maintaining our library staff. Once again, this year, thanks to the generous support of the Friends membership and our fundraising events throughout the year, we have met our financial commitments without any financial help from elsewhere, unlike many other rural parishes.

Our Charity and the library continue to work successfully due to the vision and hard work of our Librarians and FOWL Trustees, backed by the loyal support of our volunteers and co-ordinators. We are extremely grateful to them all.

Dr Anna Tilley
Chair; FOWL

ANNUAL REPORT from the WATLINGTON BRANCH OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION 2018 - 2019

In the last twelve months the end of WW1 was celebrated across the country. Armistice Day fell on 11th November and the RBL, Parish Council and many other organisations here in Watlington took part in a parade and service of remembrance for all those who lost their lives in conflict. The Two Minute silence was observed at the Cross at 11am where many people of all ages gathered.

On Friday 9th November a concert called, Watlington Remembers, was held in St Leonard's Church. It was produced by Iain Naismith with the Watlington Concert Band who played some of the old favourites of the time. RBL Committee members read stories and poems about how this War affected peoples' lives here in Watlington. Slides were shown of the graves of all those names appear on the memorial cross. This was particularly moving and much appreciated by the large audience.

The Committee have worked hard during 2018 to make the Watlington Branch run smoothly and organised some events to raise funds for the Poppy Appeal. This year there was the Pub Quiz held in the Chequers Pub at the end of May which was enjoyed by all who took part. A Grand Draw was held in August with tickets being sold outside the Town Hall. It raised a lot and we are grateful to the prize givers, organisers and everyone who bought tickets. The Poppy Appeal organiser and sellers worked hard selling hundreds of poppies and there were some generous donations given at the concert in November, mentioned above. These events enabled the Watlington Branch to send over £9000 to the Poppy Appeal which is a very good result. It helps the appeal in its work and shows our appreciation of all those men, women and children who suffer as the result of War.

In April there was a visit to the RAF Benson Heritage Centre organised by the branch. Ten people joined the party and saw the fascinating history of this local RAF Station.

Please keep looking at Notices around the town and in the Watlington Times about local British Legion events planned in the next months which you might like to support.

If you have some time and would like to become a member or help the Committee please get in touch with the Secretary, Mrs Tessa Mogg 01491 612429.

10th May 2019

RIDGEWAY



Last year a new U3A Impact Report was launched featuring the research: **Living Life, Extending Horizons, Challenging Conventions**. It demonstrated the exceptional impact of the U3A movement on wellbeing in later life and details a sustainable and positive approach to ageing, built on group learning, skill sharing and volunteering. This led to talks with the Government, specifically the NHS, which has resulted in the idea of Social Prescribing. Age UK has set up an initiative in South Oxfordshire for just that. It is a way which can link a range of local, non-medical activities, opportunities and support that can improve health and help live life to the full. The U3A motto is 'learn, laugh and live'. U3A is specifically for people no longer in full time work.

Ridgeway U3A showed what it has to offer at our very successful open day in September 2018, enabling guests to see what a vibrant, friendly and interesting U3A we have here in Watlington with the help of our friends from Chalgrove and surrounding villages. Medical Professionals and Clergy were invited, so that they could see the benefits of Ridgeway U3A at first hand.

Ridgeway U3A meets every month on the third Tuesday afternoon at 2.30pm to listen to a varied and interesting program of speakers. This year we have yet to hear from John Paine about 'Tigers and Maharajahs' on **18th June**, Peter Barratt talking on 'a Suffragette in the Family' on **16th July**, Colin Pawson talking about & demonstrating 'Coaches and Coach Horns' on **20th August**, and a professional writer Philip Caine on 'Barrow to Bagdad and Back' on **17th September**. There is the added advantage of tea/coffee with biscuits and a chance to chat afterwards.

We also have several interest groups which members can join, or if they have an interest not represented already, then they are encouraged to start another. The groups are led by members and include two Reading Groups, a Heritage and Local Studies Group, a Creative Writing Group, a Walking Group which now joins the Chinnor U3A for their walks, a Dabbling in Art Group and a German Language Group. These are all included in the subscription. There is also a New Horizons Group which has either Speakers or Trips for which there is a charge. The Luncheon Group meets every other month and a Theatre Group as and when local productions are of interest to members. These obviously have to be paid for separately. We are sure you will agree that the activities available are indeed varied and interesting – there is something for everyone.

