

Watton Annual Town Meeting 2026

AS A RESIDENT THIS IS YOUR MEETING!

All welcome

Please remember this is not a Council Meeting but a meeting for residents of the town facilitated by the Town Council

Tuesday 21st April 2026 at 7pm

To be held in the Sports Hall, Watton Sports Centre,
Dereham Road, Watton IP25 6EZ, *Light refreshments provided.*

The meeting will start at **7:00pm** under the Chairmanship of the
Town Mayor Gillian Tarrant

Agenda

Welcome by the Chairman
1. To approve the minutes of the 2025 Town Meeting
2. To receive the Chairman's Report
3. To receive reports from District Councillors
4. To receive report from the County Councillor
5. To receive reports from organisations which have received grants or donations from the Town Council during the last financial year
6. To receive reports from other organisations or local groups within the town
7. To receive questions from the public on Town affairs in general

Gillian Tarrant

Gillian Tarrant
Chairman of Watton Town Council

This meeting is being convened and conducted in accordance with the requirements of Part III of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972

Minutes of the Watton Annual Town Meeting held at

Watton Sports Centre on April 15th 2025

Present: Don Saunders (Chairman of Watton Town Council), District Councillors Mr K Gilbert (also Town Councillor) and Ms C Bowes (also County Councillor), 4 other members of Watton Town Council and 27 members of the public (many representing organizations in the town).

Also present Watton Town Council Clerk.

1. The minutes of the 2024 Annual Town Meeting were presented, agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

2. Chairman's Report

The Chairman of the Town Council had provided a report of Town Council activities over the past year which was available in the agenda pack for the meeting.

A copy of all reports received or given at the meeting will be made available on the Town Council website: www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk

3. District Councillors' Report

Written reports were received from Claire Bowes, Tina Kiddell and Keith Gilbert.

4. County Councillor's Report

Written report received from County Councillor Claire Bowes with verbal update given:

- Flag poles have been re-instated to mark VE and VJ Days 2025.
- Norfolk County Council is supporting VE and VJ Days by waiving road closure charges for any street parties organized on those days.
- Amnesty days are being held at local recycling centers.
- There is to be a total re-dress of Harvey Street in 2026 with road markings in the High Street to be re-painted in 2025.
- Claire will investigate whether there are current plans to extend the footpath beyond Lidl on the Norwich Road.

5. Reports received from organisations which have received grants or donations from Watton Town Council in 2023

- Watton Family Group – written report received from the Watton Family Group with verbal update given. A request was made for additional volunteers to help at sessions held in the Charlotte Harvey Community Hub on a Thursday morning.
Noted that one of the Mayors Charities for 24/25 is the Watton Family Group.
- Watton Society – written report received with display stand at meeting.
- Loch Neaton – written report received with verbal update given.
- Watton Carnival Committee - written report received.
- Watton Rainbows, Watton Brownies and Watton District Guiding Rangers – written reports received with verbal updates given.
- Watton Sports Association - written report received with verbal update given
- Queens Hall Christmas Event – written report received.
- Watton Ladies Group – written report received with verbal update given.

- Norfolk Clubhouse - written report received with verbal update given.
- Watton & Saham Flood Action Group - written report received with verbal update given.
- Wayland Chamber of Commerce - written report received with verbal update given. Watton Family Group - written report received with verbal update given.
- The Charlotte Harvey Trust – written report received with verbal update given.
- The Wayland Partnership - written report received with verbal update given.
- The Benjamin Foundation – written report received.

Noted that many groups who gave a verbal update stressed that volunteers are needed!

6. Reports received from local organisations

- 864 (Watton) Squadron ATC—written report received.
- Loch Neaton Park Run - written report received with verbal update given.
- Museum4Watton – written report received.
- Queen’s Hall – written report received.
- Watton Food Hub - written report received.
- Watton Inner Wheel Club - written report received.
- Watton Twinning Association - written report received.
- Watton Evening WI - written report received with display stand at meeting.
- Watton Mens Shed – verbal update given.

7. Town Affairs/Matters raised by attendees

No matters raised by those present.

Reports available on the Town Council website

Item 2

Report from Watton Town Council 2025-6

2025/2026 has been a busy year for the Town Council; we have seen changes due to the resignations of some councillors earlier in the year however I am happy to report we now have a full contingent of councillors.

As a council we aim to fulfil the statutory duties of the council.

In addition to our statutory obligations, we are also committed to providing a variety of opportunities, activities and functions for the benefit and wellbeing of the community.

Events

In conjunction with local organisations the Town Council has organised or been part of the following events.

2025

May

- VE Day Commemorations

June

- Open gardens
- Yard sales

July

- Antiques Market (2025 held at the Queens Hall due to the forecast of inclement weather)

August

- VJ Day commemorations
- Watton in Bloom Summer 2025 organised by Watton Society and judged by the Mayor
- Skate Park opening at Watton Sports Centre
- Bikes on the High Street

October

- Food and Fireworks Festival

November

- Remembrance Service
- Festive Street Market and tree lighting with free gifts for children from Father Christmas

2026

- Watton in Bloom Spring 2026 organised by Watton Society and judged by the Mayor

Throughout 2025/2026 the Town Council has supported the free Family Fun Days held at the Charlotte Harvey Community Centre, every Tuesday during school holidays (except the Christmas break).

Church Walk

Church Walk is not owned by Watton Town Council but the Council continues to assist with maintenance of the area.

The lighting has been improved and the daffodils continue to flourish.

Town Car Parks

A consultation with residents was held regarding the takeover of the three currently owned Breckland Council car parks in the town. An overwhelming number of votes were in favour of the Town Council taking control.

Negotiations with Breckland Council continue, but hopefully the car park ownership will be transferred soon.

The Town Council has also requested the transfer of open space land from Breckland Council to the Town Council.

Newspaper

The monthly free newspaper: The Watton and Wayland times contains local information about events, activities and local groups.

The Town Council supports the paper by paying for regular use of the centre pages where Council information can be found.

Thetford Road Allotments

The Town Council has been fortunate in obtaining the freehold of the allotments at Thetford Road. To celebrate this an Allotment Open day was held in August 2025.

It is hoped this will become an annual event.

Weeze

The Town Council has commissioned a framed print of the Watton Heritage Map which will be taken to the twinning town of Weeze when a visit is made later in the year to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the founding of Weeze.

Community Champions Award

A scheme has been introduced by the Town Council whereby good deeds in the town can be acknowledged.

New Mayors Chain

A new chain for the Mayor has been commissioned with the old chain now retired and on display at the Museum for Watton.

Town Council Councillors and Staff

The Town Council has welcomed 5 new Councillors during the year and one new member of staff.

The Council has recently introduced both a Digitalisation Working Group and a Bio-diversity Working Group.

Working with others!

HMP Wayland

HMP Wayland has been running a Community Matters Project which the Town Council has been part of. This has led to closer positive working with the prison which has made wooden notice boards, bird boxes and planters in its workshops. All are being used around the town.

Norfolk Youth Justice Service

The Town Council has also worked with the Norfolk Youth Justice Team who have been helping with maintenance of the pathway around the perimeter of the Bridle Road Play Area.

Norfolk County Council

Additional flowering cherry trees have been planted by Norfolk County Council around the parish to be looked after by the Town Council.

Breckland District Council

Breckland Council has provided two footfall cameras for Watton High Street which are now maintained by the Town Council.

Watton and Saham Flood Action Group (WASFAG)

WASFAG will provide a report but it is noted that the Council continues to support the Group and is liaising with BlueGreen Urban regarding measures to "Reclaim the Rain" in the High Street.

Comments from the Mayor

I have been overwhelmed with the support and friendliness I have been shown by groups and individuals during my tenure as Mayor.

I had always felt since moving to Watton several years ago that we have a wonderful community and this has certainly been reinforced throughout the past year.

As Mayor I feel fortunate to have been invited to be involved in many events and activities that have taken place and offer my heartfelt thanks to all who have made me feel so welcome.

The Town Council is sole Trustee of the Charlotte Harvey Community Trust.

The Centre in Harvey Street which is run by the Trust is growing from strength to strength and is used by many groups, organisations and individuals.

Information can be found and bookings made on the centre website.

The food hub is very popular and offers residents of Watton and the wider Wayland area access to a good selection of foodstuffs at reduced prices with free fruit and vegetables also available. Residents can join the food hub for a one-off fee of £1, a great help to all in these financially difficult

times. The staff at the hub are all very friendly and everyone is welcome regardless of circumstances.

The Benjamin Foundation hosts weekly youth clubs at the centre which are well attended.

The Trust will also provide a Report for the Town Meeting.

Finally, the Town Council has received a Love Your Town Pride of Place grant of £4,800 from Norfolk County Council and Breckland District Council's Love Your Town Fund which has funded the Hare Trail which started on 3rd April 2026, and

Looking to the future the Town Council has accepted £12210 Pride in Breckland grant. We look forward to detailing in next year's annual report how this grant will have benefited the town as a whole.

Councillor Gillian Tarrant

Watton Town Mayor

Item 3 District Councillors

TOWN MEETING REPORT BY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR TINA KIDDELL WATTON WARD.

Due to me being a candidate in the upcoming election on the 7th May I am unable to comment on Council Business. I do not want to unwittingly break the pre-election rules of Purdah.

Tina Kiddell Watton ward

District Councillor Keith Gilbert

As a member of one of the opposition groups, being an Independent member, I am not involved in decisions made by the ruling Conservative group. I always say that the job of an opposition member is to ask the awkward question.

I serve on two committees, the Planning Committee and the Licensing Committee.

