

Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 31st March 2016

Trustees: Mr. John Meischke (Chairman) Mr. Ian Knight
Dr. Emma Waltham Mr. David Stock

Mr Iain Harris did not stand for re-election as a Parish Councillor in May and therefore stepped down from his position as Chairman of the Board of Trustees; we thank him for his work in both of these positions. As a result Emma Waltham joined the Board of Trustees and John Meischke agreed to take the position of Chairman.

The charity was formed on 7th August 1997 and the objects were altered by a Deed dated 15 July 2007 and are now as follows, "Trustees shall hold the trust fund and its income upon trust to apply them for the following objectives in Watton-at-Stone: to provide or assist in the provision of recreational and sporting facilities for the benefit of the public in the village and surrounding area with the aim of improving the conditions of life of those persons."

The Board of Trustees had four formal meetings during the financial year and reported on its activities/key decisions during each of the monthly meetings of the full Parish Council.

In order to meet the charity's key objectives the Trustees took all steps to ensure the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the Nigel Poulton Community Hall. As part of this, and for reasons of safety, major works were undertaken to replace the doors and all of the double glazing at the sports field end of the Pavilion. Because of damage and several water leaks, a new roof was also fitted to the Pavilion. The replacement end-wall and roof are of a better standard than were the originals. As reported in the minutes, we have been told that the Boilers will soon need to be replaced. With this in mind, a meter has been installed to measure hot-water usage so that we can determine the type of boiler system needed to meet our needs.

After a substantial amount of work by David Stock and me on the subject of Child Safeguarding and responsibilities, it was agreed with the Parish Council that an appropriate section be added to the current Hire Agreement which must then be signed by all hirers.

As part of our efforts to broaden the scope of the activities available at the Community Hall, we commissioned an independent report into how the overall use of the building and its facilities could be improved and also had an on-site meeting with the manager of a local sports facility. Using the information from these sources, Emma Waltham produced a report and plan-of-action which was presented to the Parish Council. It was agreed that we would try to expand the use of the facility for both sporting and community activities and to this end the Trustees will produce and distribute a Parish-wide survey to help us determine what types of activity people would like to see at the Community Hall.

An overlay/protection carpet has already been purchased to allow more events to take place in the Main Hall.

The mobile library has stopped serving our village, so the Trustees have supported Mike Freeman (our local District Councillor) in his attempts, with the help of volunteers, to set-up a Library in our Meeting Room. This has proved to be successful and shelving has been installed to accommodate the large supply of books already available. Refreshments are being offered in the Pavilion while the library is open. We are applying for a grant for new tables and chairs.

To make the facility more appealing to hirers, it has been proposed that the light fittings in the Pavilion be replaced and then decorate that area.

Extensive research into bringing Broadband into the Community Hall has been undertaken with specialists from EHDC. However it is currently unlikely that this service will become available to us without excessive cost.

I would like to thank the Trustees and Mrs Jane Allsop (the Clerk) who have all worked hard to make things happen this year. We all hope to see this effort bear fruit later this year!

Report by: John Meischke