We are also able to join in with events organised by the Thames Valley Network which brings together many U3As from the South East. Their size allows them to organize workshops and events covering a large number of subjects, including the Dunkirk Evacuation, 'History on Film' of 4 women in the 18th century, 'Medicine and Art' and later this year another chance to enjoy a study day at Kelmscott, the summer home of William Morris.

Ridgeway has managed to keep the subscription fee to an affordable £18.50 for yet another year. What better way to make new friends and to enjoy yourself.

More can be found out about us on our website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/ridgeway>

and that of Thames Valley Network at: www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk

Also, information can be found on the National Website at: www.u3a.org.uk

Annette Thompson – Chairman

Watlington Town Football Club 2019 Report

The football club has seen more steady progress over the past year, including some major successes on the pitch this season!

It continues to offer football to all sections of the local community, with its Soccer School for 3-6-year-olds, eight junior teams, for children aged 7 to 16, a ladies training group, and three men's teams, including an over-35s team. There are approximately 125 regular junior players and 100 adult players involved with the club. This number will grow again by next season as a new Under-7 team for the next age group joining the League is added this summer.

The men's teams all enjoyed arguably their most successful seasons yet. The First Team won Division 2 of the North Berks Football League with an impressive 15 wins from 18 matches and can now look forward to playing in the top division at this level next season. They also had a fine run to the county cup final, where they eventually lost to a team that is playing at a level 3 tiers higher than them. The men's Reserves team enjoyed their highest-ever finish of 5th place and 37 points in Division 4 after a very positive season all round. Meanwhile the Old Boys (35+) team finished in 3rd place in their division and went on an excellent run to the county cup final.

This season has seen the first junior players who have been involved for some years with the youth section, graduate into the men's section. This transition has been fantastic to see and demonstrates that there is an open pathway available to younger players aspiring to play adult football after they turn 16, fulfilling a vision of the club since the junior section was set up in 2013. The club hopes to see more and more youngsters go on to play their football with Watlington after playing youth football with the junior groups.

The club welcomes all new players and will always make efforts to make new players feel welcome and involved. There is a strong social scene at the club now, and much to enjoy beyond playing football itself.

As with any volunteer organisation, the football club couldn't exist without the fantastic support it has from its volunteers, whether they are the coaches, the committee, referees, or parents helping out in an ad hoc capacity. A huge debt of gratitude is owed to them all, but they can be proud in having played their part in sustaining such a thriving sporting asset on our doorstep.

The club is always on the lookout for new players at all levels and ages, as well as volunteers to fill roles essential to the continued running of the club.

For any enquiries on how to get involved, contact: watlingtontownfootball@gmail.com

Rainbow Corner Day Nursery report 2019

Rainbow Corner will be 35 years old this year and still providing Watlington and surrounding villages with high quality childcare and Education, having received an OUTSTANDING Ofsted award last August. We continue to work very closely with Watlington Primary school foundation unit and have regular meetings with them, the children's family hub and local health visitors to make sure we are all meeting the needs of as many under five children and their families as we can.

As a charity and community run nursery, we can provide a much wider range of times and additional equipment. We keep a close eye on our budgets and hold our AGM in March each year. We fundraise for all the extra equipment and fun activities our children need to give them the best start in life. This year we have already organised a fun run/walk which raised over £500, we also have planned a Family fun day for June and a Murder Mystery event for Oct.

We provide the children with a wonderful array of activities including walks around Watlington visits to the library, fire station, church and shops etc. In nursery we are just as busy with Art and craft activities, lots of outside play and learning with two wonderful mud kitchens, digging tubs, water wall, home corners and a new Music wall and additional extra-large building blocks. Indoors we have a new dressing up station and lots of small world play. We welcome visitors from the local community as well as parents to come in and help teach the children about their job roles/hobbies or bring in items and activities for the children to experience hands on. We are also running "wild woods adventures" for our older children and thank the primary school for the loan of their wooded area. Susie Grove our qualified teacher works with the children as well as supporting staff in the teaching methods for the very young.

We have a full working kitchen with two nursery cooks who provide the children with home cooked, healthy meals and continually keep up to date with new guidelines on children's nutrition, we also have the 5 score on the doors award.

We continue to offer the government's free 30-hour funding to parents, but we are only able to offer this in a reduced way to be able to stay sustainable. However, we do try whenever possible to offer short term places and reduced rates for people who find themselves in difficulties.