As a member of the Planning Committee I do not make public comment on planning applications, because to do so could lead to an accusation of pre-determination, and I could not then sit on the Committee for that application.

Only a small percentage of applications are heard by the Planning Committee, the majority are determined by officers if they are in line with the Council's policies. However, a ward member can "call in" an application in their ward if they disagree with the officer's recommendation and ask for it to be determined by the Committee.

We do not always agree with the officer's recommendation, and quite often vote against it. There have been several instances this past year when an application has been recommended for refusal and the Committee has voted to approve it. We are definitely not a rubber stamp committee.

The Licensing Committee is very much a legalistic committee, overseeing the work of the Licensing department, which covers licenses from Taxi drivers, licensed premises, to sex establishments.

I have sat on several licensing panels. These are mainly taxi drivers who have accumulated more than six points on their license, and have to inform Breckland of the fact. The panel can revoke or suspend the licence, or not, depending on circumstances. We do have legal advice when considering what action, if any, to take.

Local government reform is on the way. Personally I am in favour of a Unitary Authority. I do think that Three Unitary Authorities for Norfolk is a good idea and is my preferred option.

If there are any questions I will be pleased to try and answer them.

Keith Gilbert,
Ward member for Watton on Breckland Council.

Item 4

County and District Councillor Report to Watton Annual Meeting 2026

I'm always impressed by the number of local voluntary organisations and individuals who work selflessly in the Watton and Wayland area and who's contribution can easily go unsung. Over the years I have been pleased to support bids for funding for charitable projects and most recently have been keen to secure funding through the County Council's Community Fund for Watton Sports Centre with £1,000 going to the new 3G 5 a side pitch project and £500 each going to the Daisy Programme, 3rd Watton Brownies and Love Watton.

I applaud the successes achieved in recent years by Wayland Academy, of which we should all be extremely proud. As a result of the hard work and dedication of pupils and staff the Academy celebrated record GCSE results in August 2025, with 64% of students achieving 9-5 grades in English and Maths and 80% achieving 9-4. The Academy is now ranked among Norfolk's top-performing schools.

In the last year I have been pleased to see the planting of 30 trees including flowering cherries and native trees on County highways land in and around Watton, funded through the County Member's Highways Environmental fund. These compliment schemes I already helped secure - the replanting of cherry trees on the High Street, new planting on green space on George Trollope Rd through Breckland's Market Town Initiative and on Merton Road, through the King's Coronation Orchard Fund.

My work to deliver more speed reduction safety measures continued with 2 successful bids for funding from the National Highways Road Safety Fund one of which brought advisory flashing 20mph signs past Wayland Academy.

I lobbied last year for more support for our hospitality businesses and pubs following Government tax hikes and the County Council recently announced a £250,000 "Hospitality Matters" campaign to support the sector with bespoke training, workshops, and potential £1,000 grants.

As County and Breckland Councillor I have been engaged with Watton's Middle Street regeneration project and successfully worked for investment in that from both County and Breckland Councils. Likewise I back the innovative Watton and Wayland Digital Media Centre proposal for our town and was pleased to attend the project launch in October.

I'm very pleased to be able to report that in 2025 nearly £300,000 was allocated by Conservative run Breckland Council to support sports and youth facility improvements in Watton, including the new Junior Park Run, resurfaced hockey pitch, and basketball facilities. The funding came from developer contributions linked to recent housing developments. Watton Sports Centre was allocated £108,000 to support the creation of the recently opened Watton Skate Park, while £80,657 was used to resurface the hockey pitch.

Market town businesses and organisations in Breckland were awarded grants totalling more than £20,000 through the Love Your Market Town Pride of Place scheme a joint initiative between Norfolk County and Breckland District Council. In Watton, successful projects were this year's Easter Watton Hare Trail and Watton Antique and Collectors Market both of which applications I was actively able to support.

In January Breckland began the process of transferring a number of the district's car parks (including in Watton's) into the ownership of local town councils after having invited all town councils in Dereham, Swaffham, Watton, Thetford and Attleborough to consider taking on

the management of car parking provision in the towns. This welcome move, (led by Watton) followed Breckland Council's original proposal to charge for parking in its market towns, which last year, in support of residents and high street businesses, I had strongly opposed.

As you are all not doubt aware, local elections for Norfolk County Council will be held on 7th May and after making a public stand against the previous postponement I am pleased to be re-standing. It is always an honour and pleasure to be nominated to represent the Watton and Wayland area that I was born and brought up in. The two polling stations for Watton residents will be the Queen's Hall and Watton Methodist Centre. Polls will be open from 7am to 10pm. Your polling card will indicate which polling station you should attend to vote.

Please do remember that you must now show an approved form of photo ID when voting at a polling station.

Norfolk wide achievements

Norfolk County Council has a strong record on delivering on its promises and investing in the county's future. From new libraries to strengthened local transport, supporting businesses and high streets, expanding opportunities for young people, investing in 90% 5G coverage for Norfolk, taking action to protect Norfolk's heritage and natural environment, (850,000 trees planted) and building 430 houses (the majority for first time buyers) . It is a Council that stands up for Norfolk and fights to secure the investment it deserves. Its Children's Services is held to be one of the best in the country.

The council approved a balanced budget for 2026–27, demonstrating strong financial leadership and prudent management in what remains one of the toughest funding climates in decades. It ensures that the county remains on a firm financial footing without resorting to emergency measures which is in stark contrast to a growing number of upper tier authorities across the country which have issued Section 114 notices or are facing effective bankruptcy. It reinforces the administration's commitment to careful stewardship of taxpayers' money, strong local services, and a resilient future for the county.

Investment in community led highway improvements across the county

The County Council has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting local communities with the approval of 99 new highway improvement schemes for 2026-27, delivered in partnership with town and parish councils across Norfolk through its successful Parish Partnership Programme.

Bus service improvements deliver record growth and faster journeys

Norfolk County Council's ambitious Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) has transformed public transport across the county, driving a 26% increase in passenger numbers since 2022 and making Norfolk a leading national example for sustainable travel.

Investment in the restoration of iconic Norwich Castle

Norwich Castle Keep reopened to visitors following a comprehensive five-year redevelopment project that introduced new accessibility features alongside new galleries and interpretive displays. Funded by £12 million from Norfolk County Council and over £13 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, all five floors of the newly named People's Palace are now open to the public for the first time ever.

Local Government Reform

The Government recently announced its intention to abolish Norfolk's existing two-tier system of Local Government which comprises eight district and one county council and replace them with three new unitary authorities for the county. The areas of Breckland Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, plus a small number of parishes from South Norfolk, will be replaced by a new authority for West Norfolk. The decision will also see two additional unitary authorities established, one for Norwich and one for East Norfolk. These three unitary councils will be responsible for providing all local authority services within their respective areas, including social care, planning, highways, housing, education and waste. The establishment date for the new unitary system is 1st April 2028. Current councils will continue to provide services during the transition period leading up to April 2028.

Claire Bowes.

Norfolk County Councillor, Watton Division

claire.bowes@norfolk.gov.uk

Breckland District Councillor, Watton Ward

claire.bowes@breckland.gov.uk

07789796937

Police

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a report to the Town Council. I would very much like to take this opportunity to remind Councillors and the public of our Neighbourhood Police (formerly SNAP) Meetings.

These meetings are held four times per year and provide an opportunity for residents and councillors to hear updates on current police priorities and raise any concerns. The meetings are held across the Watton policing area, including rural parishes with an opportunity to join the meeting online via Teams for those who cannot make the meeting in person. The current Police Priorities are:

- Tackling Anti-social behaviour with focus particularly on Dereham and Thetford
- Tackling Rural and Acquisitive crime across Breckland.

The next Neighbourhood meetings for the Watton and surrounding parishes are:

- Tue 21 April 2026 at 7pm (online only)
- Mon 20 July 2026 at 7pm (Watton Town Council Offices)
- Tue 2^h October 2026 at 7pm (location TBC)

For the link to join the Neighbourhood meetings online please email your beat managers at SNTBreckland@norfolk.police.uk

I would also like to remind councillors and residents on how to contact police should you need to. If its not an emergency, the easiest way to contact us is online at www.norfolk.police.uk. Your report will be sent direct to our control room where it will be reviewed by the same team who answer our calls.

Always call 999 in emergency situations such as:

- There is an immediate danger to life
- Someone is using violence or threatening to be violent
- A road collision where life is at risk, or the road is blocked
- A crime is happening right now, like a house burglary or a theft.

You can also report non-emergency matters anonymously via CrimeStoppers either online at crimestoppers-uk.org or by phone at 0800 555 111

Item 5



Grants, Donations and Charities

In this financial year from March 31st 2025 – 1st April 2026 the Town Council has awarded the following Grants and Donations to local organisations

Grants

Applicant	Amount	Report received
Charlotte Harvey Trust	£1580.00	✓
Watton Carnival Committee	£1000.00	✓
Watton Ladies Group	£67.81	✓
Watton Christmas Hamper Appeal	£67.40	
Watton Junior School	£500.00	✓

Applicant	Amount	Report received
Watton & Saham Flood Action Group	£258.00	✓
The Wayland Partnership	£4333.74	✓
Wayland Academy Achievement Evening	£50.00	✓

Donations

2024/2025 Mayors Charities

Watton Family Group	£445.05	✓
Wayland Academy Duke of Edinburgh	£445.05	✓

As a condition of any grant the Town Council requests all successful applicants to give a short presentation at the Annual Town Meeting on how the money has been spent.

If any voluntary groups in the town would like to be considered for a grant please view the Grant Application pack on www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk for information.

Report to the Annual Town Meeting April 2026

The Charlotte Harvey Trust is the charity that is responsible for Watton Community Centre on Harvey Street. The Centre is now the Home of Watton Food Hub which is part of the Nourishing Norfolk Network. Please see their separate report.

There are 3 part time members of staff who are responsible for running the Centre and Food Hub and also work to improve the facilities and put on community activities.

The Caretaker Graham retired this year, a huge thank you to him for all his work and support. We are pleased to welcome Neil who joined the team in March 2026.

Groups using the Community Centre during 2025-26:

The Centre provides a base for eighteen community groups and activities with over 175 people using the Centre each week. New groups this year include Watton Scouts, Watton Players and Lapwing Education.

Watton Squirrels, Beavers & Scouts	Lapwing Education
Yoga	Saracens Martial Arts
Watton Players	Your Health Norfolk
Benjamin Foundation Youth Group and Young Carers	HM Prison & Probation <u>Service Dog</u> Training Team
Sewing Group	Watton Family Group
Saracens Kickboxing	3 rd Watton Brownies
Hackers, Tackers & Stuffers	Breckland Boardgamers
All Nations Church	Chair Yoga
Wayland Short Mat Bowls	Mid Norfolk Stroke Group
As well as one-off use birthday parties and celebrations.	

c/o Watton Town Council 01953 881007
admin@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk
www.wattoncommunitycentre.co.uk

Other activities in 2025-26:

Family Fun Tuesdays

After the very successful launch in 2023 we extended the Tuesday, free family activities to all school holidays (except Christmas). They were again funded with support from Tesco and Watton Town Council. The days continued to be very popular with over 70 - 100 children and their 'adults' attending. We were very lucky to have tremendous support from local community groups who came along to provide additional activities, these included: Benjamin Foundation, Love Watton, St Mary's Church, Breckland Family Hub, 1st Watton Rainbows and Wayland Men's Shed. Watton Town Councillors and other volunteers were also a great help providing help on the day with set up and running.

Watton Food Hub

The Community Centre continues to host The Watton Food Hub. This provides a valuable service to the Community and now supports over 400 households in the Watton area.

See separate report.

Projects in 2025-26:

Accessibility

The exit door to the Rear Hall was accessible only via steps, both making it difficult to use for the less mobile and a potential hazard if needed for emergency exit. A new ramp / steps was installed, greatly improving the situation. The work was funded with a grant from the Norfolk Family Hub Community Fund.

Falls Prevention Classes

A grant was obtained from Sport England to run 2, weekly Falls prevention classes at the Centre. These were run by the Your Health Norfolk team and were free to users for the first 6 months. This funding has now finished and the group is continuing on a 'self funded' basis. Feedback on the classes has been overwhelmingly positive and they were over-subscribed. We hope to apply again to repeat the project for a new intake.

Warm Spaces.

We have been able to continue the 'warm spaces' project for another year thanks to funding from the Love Norfolk grant. This year we have been lucky to have a volunteer who has cooked fresh soup each week and this has proved very popular.

Centre Storage

Time has finally caught up with the storage sheds at the [Centre](#) and these are being replaced with a 20' container. This will provide safe, dry storage and removing the sheds will give space to improve the area around the butterfly path. The work was funded with a grant from the Norfolk Family Hub Community Fund.

Plans for 2025-26:

Centre Access

Grant funding will be sought to replace the Front Door with one that opens automatically and to improve disabled access from the car park.

Family Activity Days

Will aim to continue the Family Fun Tuesdays during the school holidays with support from local businesses and community groups and Watton Town Council.

Centre Signage

Hope to install new signage to improve the visibility of the Centre from Harvey Street.

REPORT FROM WATTON CARNIVAL COMMITTEE

On behalf of Watton Carnival Committee I would like to say a huge thank you to Watton Town Councillors for approving our grant for monies towards the Watton Carnival on the 13th July 2025 at Watton Sports and Social Club.

The Carnival is settling well into its new home at the Watton Sports Centre and is continuing to grow. The Carnival is offering more activities for children. We also faced difficulties from our Insurance Company with regard to safeguarding issues and keeping children and the general public safe and The Police are happier with the Carnival's new home.

We were asked to keep the Carnival at the Sports Centre by the community. The atmosphere was amazing. We understand that footfall is increasing and our partnership with the Sports Centre continues to grow.

We are finding the overheads for the Carnival seem to be increasing alarmingly post Covid.

The £1,000 received from the Town Council helped enormously the monies were used to cover the free Children's Attraction, the donation for 1st Aid Cover by Watton First Responders and as we received extra monies we used this to go towards the cost of the live music.

Without the support of the Watton Town Council it would make putting the Watton Carnival on very difficult as we are finding it harder to get sponsorship due to the economic climate.

Once again, a huge thank you as we believe that the Carnival has been part of the life of the Town for decades.

Thank you we are so grateful for your continued support and the Committee looks forward to working with the Town Council moving forward.

Jayne Eastwood

Watton Carnival Committee

Watton Ladies Group

Christmas Day 2025

As it went so well on Christmas Day 2024, we decided to arrange another Christmas Day lunch in 2025. We asked businesses in and around Watton to help by donating food and had a great response again. Watton Town Council gave us a grant, which we spent on Christmas presents for all our guests and volunteers. Unfortunately, a few days before Christmas our local Turkey Farm caught bird flu and the flock had to be culled. Although we couldn't get another grant from the Council three of our Councillors donated some money privately, which was enough to buy the turkeys. We fed 32 people that day, including guests, volunteers and the house bound.

Watton Junior School



WATTON WESTFIELD
INFANT & NURSERY
WATTON JUNIOR

Watton Westfield Nursery & Infant School and Watton Junior School

Report for Watton Town Council

Annual Town Meeting 2026

1.0 School Leadership Update

Liam Ambrose is pleased to formally introduce himself to the Town Council as the Executive Headteacher for Watton Westfield and Watton Junior Schools, appointed to the role in September 2025.

2.0 School Vision and Values

Watton Westfield and Watton Junior Schools have refreshed their shared vision and values to set a clear, ambitious direction for the coming years. This work was **coconstructed with pupils, staff, parents and carers, and the local governing body**, ensuring it reflects the aspirations of the whole community.

Our shared vision is to provide every child with the knowledge, character and motivation to *thrive* in education and in wider life. We are committed to creating schools where children feel *safe, valued and inspired*, with high expectations alongside recognition that success looks different for every learner. Our long-term aim is for every child to leave us confident, ready for the next phase of education, and proud of themselves and their community.

Our values are captured in the phrase:

“A Community of Ambition, Creativity and Kindness”

- **Ambition** – striving to be our best, showing resilience, and taking pride in our work.
- **Creativity** – being curious, solving problems and finding our own voice.
- **Kindness** – leading with empathy, building strong relationships and respecting diversity.

At the heart of these sits **community**, recognising our schools as a partnership between children, families, staff and the wider town.

Together, this vision and values statement represent a renewed, inclusive commitment to Watton’s children and to our partnership with the local community.

3.0 Complex Needs ESP Grant Update

We are grateful to Watton Town Council for awarding a £500 grant to support the establishment and development of a specialist complex needs provision (Canada Class) at Watton Junior School. This funding has enabled us to meet the needs of pupils requiring highly adapted, sensory-based and therapeutic approaches to learning, ensuring they are able to access education in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment.

The £500 grant was used to provide supplementary resources to Canada Class, supporting pupils with ASD, sensory processing needs, dyspraxia and learning delays. Funding has enabled the purchase of additional practical, sensory and therapeutic resources essential to the children’s daily learning and regulation.

Expenditure included sensory regulation equipment such as space hoppers, a hammock, a mini trampoline, kinetic sand, a calm-down tent and visual timers. These resources support pupils’ proprioceptive needs and emotional regulation and have significantly reduced incidents of dysregulation, allowing pupils to self-regulate within the classroom rather than leaving the learning environment. Fine and gross motor resources were also purchased, including playdough, paint, card and robust shared games, supporting early developmental skills, communication, turn-taking and the establishment of consistent routines.

Educational resources were selected to combine learning with play, including large dominoes, a large Connect Four set, tuff tray mats and interactive number resources. These have supported progress in mathematics, language development, problem-solving, teamwork and social skills, while also meeting sensory and emotional needs.

The impact on the provision has been significant. Pupils are settled, engaged and enjoy attending school, with high rates of attendance. The supplementary resources have contributed to these successes. A recent visit from the Norfolk County Council SEND Adviser noted that pupils were “settled and safe in their space” and that the positive adaptations to classroom practice were clearly evident.

In summary, the Town Council’s grant has had a direct and lasting impact on the wellbeing, engagement and progress of some of our most vulnerable learners. This specialist provision, and the outcomes achieved, would not have been possible without the council’s generous support. Staff and pupils in Canada Class are extremely grateful for the investment made and the difference it continues to make to their daily lives and education.

Report from Watton & Saham Flood Action Group (WASFAG) to the Annual Town Meeting on 21st April 2026

Introduction

This report only relates to Watton. A separate report has been provided to Saham Toney Parish Council's Annual Meeting.

Last year I indicated that I would be retiring from the Group but that has not happened. I am still acting as Chair to the newly constituted Group. Cllr Hutchings has taken on an active role and has been using social media to highlight the aims and achievements of the Group. We have also written articles in the Watton & Wayland Times highlighting, in particular, the flood prevention work in the schools.

Cllr Avery (Saham Toney Parish Council) also updates the Group's Facebook page. She and I consult about whether to alert residents via Facebook to risk of flooding when we are alerted by the Flood Forecasting Centre.