We now employ 25 plus staff with a real mix of ages, we encourage all staff with us to further their development and we help and support students that come to us to fill their training needs and often employ them when the next staff vacancy becomes available.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who support and help us throughout the year, from both schools, local Businesses, past parents as well as our current committee, trustees and staff. Without such Support Rainbow would not be the place it is today.

Friends of Watlington Hill Report for Parish Annual Meeting 23/05/2019

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.

We also clean the White Mark monument about once a year.

Our new National Trust Ranger for Watlington Hill, Matthew Bond, has introduced a policy of cut, collect and remove scrub and other unwanted material from the Hill. This is to avoid the cut material providing nutrients for new growth. The raking and collecting had to be done by hand, but recently the National Trust has invested in a large towed mowing machine which has a hopper to collect the cut material which is deposited in bundles largely avoiding the need to rake.

The policy has already proved very successful in improving the appearance of the Hill.

We meet at 10 am on either a Saturday or a Sunday in the National Trust Car Park and work until about 3pm in winter and 4pm in summer but volunteers need only work as long as they wish and can leave earlier or join in later. There is always a good atmosphere with friendly conversation. It is a great way to meet new people and learn about and enjoy the local environment. If you would like to be added to our mailing list please contact Keith Jackson keithc.jackson@btinternet.com or Terry Jackson tjacks@waitrose.com.



First Steps Family Hub Summary Report April 2019

This report covers:

What service we provide for the families within the local community.

Our attendance levels and donations.

People we work alongside to provide our service.

Funding, fundraising and our future plans.

The primary purpose of our Family Hub is to provide a service for parents and carers of children in Chalgrove, Watlington and surrounding areas so they can access support, activities and advice. We want to ensure that all families including vulnerable adults and children can receive a wide range of support packages, removing some of the burden on social care and potentially preventing escalation of issues.

To ensure that we are providing families with a range of activities and information we have built links with outside providers in the local area. We have invited the following along to run sessions on our behalf; Mrs Bun the Baker, Lady Bird First Aid, Musical Mayhem, Shake and Make, Sole well-being baby massage and Mini Professors.

Our current service has a regular programme of activities for 0-5 year and their parent/cares please see the attached timetable for more information.

All our sessions are planned according to the EYFS and we evaluate each session to inform our next steps. There is a wide range of children to plan for but we try to differentiate to ensure there are suitable activities for all ages – our sessions promote developing early communication and language skills including incorporating book start corner.

We have a school readiness plan in place, and we work closely with the Primary schools to implement this.

Parental feedback and surveys have been used during the year to inform of what the families like and dislike and adjustments have been made to the programme when necessary. For example, we overlapped the Tea and Tinies sessions with the Health Visitor and incorporated the Henry course as to suit families with young babies.

Quote from a family:

“We had a lovely morning at messy play. The children enjoyed spending some quality time with their Grandparents. We found it very welcoming and a relaxed atmosphere.”

As a family hub we provide universal open access to all in the community. Cost should not be a barrier to attending therefore we have a donation only system. We work with OCC supporting vulnerable families in the local area by providing access to our sessions for supervised visits.

Numbers have been on the rise since Free March in 2018. Since then we have replaced a fixed charge per session to have a donation per session. This has increased our numbers attending. We run both adult and child led activities which the families seem to enjoy. Numbers started to drop at Tuneful Tuesdays, but this has been addressed and they are now on the rise.

Donations from attendees at the hubs have contributed to the overall income of the hub however does not have a big impact on the budget as the takings go directly towards the activities put on for the families.

The role of joint hub co-ordinator and play workers is working well. Each member of staff has their own responsibilities and the communication between them is good. We hold regular committee meetings and reports are given to the Parish councils when necessary

The Family Hub has also put significant effort into securing and maintaining good relationships with local schools and parish councils, health professionals and Oxfordshire County Council. We have also been developing new networks with local organisations and service providers to be able to offer a wider variety of activities. For example, we approached SOHA housing for funding which has enabled us to provide Mrs Bun the Baker’s sessions for free.

We are currently working to ensure that the Hub’s financial stability continues after the transition funding from OCC ceases by applying to different organisation for grants such as SOHA, Bovis Homes, Big Lottery and other local community-based grants. We are also continuing with our fundraising events throughout the year.