As we have all the projects in place to lessen the risk of flooding, the work mostly consists of keeping track of progress.

We are grateful to the Town Council for the grant which enabled the Clerk and Cllr Hutchings to have training in how to update the website. This still has to be implemented as they are very busy with Town Council matters as many of you will be aware.

Achievements in the past year

Reclaim the Rain (RtR)

Reclaim the Rain is designed to persuade the Environment Agency, local authorities and the Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) that saving rain and flood water for reuse during times of drought while at the same time lessening flood risk will work in small rural communities that suffer from surface water flooding and that do not receive funding currently.

The following are the main projects in Watton:

- A reservoir on a farmer's land south of Watton which will take water from the watercourse on the land and store it for use in dry summers. This is hoped to help the risk of flooding in the Bridle Way which then impacts Brandon Road, Langmere Road and neighbouring streets. Defra also provide grants for such reservoirs, and these are being applied for.
- The Water Management Team at the County Council are also planning to divert the watercourse on the farmer's land to empty at the top of the Bridleway and thence to the pool at Cranswick. This will provide even more water for the reservoir while lessening the risk of flooding in the Bridle Way.
- Those of you with children or grandchildren at the three schools will know that all the work reported last year has now been completed. As a result, there has been no flooding at the schools which is great news.
- The GreenBlue Urban project in the High Street will have the final design agreed by the end of this month. The public consultation on this has had to be delayed because of the County Council elections. This will now take place after 21st May so please come and have a look at the plans when the consultation takes place. This will include rain gardens, special planters and tree pits which will manage the water coming off the roofs in the High Street so that they do not flood the road and cause the foul sewer to overflow. It is hoped that it will make the High Street look more green and pleasant and encourage more footfall.

WSP Project: Watton Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP)

As reported last year, this project will build attenuation features of various kinds to address the flood risk in 5 areas of Watton - Lovell Gardens, Watton Green, Brandon Road with Langmere Road etc., Jubilee Road, Aircraft Drive with Saham Road and as far east as Nelson Court. The final plans are in place and the team at the County Council has been talking with landowners to secure land for flood prevention work.

The latest estimated costs (January 2026) for all 5 hotspots are £1.3m for engineering solutions and £1.2m for property-level flood protection. This will protect 35-40 homes.

Last December, Defra consulted on new ways to fund flood projects and our Group contributed our thoughts to that as did the Water Management team at the County Council. In March, Defra published their new direction. The positive news is that they will fund the first £3m cost of a project that protects homes. Anything above that will be 90% funded with the rest provided by partners. Homes built after 2012 like Aircraft Drive will now be eligible. This started on the 1 April this year. The officer at the Water Management Team says that there are still grey areas in how this will work so they will wait to see how the funding will work before applying.

In the meantime, the Water Management Team have been looking at delivering some of the preferred options separately using other available funding pots. For example, there are several funding streams for delivering natural based solutions such as leaky dams, tree planting and storage basins. Langmere Road has been earmarked as one area where this is possible, and the team have reached out to relevant landowners.

Representation on Planning Applications

As appropriate, the Group have made representations on Planning applications where there is a risk of flooding, and we also speak at the Planning Committee. In recent months we have commented on several developments. Often, consultants outside of Breckland don't know the drainage systems in Watton or where flooding has occurred, so we need to keep them informed.

We also made representation on the preferred sites for the new Local Plan registering our concerns about the amount of sewage that would be going into our already struggling sewerage system and the amount of extra overflow from the Sustainable Drainage Systems going into the network of watercourses especially at the Cranswick Pool. The culvert under the B1108 is too small for the purpose and we have asked that developers give S106 funding for additional flood prevention/protection measures which is allowed under a section of the new Local Plan.

Breckland District Council published the results of the consultation in February. This included the statutory consultees such as Anglian Water, NCC Highways and the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Anglian Water asked for an additional clause in ENV 01 that reads "f) foul drainage strategy to demonstrate that there is capacity available in the sewerage network and at the receiving water recycling centre to accommodate wastewater flows from the site." I understand that this refers to any site.

They also state that they should be consulted about the surface water drainage strategy saying: "It is essential for the effective management of our operational risk that we ensure the risk posed from surface water drainage is clearly understood and taken into account by developers." They added: "Anglian Water has published Surface Water Risk Management Guidance that provides a comprehensive approach to how we will assess different types of site in terms of surface water connections."

Residents should also note that NCC Highways objected to the development next Wayland Wood on the grounds that a suitable access off the A1075 was an issue. They state that no

solution to access issues could be found. They also raised concerns about the access to the old RAF site off Norwich Road.

In addition, the Lead Local Flood Authority raised many concerns about their place in the Plan having to remind Breckland that they are the statutory consultee in relation to surface water flooding and that the Environment Agency is only competent to comment on developments near rivers or the sea. They specifically mention the Sustainable Urban Extension as having no requirement for a drainage strategy and that this must be included. Another department at the County Council made reference to the same development in relation to the Carbrooke quarry. They stated: “The site is within the consultation area for a safeguarded mineral extraction site and waste management facility and the development must not prevent or prejudice the use of the existing safeguarded sites unless suitable alternative provision is made, or the facility is demonstrated to no longer be required.” They also stated: “This site is partially underlain by a defined Mineral Safeguarding area for sand and gravel resources; therefore investigation and assessment of the mineral will be required, to the satisfaction of the Minerals Planning Authority, potentially followed by prior extraction to ensure that needless sterilisation of viable mineral resources does not take place.”

So, there is support from statutory agencies for many of the objections we have made.

Future Plans

- We will continue to monitor the progress of projects and publish updates in the Watton & Wayland Times.
- We will have a stall at the Spring Fair on 24th May as we did at the one last November. Many newcomers to Watton have no idea of the flooding we have experienced nor of the work of the Group.

Liz Whitcher
Chairman
10th April 2026

THE WAYLAND PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRUST REPORT 2026

We have continued to run the charity and Wayland House for the benefit of the Wayland Community. Our offices continue to be tenanted, or hired for meetings and events, with a few changes over the year. Our main reception has a big range of visitors with a wide variety of enquiries. In the Dragonfly Gallery we continue to display locally made art and crafts as well as our recycling initiative of crafting materials. Not only does this facility make crafting more accessible by providing materials at low cost, but it also avoids the items going into waste and landfill. We run a variety of craft workshops, keeping the costs as low as possible.

The grant from the Town Council is now at an end but it provided very welcome help with maintenance needs in the building. Most recently we have experienced heating issues, having discovered a leak. The decision as to the best approach for repair is ongoing and although some of it is covered by insurance, not all is, so we may well be seeking help in the future once decisions have been made as to the best route to take. We managed to cope with the colder weather with the supply of room heaters agreed by the insurers.

Meanwhile we have been working towards the Digital and Creative Media Centre. We held a very successful launch in Norwich to businesses and representatives of local authorities and interested organisations. We have had a huge number of hits of support on our website following that event and the publicity it attracted, and they continue to come in on a regular basis. Currently we are working on the planning application. We have had a number of necessary surveys done and are pulling together all the paperwork. We have been very well supported by Breckland to manage this process, which we very much appreciate, as it is not easy to navigate.

We have set up a JustGiving site which we hope will attract donations to help us continue our work and especially the process towards the DCMC. It can be found via a link on our website or we can supply a direct link. Even £5 makes a difference. In addition, we have Easy Fundraising which is where you can nominate a charity via participating companies who make a donation when shopping with them online. A huge number of reputable companies take part as part of the charity remit. It requires no additional effort on the shopper's part but does mean we benefit locally.

Part of our own in-house fundraising have been the talks on local history. The first was by Any Reid, based on his recent book on the history of Watton, and the second was by Julian Horn on the amazing escapades of a wartime airman from RAF Watton. Both were very well received. They have suited those who have always lived here and love to hear more about their home town, as well as those new to the area keen to understand the area. It has been inspiring to learn from those who have a deep knowledge of their subject. We have more in the pipeline so look out for the adverts.

We have been working with Reclaim the Rain for the placement of water collection tanks under part of the car park and await further information and developments.

Meanwhile, we welcome new volunteers to help in the Gallery, or reception, or to do some occasional jobs like keeping the small areas of grass in the car park tidy. Additional trustees are also welcome. We have a small grant from Breckland towards a simple intergenerational growing together project and volunteers would be most welcome to help with that. We are always willing to give presentations on what we do and especially on the plans for the DCMC.

Wayland Academy

Watton Town Council donation towards Achievement Evening

We would like to thank Watton Town Council for the kind donation towards our annual Achievement Evening. The donation was used towards the purchase of vouchers for subject prizes.

As well as presenting students with their various exam certificates, one student from each subject is chosen as the recipient of the subject prize for their outstanding achievement throughout the course.

There are also prizes for overall Academic Excellence, Progress and Contribution to School Life.

Thank you once again for your contribution to a successful evening, we value highly our continuing relationships with the community and local businesses.

Wayland Academy Duke of Edinburgh Award

Report on Use of Donated Funds from Watton Town Council.

We are pleased to provide an update on how your kindly donated funds have supported the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) programme at Wayland Academy.

This funding has been used to directly enhance student participation and accessibility. The donation enabled the purchase of new rucksacks ensuring that more students have access to suitable, high-quality equipment for their expeditions. This investment helps remove barriers for those who may not otherwise have the necessary kit.

These contributions have had a meaningful impact by promoting inclusion and enabling more young people to benefit from the opportunities the DofE award provides.

We are grateful for the support, which continues to make a tangible difference to our students.

Cara Mihalop
DofE Co-ordinator



WATTON FAMILY PLAYGROUP

Watton family playgroup has been running since pre covid under the auspices of St. Mary's Church, who provide the volunteers with training in First Aid & Safeguarding and ensure the lead volunteers are DBS checked.

We are based in the Watton Community Centre in Harvey Street and are open every Thursday during term time between 09.15-11.15

We ask for a donation of £1 per family. The group relies solely on volunteers to enable it to continue as an important and valuable asset for the families of Watton and the surrounding villages.

Each week we offer a variety of activities including Sandplay, Ballpit, Slides, Trikes, a Kitchen Area, Crafting Table, Musical Area, Drawing and a Book Area. For our babies we have a safe and secure area, and we provide weighing scales so parents can weigh their baby. There is also a baby changing area where nappies and nappy sacks are available to use.



Refreshments are available, at no extra cost including hot drinks and biscuits for the parents and fruit and snacks for the children.

The group welcomes regular visits from the Warm Baby Project and Breckland family advisory services.

We were very fortunate to be chosen as one of the charities supported by Mayor Don Saunders during his year in office.

This money has been spent on various resources to enhance the children's 'Play experience' including new bikes and pushchairs, construction play bricks, sand tray, soft play, stepping stones and a new tunnel and tent.

Without this grant our resources would be limited and there would be fewer opportunities for the children to explore the many play activities we provide.

In conclusion, the Mayor's grant has made a huge difference for our group, and we are very grateful that he chose us in his mayoral year.

Item 6

Reports from other organisations or local groups within the town

1. Watton Society
2. Wayland Men's Shed
3. Watton and Wayland Times
4. Watton Inner Wheel Club
5. 1st Watton Rainbows
6. Loch Neaton Parkrun
7. Watton Sports and Social Centre
8. The Queens Hall
9. Loch Neaton
10. Watton Twinning
11. Daisy Programme
12. Watton District Guiding
13. Watton Food Hub
14. The Benjamin Foundation
15. 864 (WATTON) SQUADRON ATC

All reports will be available on the Town Council Website

WATTON SOCIETY REPORT FOR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING 21ST APRIL 2026

WHAT IS THE WATTON SOCIETY, WHEN AND HOW DID IT START.

The Watton Society is a club held on the third Wednesday of the month except August at the Watton Methodist Hall. We have speakers on a wide variety of subjects or arrange our own activities or outings.

The Society was formed in 1973 at what is now known as the Wayland Academy and was then called the Watton Arts Society. The name was changed to the Watton Society in 1990.

We have 33 paid up members at the moment. The current committee is John and Judy Kerr, Wendy Collins, Margaret Cator, Ruth Stapleton and David Simons.

WHAT DOES IT COST. Subscriptions are £6 a year. You do not have to be a member to come to meetings. Door costs are £3 for members, £4 for non members.

THIS YEARS'S PROGRAMME. Copies of the programme are available at this meeting tonight, on the website www.wattonsociety.org.uk and from email info@wattonsociety.org.uk. Also from Judy Kerr, 01953 882613. Next year's programme is being discussed and investigated and will be issued at the AGM in October.

WHAT ELSE DO WE DO.

In addition to monthly meetings and outings we hold **an annual picture competition for children** for which we award prizes. Details of this are sent out to schools and youth groups and prizes given usually in the Autumn after the school summer holidays.

We also hold the **Watton in Bloom competition**, which entails the committee and sometimes other helpers touring the town to look at gardens that can be seen from the road with an excellent display or colour. This is done at varying times of the year and the judging is done by the current Mayor.

The Heritage Trail leaflet produced by the Watton Society has been updated where possible and plaques now placed on over twenty buildings and sites of historical interest. Each plaque costs over a hundred pounds now. The leaflets are available at the Town Council Offices and the Tourist Information Centre.

Costs have risen over the years, website, speakers, bank charges, stationery and hall hire. We are very grateful to the Town Council for their support both financially and with advice. If we can help them in any way with their activities we are pleased to do so.



WAYLAND MEN'S SHED

Registered Charity 1213606



Since our report to the Town Council last April, Wayland Men's Shed has continued to thrive and provide a valuable service for the well-being of men in the community. We currently have 105 members with regular enquiries and visitors with a view to joining. With up to 50 members attending sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays we find ourselves fast outgrowing the room we use for social purposes. Likewise, the workshops, who meet on Mondays and Thursdays, have limited space mainly due to Health and Safety issues. We continue to look at options that allow us to remain as part of the Sports Centre. However, we are happy to be situated there and are grateful to the trustees and staff for their support.

The Woodwork shop has been busy with a number of projects including, two Tawny Owl boxes for the Carbrook nature park, three sets of book stands (9 in total) for the Thompson village hall book sale, dartboard protection stands for the Sports Centre plus repairs to various items of furniture.

The computer workshop has been busy repairing and updating donated computers and printers. They are then passed on to charitable causes or sold at a small cost to cover any parts. Any that are deemed unsuitable for repair are dismantled for their scrap value.

We have supported Watton Town Council by providing members to assist with road closures at antiques fairs, the bike show and the festive market as well as providing marshals for the car show at the Sports Centre.

Due to the activities and services we provide, we applied to become a charity and as from June we are registered with the Charity Commission as a charity (no.1213606). We hold regular events and since last April have held 2 Quiz nights, a summer Bar-b-que, a Christmas meal at Broom Hall, a cheese and wine evening and a mulled wine and mince pie morning. Trips we have been on include, Sheringham with afternoon tea on a steam train, the Cromer pier show in July and December and ten-pin bowling at Dereham. All of these trips and events are open to not just members but their family and guests.

Our sub- groups continue to provide a variety of activities for members:

- "The Shutterists" camera group go on monthly trips to places of interest to take pictures plus have a monthly photo competition.
- The music appreciation group meets up once a month to listen to a variety of different music chosen by individuals attending.
- The shanty group meets up twice a month to enjoy singing shanty songs. They have performed at different venues including, Swains Thorpe, St. Mary's Church, the Queen's Hall, Harling bowls club, Thompson village Hall, Buckingham Lodge, Dorrington House and the Methodist Church Hall for the Watton Society.
- The games group meet up once a month for those who enjoy playing games and learning new ones.

We had a stand at the Wayland Show, where we displayed the work of the Men's Shed and had several visitors who expressed interest at what we do.

We received a grant from the Norfolk Community Foundation Connecting Older People Fund for which we are very grateful. We also thank Watton Town Council for their constant support.

The Men's Shed continues to have a big impact on Men's well-being.

Malcolm Trayhorn, Chairman



Connecting Communities

Watton & Wayland Times



Email: wattontimes@gmail.com Web: wwtimes.co.uk Phone: 07864 720480

Watton & Wayland Times Parish Meeting Update

Twenty one months ago, following the closure of the Wayland News just after the Covid period, the Watton & Wayland Times was relaunched with a simple aim: to restore a free, local paper created by the community and for the community. Since then, the paper has grown steadily into a lively, dependable monthly publication that continues to strengthen local connection and pride.

Today, the paper is run as a Limited Company, but crucially one with no paid staff. Everyone involved — including the Editor — gives their time freely. Every issue is produced through goodwill, volunteer effort, and a shared belief that our area deserves a voice and a platform for local stories, events, and community achievements.

Circulation has been rising slowly but steadily, and we now print 2,800 copies each month, reaching households, businesses, community groups, and readers across the wider Wayland area. Alongside regular features and local updates, two additions have proved especially popular: the monthly Codeword puzzle and the new Hare & Seek competition, both of which have helped boost engagement and bring a bit of fun to each issue.

I am deeply grateful to the local businesses whose advertising makes the paper possible, and to the Town Council for its ongoing support. I also want to thank the many readers who choose to contribute £1 or £2 a month — and in some cases more — through voluntary subscriptions. These small but regular contributions have allowed me to take a more relaxed and creative approach to each edition, resulting in a larger, easier to read layout, with stronger visual content and more space for community voices.

The paper remains committed to being a positive, inclusive, and reliable presence in the area. With continued support, we look forward to growing further and ensuring that the Watton & Wayland Times remains a valued part of our local life for years to come.

THE INNER WHEEL CLUB OF WATTON



Inner Wheel is one of the world's largest women's service voluntary organizations, with over 100,000 members in more than 100 countries. Founded in 1924, it focuses on promoting true friendship, encouraging the ideals of personal service, and fostering international understanding, with members frequently supporting local, national, and international charities.

Our Club celebrates its 45th birthday this year and is linked to the Rotary Club of Watton. Originally to be a member you had to have a family connection with a member of the Rotary Club. However, now it is no longer necessary, but we still enjoy joint social functions together.

We have a regular membership of around 20 ladies and run the club with a President who changes every year and committee members who serve for 3 year terms.

On the third Thursday of the month, we have an evening meeting usually held in the Methodist Centre, but on occasions in someone's home. We frequently have an interesting speaker or sometimes organise our own entertainment. This helps to provide fun and friendship to the members. This year we supported the national campaign "Orange the World" by walking down Watton High Street dressed in orange. This initiative supports the UN's goal to eliminate violence against women and girls by wearing orange, lighting up landmarks, and raising community awareness.

We do participate in the town Christmas market and offer public events each year in the Queens Hall in the form of several Lunchtime concerts and this year we also organised a Flower Demonstration with Afternoon Tea. On Wednesdays in the Methodist Centre we hold 3 or 4 Coffee Mornings throughout the year. Our President will sometimes arrange a special event to raise funds for the charity of her choice for that year. These activities raise funds towards our Benevolent funds which we distribute twice a year to local, National and International charities.