Fundraising is now top of the agenda as concerns are gaining about funding after March 2020. We need to secure funding to place the shortfall from the OCC funds.

During this year we have developed a number of links with other stakeholders to support and develop our work with both children and parents. We have regular contacts with the Health Visitors and with OCC including social work staff as required. The staff have undertaken a range of training including First Aid, Lead Safeguarding, Food hygiene, HENRY, speech & language and we are currently embarking on a specific initiative with training to support parents experiencing mental

health issues resulting from isolation following childbirth. As new housing developments take place in both Chalgrove and Watlington and surrounding villages our resources are becoming increasingly important for new families arriving with few family links. This importance is recognised not only by the Parish Councils but by our two District Councillors and our local clergy who are supporting our venture by adding to our number of Trustees and creating a solid basis of support in the community. Our preventive work with children and families is evidenced by attendance and feedback.

We are also part of the South and Vale Family Network, which includes other voluntary run family centres who are in receipt of OCC Transition Funding, which is useful for peer support.

We are continuing to explore funding avenues and apply as they arise.

Our local fundraising activities include regular attendance of fetes and community events and the building of a relationship with the Beacon Festival – for whom we have become a charity beneficiary.

WATLINGTON ENVIRONMENT GROUP

In February Watlington Environment Group (WEG) celebrated its 20th anniversary during which time the Group has grown, developed and matured.

With around 90 members we hold a wide-ranging programme of talks, walks and visits as well as carrying out practical conservation work throughout the parish. Areas of current practical activity include managing the Watlington Chalk Pits Local Nature Reserve on behalf of the Parish Council and eliminating Himalayan Balsam (an invasive alien plant) from the woodlands around Christmas Common. We are also happy to offer advice to anyone in the community needing help with environmental or wildlife matters.

Our Watercourses Project, now in its 6th year has proved a great success with much understanding of the complex hydrology of the area gained and practical work undertaken to improve water quality and aid the population of wild brown trout in the brooks.

At the beginning of the year we re-vamped our website - please visit it for more information: <https://www.watlington-environment-group.org.uk>

Robert Barber - Chairman.

Watlington In Bloom Annual Report

Following a break from entering the 'In Bloom' Campaign Watlington entered in 2018 and achieved Best Large Village and a Silver award in addition to a coveted award for care of the environment. We are entering again in 2019 and will be judged by the Thames and Chilterns RHS Judges, Victoria Newton and Kyle Dowling, on 8th July.

We have already been working around the town this year. Two of the three tubs have been moved from the Car Park to the end of Couching Street where the roundels had first been prepared by cutting old tree stumps lower down and weeding and covering with weed membrane and stones. Keeping to our green ethos we of course replanted the plants but will be adding a few as well. The

third tub will be moved here in due course and plans will be made to improve the car park in a manner that is not so difficult to keep up- watering is an issue there.

Caroline Lye has kindly donated a small cube planter which will be planted up and placed in the High Street along with those done last year outside K is for Kitchen and Harriet Holgate Interiors.

Open Gardens Day in June 2018 was a great Success and was followed this year by a most enjoyable Early May Bank Holiday Open Gardens Day. I think people really enjoy this event and not just for the fantastic gardens but also for the social aspect of the event. Please do consider contacting me if you think your garden might be suitable to open in future and many thanks to those that opened their gardens already.

We have a few projects that we would like people to get involved in this year. Mansle Gardens It's Your Neighbourhood Group will be getting together to refresh this lovely quiet area and anyone who passes by this park and wants to get involved should contact either myself (details below) or Nigel Mogg at Church Close.

The Triangle at the junction of Brook Street, Cuxham Road and Britwell Road is a candidate for an overhaul. I am growing on some plug plants that will be drought tolerant, ready for this area but we need to prepare the area by digging out the grass and probably adding soil or compost.

I must thank the First Sunday Task Force for all the work they do. It really helps Watlington look Wonderful and impresses the RHS Judges. We have such a pretty town to live in that we should all try to do our bit by keeping our frontages tidy and if we have time to help either the Task Force – contact Jenny Wilkinson or turn up on the first Sunday of the month at the Memorial Cross at 11am, or contact me about helping Watlington In Bloom. We really need more volunteers.

Terry Jackson

[Tel:- 01941 613362](tel:01941613362)

E-mail:- tjacks@waitrose.com