Our club is part of the Inner Wheel structure which has a District, National and International Organisation and our members enjoy their visits to District events and to both the annual National Conferences and the International Conventions which happen every 3 years (next year it is in the Philippines). Four members were able to attend the Conference held in Harrogate last year and two attended at Llandudno this year. These always provide stimulating speakers and enable you to form friendships across the country and to meet members from across the world.

Linda Thomas
Treasurer/Secretary
Inner Wheel Club of Watton

1st Watton Rainbows St Mary's Church

My name is Christina, and I run the 1st Watton Rainbows. We take girls from 4 to 7 years, and have spaces for up to 20 girls, all of which are currently taken, with more girls waiting for a space once a Rainbow moves to Brownies. During meetings, the girls work on Girlguiding activities and build up minutes of set activities towards the six themes of

Know Myself
Skills for my Future
Take Action
Express Myself
Have Adventures
Be Well

Once they have gained a Skills Builder, completed 120 minutes, and done an Interest Badge at home they gain a Theme Award. Two Theme Awards get the Bronze Award, 4 the Silver, and all 6 with a couple of additional challenges, gets the ultimate Gold Award. I am delighted to say that this year we have had 4 girls leaving Rainbows with the Gold Award. We also work on regional challenge badges and this year have completed Challenges on Well-Being and 100 Years of World Thinking Day, We are currently working on activities around Earth Day, and looking after our world.

I like to make the unit visible to the community and try to take part in community events such as the Tuesday Fun Days, the Remembrance Parade and Watton Carnival. As we meet at St Mary's church, we also join in services there, especially the more child-led ones, like Mothering Sunday and Christingle. At all community events, we proudly carry our unit flag, bought with funds from the Town Council.

As with all group, balancing the books is always difficult. Subs from the girls covers the Headquarters Annual Census charge and venue rent. Gift Aid donation helps towards resources, badges and awards. We like to take the girls on trips and have been to two Rainbow Activity days at Hautbois, near Norwich, but unfortunately transport costs are becoming more prohibitive, so I was delighted to learn that we had been chosen as one of the Mayor's Charities this year. This will help us to provide the girls with some 'optional extras' and so I would like to thank Gill for choosing us. |

Christina



Loch Neaton Parkrun

Loch Neaton parkrun has been running since March 2019. The parkrun continues to run every Saturday morning at 9am. Up to 4th April we were at event number 279. We have had 20,858 finishes, 3,292 personal bests and 390 volunteers have helped us out.

We meet at the Loch and the 5km course is run around the Loch area and the sports centre.

Our numbers continue to remain steady with on average 65 people attending, and this year we held our first ever New Year's Day parkrun which was attended by 80 people. We have very good support from the local community and have many visitors attending – the furthest one coming from Australia.

Our course record is still intact at 17 minutes and has been since 2019, although we have had some very good attempts made to crack it!

Not only do we have seasoned runners coming along, but we also have a very good mix of participants of all ages who run, jog, trot and walk around the course.

Parkrun as an organisation have been actively promoting parkwalk and this has been very successful. A lot of people who come to parkrun are completely new to running and park walking is an amazing first step to get people out and about without the pressure of feeling that they have to run. At the end of the day any exercise is good for you not only physically but mentally too, and it is fantastic to see the happy faces when people have completed their first event.

Our parkrun is entirely run by volunteers, and we have an awesome bunch who help us out every week, we are eternally grateful to them for their continuing help and support, as without them we would not be able to go ahead every week.

If you haven't tried parkrun before, please feel free to pop along to participate or volunteer. We are a very friendly bunch, who go for coffee in the sports centre afterwards as well as socialising for other events.

As mentioned before parkrun is good for you physically and mentally and our parkrun is always being praised for being friendly and having a real community feel to it. For further information we can be contacted on email lochneaton@parkrun.com. Or check out our Facebook page Loch Neaton parkrun.

If you would like to know more about parkrun in general or register for FREE at <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/>

Sarah Dagless
Event Director



**WATTON
SPORTS & SOCIAL
CENTRE**

Town Meeting 2026

The last 12 months have been a busy time for the centre and one thing you may notice is the name change. Why have we changed it? There was a time when the centre was a member only Sports and Social Club but those days are long gone and we provide a huge range of activities both Sports related and Social activities like hosting the Watton Ladies group, the Wayland Men's Shed, the Book Club etc.



We believe the new name better reflects the present-day operation of the centre. Gradually we are renewing signage when funds permit and, at last, we have been able to replace the tatty sign over the main door!

One of the big events for us was the completion of the SK8 Skate Park. Achieving final planning consent was a huge job for us and our vice chair, Christian, spent a huge amount of his time making sure that SK8 changed from a vision by Tina Kiddell, Michelle Bibby and young people from YAB into reality. Funding was provided by Breckland District Council via S106 Fund for Watton, so no ratepayer's money went into building the park.



Since it opened it has proved popular with everyone and YAB have kindly provided funding for a competition at the Skate Park on the day of the Watton Carnival (5th July).

Our other big project for 2026 was the new 3G all weather 5-a-Side football pitch which is being used both for bad weather training and junior matches. Funding was via a £1000 Community Grant from Norfolk County Council and from donations from individuals



and local businesses. This pitch can also be hired for football based parties and we have hosted some successful parties for members of Watton Junior Football club.

It's no secret that the Sports Centre, which is a charity, has struggled financially for many years but our small team of Staff, under Paul Rayner, and our volunteer Board of Trustees have worked hard to explore every avenue to raise enough money to run the centre. We do receive some assistance from Watton Town Council with grass cutting but we do not receive any direct funding from them with the cost of running this vital community asset.

We realise that Watton has a very wide range of residents and we always want to make sure that, as a charity, we provide as many affordable activities as possible along with some free use of the facilities for events like the Carnival.

Some of the many activities available are:

- Squash
- Pickleball
- Table Tennis
- Bowls (both Lawn green and indoor)
- Men's Shed
- Badminton
- Martial arts
- Gym
- Zumba
- Line Dance
- Watton Ladies Group
- Book Club
- Snooker
- Pool
- Hockey
- Football
- Walking Netball

The Watton Medical Practice also use our facilities for a number of Outreach Clinics.

Our Bar / Café is open 7 days a week with full meals available Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and snacks and cakes at other times.

Over the last 18 months we have hosted more major parties and wedding receptions and we can offer various rooms including our Sports Hall that can have our internal marquee erected to make an event extra special.



We can provide buffets and arrange music, dance floors etc.

On a more somber note many Watton residents are now also using our facilities to hold Wakes and we can provide everything you need to support you.

So please feel free to visit if you aren't already a user of the Sports Centre and see what we can do for you. Whether it's setting up your laptop in the bar or conservatory to work or meet clients (there is free hi-speed Wi-Fi throughout the centre), join a club or class or just have a drink and gossip we can accommodate you 7 days a week from 8 to late.

Website QR Code Links:





The Queens Hall
Norwich Road,
Watton,
Norfolk
IP25 6DA

This past year has been a good year for the Queens Hall. We have been very fortunate to be the venue of choice for a growing number of community groups and classes. It is wonderful to see the Hall being used often and by such a diverse range of people - on a regular basis, we welcome ballroom dancing, CLM Fitness, carpet bowls, bingo, jiu jitsu, line dancing, pilates, antiques fairs, trading card fairs, mediumship and car boot sales to the Hall.

We have recently worked with Tom, from TCQC to add a calendar functionality to our website, so that hirers can book and pay for their events in a more streamlined fashion. Yet again, we have to thank Tom for his patience and efforts to get this live.

We have made investments in the Hall in the last year to help secure its future - we have continue to maintain this aging building to the best of our ability. Our thanks must go to the small, but mighty team who voluntarily do all of the maintenance the Hall needs. They meet weekly and we would not be able to function without them.

We are of course indebted to Mike and Barbara Rix, who have been the custodians of the Queens Hall for so many years, and who continue to be on hand for the regular and ad hoc hirers of the Hall.

As we go forward, we are looking for more volunteers to join us. We would be happy to hear from anyone who thinks they could help us to run and look after this local landmark.

Aimée Neale

Secretary of the Queens Hall Committee.



Loch Neaton - Town Meeting 2026

Loch Neaton is one of the town's oldest charities dating back to 1906 and is managed and maintained entirely by volunteers with the exception of grass cutting, where a contractor is funded by Watton Town Council.

The Loch costs around £1500 a year to run (insurance, rubbish disposal etc.) and volunteers provide several hundred hours a year of their time to carry out maintenance and repairs.

Our only income is from the sale of Fishing Tickets and donations from the public or, occasionally, local businesses.

Over the last year we have lit the Loch Beacon for a number of special events including VE and VJ day. 100% of VE costs were met by Breckland District Council and the VJ event was 40% funded by Watton Town Council with the Loch funding the balance.



Breckland District Council, through S106, have funded the installation of a basketball hoop and some additional benches and litter bins and the Hoop will be installed later this month.

Tesco funded the creation of an additional Picnic Platform near the bottom of the Dereham Road gates and we see this is already becoming popular with visitors.



Our D Day Rose Garden is now planted up with Daffodils and Roses and Sponsorship opportunities are now being offered.

Sponsorship of a Rose for £100 will entitle you to have a Brass Plaque to be affixed to the garden (similar to the one on the Kingsley Healthcare memorial garden). For



£150 you can have 2 plaques. Ideal in memory of a loved or for local businesses who would like to help with the upkeep of Loch Neaton.

Loch Neaton provides peace and tranquility to many, and we are lucky to have such a wonderful facility in our town. If you would like to help, either financially, or by volunteering please email phil.kibler@lochneaton.org



www.lochneaton.org.uk

Watton Twinning Association Chairman's Report March 2025 - 2026

Our year started as usual with our AGM in March at The Carbrooke Hub, as the Town Mayor was away on holiday Deputy Mayor Gillian Turrent resided over the meeting, which was followed again by a delicious Cream Tea prepared by manager Pam and her helpers.

On May 24th to 29th we had our Twinning visit to Weeze some members travelled by air to Eindhoven and where picked up by minibus others went by ferry, this time we had an extra day which was great and gave us the opportunity to see and do more. It was a really interesting and educational time, which included a trip to the new Bio Gas factory followed by a lovely lunch in the Old Mill at Wissen Castle courtesy of Weeze Town Mayor Georg Koenen. We also visited an old Gasometer which had been converted into a wonderful under sea experience, apparently they change the theme during the year and they get thousands of visitors. The mayor invited us to go back to Weeze again this year as the town is celebrating its 800 year Anniversary. This alters plans for the 40th Anniversary of Twinning next year which should be celebrated in Weeze as it is their turn, I was asked by the Mayor and the Partnerschaft Chairman if we could have the celebration here instead, I and my committee and members who were present agreed to do this. On June 22nd we had our Cream Tea/Quiz and Raffle afternoon. Watton Carnival was on July 13th the committee had a Tombola Stall at the Sports Centre. On September 14th we held a Beetle Drive, which was cut short due to heavy rain. On October 11th I attended a NATC meeting in Dereham. On October 18th Cindy and Graham at The Olde Bell Saham held a Raffle for us during their Oktoberfest Celebrations. So far this year we have had our usual New Year Get-together on January 10th kindly hosted by Keith Gilbert as I had no heating, February 28th we had a very good turnout for our Anniversary meal at The Waggon and Horses in Griston. Which brings us full circle again to this years AGM. Chaired by Twinning's Honorary President (Current Town Mayor) Gillian Turrent, committee stood down and were re-elected. Discussions were then held about the forthcoming trip in May to celebrate Weeze 800 year celebration.

Members have been happy with the efforts that I with the enormous help of the committee have done throughout the year to keep all our events enjoyable and running smoothly. Next year Twinning between Watton and Weeze will be celebrating our 40th Anniversary here in Watton so many plans must be made to make this a memorable occasion.

I'm very happy to say we have 2 returning members who moved away many years ago to live in Portugal and have returned to live in Watton. We are also looking for new members, we have meetings approx. every 2 months on Mondays at 7pm and normally finish by 9pm during the winter months we meet at 2pm. Except for the AGM all meetings are held at my place. (Contact Chair on 07450793916)

I would like to say a huge Thank You to our Watton Town Council for the huge support they have given us over the years. This year we will be taking a lovely joint gift to Weeze for their 800 year celebration. We are looking forward and making plans for several events during the course of 2026/27

May 27th – 1st June 2026:- Watton to Weeze Special 800 year Anniversary visit, .

July 5th :- Cream Tea/ Quiz & Raffle

August 9th:- Beetle Drive/Raffle with nibbles

July 5th:- Carnival

Oct:- Town Fireworks & Oktoberfest Raffle held at The Bell Saham Toney

Nov:- Festive Christmas Market

Jan 2027:- New Year Get-together.

Feb:- Anniversary Meal.

March:- AGM

This concludes my report for this year.

Margaret Devine (Chair)

Daisy Programme & Rowan Project

Watton Town Council Annual Report 2024–2025

Registered Charity Number: 1166033

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Telephone: 01953 880903

Email: help@daisyprogramme.org.uk | rowanproject@daisyprogramme.org.uk

Who we are:

The Daisy Programme is a registered charity supporting adults, children and young people who are living with, or have been affected by, domestic and sexual abuse across the Breckland area and wider Norfolk. Since 2015, we have delivered trauma-informed services that empower survivors to recover, build resilience and create safer, healthier futures.

Executive Summary

Our Mission

To empower people who have experienced abuse to recover, build resilience and live positive, healthy and productive lives.

Our Purpose

To work collaboratively, especially with those who have lived experience, to raise awareness and understanding of domestic and sexual abuse, and to support survivors to look forward to the future rather than be controlled by the past.

Our Objectives

Our charitable objectives are to relieve the needs of people in Norfolk who have experienced domestic abuse, supporting their emotional, physical and mental health.

We achieve this by:

- Supporting people to develop confidence and belief in their ability to create a safer future through tailored support planning, risk assessment, safety planning, IDVA support, casework and emotional support.
- Enabling people to move forward from past trauma through therapeutic interventions, including counselling.

- Helping people to value themselves by understanding abuse and recognising their progress and achievements.
- Creating supportive networks and a sense of belonging through peer and parenting support groups.
- Providing tools to reduce stress, build skills and release trauma through creative, mindful and body-based activities.
- Empowering survivors to develop purpose and potential through volunteering and peer mentoring.

Our Values

- **People at our centre:** We recognise that every experience of abuse is unique and we value choice, dignity and voice.
- **Strength-based:** We believe everyone has the capacity for change and growth when supported with compassion and collaboration.
- **Seeing people, not trauma:** We provide high-quality, safe, transparent and evidence-based services that recognise the whole person, not just their experiences.

“Thank you so much I have gone from not leaving my house to being able to go out alone this is a really big thing for me, I have recommended you to others who were in the same situation. I will be forever grateful to the Daisy Programme for helping me through one of the toughest years.”

“Daisy Programme was brilliant and it’s so reassuring to know there is someone at the end of a phone who ‘just gets it’, without judgement. The service is professional but personable too and has encouraged me to make decisions, sign posted me to other agencies and advised me giving with personal insight. Thank you for all your support, an invaluable service that is much needed in the midst of the crisis fog.”

“My counsellor was amazing, she has helped me feel confident to speak about things. You have made a huge difference to me and have been so supportive and a light in a very dark place. Your help made me feel supported, listened to and safe. I owe you so much.”

Activities, Achievements and Performance

Overview

2025–2026 has been a year of exceptional growth and development. We expanded our reach to support adults impacted by domestic and sexual abuse, alongside children and young people who have lived with domestic abuse. Our staff team grew from 13 to 22, and we welcomed five new Trustees, strengthening governance and leadership.



Key developments included: We have embedded expansion of our NIDAS provision to cover King’s Lynn & West Norfolk and North Norfolk, increased our therapeutic and trauma recovery services, significantly reduced waiting times for counselling, continued delivery and expansion of our Fantastic Families service for children and young people, and increased community outreach, training and partnership working across Breckland and Norfolk.

Over the past year, we have witnessed a marked shift in the complexity and urgency of the needs presented by the individuals and families we support. The landscape of social care and community support has evolved significantly, with increasing pressures on both the people we serve, and the systems designed to assist them.

One of the most notable trends has been the escalation in mental health challenges. We have seen a significant rise in referrals from organisations working with individuals experiencing mental illness, reflecting a broader societal increase in psychological distress. Many of these referrals involve people facing acute anxiety, depression, and trauma-related conditions, often exacerbated by prolonged uncertainty and systemic delays.

In parallel, there has been a sharp increase in the number of children with neurodiverse needs, including those diagnosed with autism spectrum conditions, ADHD, and other developmental differences. A growing proportion of these children are also under the protection of children’s services, highlighting the vulnerability and complexity of their circumstances. These cases often require multi-agency collaboration and specialist interventions, which are increasingly difficult to coordinate due to resource constraints.



Poverty and financial insecurity have deepened across the communities we serve. More families are experiencing food poverty, with a noticeable rise in reliance on food banks and emergency support services. The cost-of-living crisis continues to impact household

stability, leading to increased stress, housing insecurity, and reduced access to essential services.

The family justice system has also faced significant challenges. Long delays in cases coming to court or reaching resolution have placed immense emotional strain on families, particularly those involved in child protection and custody proceedings. These delays contribute to heightened anxiety, prolonged uncertainty, and in some cases, deterioration in mental health and family relationships.

Compounding these issues, we have experienced the closure or temporary suspension of referral pathways from several partner agencies. This has placed additional pressure on our services, as we have had to absorb more complex cases without the usual support structures in place. The disruption in referral networks has also led to gaps in care and delayed interventions for those in urgent need.

In summary, the past year has underscored the growing complexity and interrelated nature of the challenges faced by the people we support. Mental health concerns, neurodiversity, poverty, systemic delays, and service disruptions have converged to create a landscape of need that is more acute and multifaceted than ever before. As we move forward, it is essential that we continue to adapt our approaches, advocate for systemic improvements, and work collaboratively to ensure that no one is left behind.



Clients, volunteers, and staff walking Peddars Way

Our Reach and Impact in Watton

During the year we supported **125 people** aged 5–98. We received **28 self-referrals**, which reflects increased trust and accessibility for Watton residents. We provided **188**

counselling hours. We supported **38 Watton residents** through programmes and structured support groups, including our Watton peer support groups which meet at our Hub in Watton on Thursdays and Saturdays. These programmes provide education and information to help our clients make sense of their experiences and move on to better lives. Our peer support groups provide creative, therapeutic and craft activities, led by volunteers who have lived experience of abuse. Engaged **231 people from Watton** through Daisy Ambassadors and community activities.

Key Highlights

No Lengthy Waiting Lists

We continue to offer timely support, with all assessments and support plans completed within two weeks of referral. Our small but dedicated team ensures clients receive regular emotional support, remain safe, and are empowered to rebuild their lives. We are currently working with **78 Watton families** across all our services.

Peer Support & Programmes

Our two peer support groups remain vibrant hubs for creative and well-being activities, engaging over **27 Watton residents**. We also delivered:

- 4 Power to Change courses
- 3 Fantastic Families programmes
- 4 Domestic Abuse Recovery Toolkit programmes
- 2 Sexual Abuse Recovery Toolkit programmes



Family Engagement

We worked with **94 families**, offering parenting programmes and inclusive family activities such as drumming workshops, picnics, and seasonal events.

Therapeutic support

We provided specialist counselling to **23 survivors** delivering more than 188 counselling sessions.



Community Outreach

Through outreach sessions and local events, we engaged face-to-face with 231 people, raising awareness and connecting with communities across our service areas.

Specialist Collaboration

We are working with NSFT psychologists to enhance support pathways for survivors of sexual abuse in Breckland experiencing severe mental health challenges. Feedback shows a measurable difference in emotional well-being and psychological health.

Progress Against Our Aims

- Launched a new Trauma Recovery Support Service, supported by National Lottery Community Funding.
- Introduced new courses and group programmes to improve flexibility and accessibility.
- Strengthened Fantastic Families through increased staffing and specialist accredited training.
- Expanded community outreach with monthly drop-ins across Breckland.
- Expanded and embedded NIDAS (high and medium risk domestic abuse) coverage to include King's Lynn & West Norfolk and North Norfolk, providing seamless, holistic support across all levels of risk.

Client testimonies demonstrate significant improvements in wellbeing, confidence and hope for the future.

I feel better able to cope with aspects of everyday life	87.6%
My health and wellbeing has improved	83.8%
I feel safer	84.8%
If I am feeling unwell, I am more able to recognise the signs & I feel more empowered to seek help and/or help myself	89.9%

Our work is only possible through the generosity and support of our wonderful volunteers, fantastic funders, council staff and members and our local supporters. You help us to change lives!

Watton District Guiding

We currently have 105 girls across the district, we have 2 Rainbow units, 4 Brownie units and 1 Guide unit. We are in the process of opening another Guide unit which will hopefully be opening in September.

Over the past year we have attended several events. Three units went to Hautbois house in Coltishall for 2 nights last summer, and the girls did a range of activities such as zip wire, climbing abseiling & kayaking.

Girlguiding Anglia did a takeover day at Banham Zoo where 4000 Girlguiding members attended. We took 85 members from Watton District.

We were invited by Dereham district to the cinema to see zootropolis2 in September, and took over Dereham cinema for the morning.

We held our Thinking Day party in February celebrating 100 years of World Thinking Day. Eighty girls attended and were lucky that one of our leaders had DJ equipment and provided a disco. The girls played games and did some crafts before we ended the day with a renewal of Promises and some traditional songs.

Individually, units have taken girls away on craft weekends for Christmas and Easter and 2 units went away in January to Patterson Lodge where they did some activities such as midi fencing, star gazing and a mosaic trail. One unit went on a bus from Watton to Norwich then caught the train to Cromer for the day - very brave leaders!

Units have also been completing badges, including charity badges which support other charities. One unit raised £119 for Make a Wish, another raised £345 for Children in Need and another raised money for a dog charity.

Most units are near maximum capacity, and we could really do with some extra leaders so if you know someone who might want to join in the fun, please don't hesitate to speak to one of us!

Watton Food Hub Report Spring 2026

Since opening, Watton Food Hub has continued to grow. We opened in January 2023 and now have 407 members joined up.

We have continued to support local residents within the Wayland boundaries. As we do not ask for proof of income, we are able to support households that might fall through the net as they are over the threshold for receiving other forms of support. For example, families who are working and don't qualify for benefits can access cheaper nutritional foods at the Hub. Some of our items are free, for example, fresh fruit and vegetables, certain hygiene products (soap and sanitary products), bread and other essentials on our free shelf. Other food items, pet food and household groceries are available at discounted rates.

I am incredibly grateful to have a team of wonderful volunteers who support me in the running of the Hub. 10 volunteers help on a regular basis. They help with roles such as pricing grocery deliveries and stacking shelves, collecting donations, helping members fill in membership forms, making hot drinks for members, plus working on the till and cashing up.

We have been able to help people to access food, but the Hub has also become much more. Members like to meet up and have a chat or stay and have a hot drink in the Community Hot Spot. We also accessed funding that enabled us to give 200 households £50 of goods, which members were able to claim around £5 per session in order to help them manage their budgets.

We have been able to work with local businesses to offer high quality meat, dairy products and eggs at discounted prices. We have continued to benefit from the Fareshare scheme which means we can purchase discounted foods that Fareshare have collected from supermarkets and suppliers. This also helps to cut down on food waste and enables us to be sustainable as we continue to offer discounted prices. We are also a priority collector for Watton Lidl, which means we get donations from in store and from their customers.

It is lovely to chat to our members and get to know them and their families. I feel that we are doing an important role in helping people to reduce their grocery costs.

Jo Howe, Watton Food Hub Supervisor

Watton Youth Group Report
For Watton Annual Parish Meeting
April 2026

GROUP

Watton Youth Group has continued to run every Friday evening during term time from the Watton Youth and Community Centre. Young people from age 8 to 18 years are welcome.

We run a range of activities week to week including sports, table & board games, arts & craft as well as team games. We have also organised workshops from external providers such as Cup-O-T around promoting mental wellbeing, The Joe Dix Foundation for knife crime awareness and Catastrophic Bleed Training and the UEA to work with building aspirations.

MEMBERS

64 young people have attended the youth group between April 2025 and April 2026.

27 of these are Young Carers.

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

During school holidays we have run the following trips:

Bowling – 31 young people attended

Thetford Forest picnic – 27 young people attended

1 night residential at X-Adventures – 26 young people attended

STAFFING

Our team leader, Ellie, left us over the Easter holidays and Rob Sheehan has taken over this term. We have two youth support workers, Sofi & Heidi, who have both involved in the group for many years.

A young volunteer joined us during the autumn term as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Gold award. She has completed the hours needed for her award but has continued to volunteer with us.

FEEDBACK

The young people tell us they enjoy coming to youth group because it gets them out of the house and gives them something fun to do. They enjoy having the time and space to

meet with their friends and to be able to hang out with them. The group members have told us that they trust the youth workers and having somebody there that they know they can talk to if they are struggling with anything or if they've just had a bad day has been important.

FUTURE

Over the year ahead we are building on a fundraising campaign in order to be able to sustain the group. We are in the process of organising a family fun day in Watton to help raise some funds with more information coming out about that soon. The Kings Arms have very kindly offered to run a Charity Quiz on Sunday 31st May for us so we are looking forward to that. Do please come along if you're able!

We need your help...



What's the Story?

Watton Youth Group was launched in 2021 and delivers weekly, term-time group sessions and positive activities programmes in the holidays for young people living in and around Watton. It provides young people with opportunities to have fun and socialise, plus access to wellbeing support whenever they need it.

Watton Youth Group achieves many positive outcomes for the young people involved, such as helping them form healthy peer relationships, support for their personal development and boosting their confidence and self-esteem.

Securing the Future

Having enough funding to run the project is a permanent challenge in this day and age of multiple support needs and competition for grants. Making sure we can keep the Group going means doing something different, and trying some new ideas.



That is why The Benjamin Foundation is working in partnership with local parents, young people and Watton Town Council on a fundraising campaign to secure the future of Watton Youth Group for the long term.

As well as our own fundraising activity, we want to support fundraising work by individuals, families, businesses and communities in and around Watton, providing advice, guidance and practical help as needed.

This is where you come in

You may be new to the idea of raising funds for charity work. Or you may already be a seasoned campaigner, ready to crack on. Either way, we can give you plenty of support to get you and keep you up and running.

We have created a JustGiving fundraising page, and fundraising support packs for businesses, individuals and community groups. If you're up for the challenge of raising funds for the Group, we want to hear from you.

Want to know more?

Step 1: Contact Us!

You can call 07880 242374 to speak with Alice Stevenson, our Youth & Young Carers Development Manager or email her at alice.stevenson@benjaminfoundation.co.uk Please **do this first** so we can track who is doing what and when, and support your fundraising work.

Step 2: Check out our guidance packs

We've created different packs to support any fundraising work you might like to do. The **purple** QR code will take you to the packs we have produced for businesses and corporate donors, individuals and community groups.



Step 3: Just Give, because that's okay too

If you want to support the Group simply by making a personal donation you can do that via our JustGiving fundraising page. Use the **orange** QR code, or go to: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/watton-youth-group>



Whatever you can do to help, whether big or small, we promise you...it will be appreciated!

About us



The Benjamin Foundation
Positive outcomes
for children, young people & families

We deliver youth work services for young people, creating opportunities for socialising, learning and being a positive part of their community. Our youth workers also provide support to help young people tackle any day-to-day life challenges they may face.

Charity number 1124936
www.benjaminfoundation.co.uk

864 (WATTON) SQUADRON ATC **ANNUAL TOWN REPORT**

2026 marks the 49th anniversary of the formation of 864 (Watton) Squadron and we are excited to be starting the planning for our 50th anniversary celebrations for 2027. We hope to include some town events as well to allow our community to share our celebrations.

This year is set to be action-packed for our cadets, with opportunities to attend 10 large scale camps throughout the year. Cadets have a chance to visit RAF Leeming, RAF Shawbury, RAF Benson and RAF Odiham for exciting weeks away. All of these Stations boast flying opportunities so we hope to see plenty of cadets take to the skies in different aircraft! Bolstering the RAF Station camps, we will also be visiting Cumbria and Windermere in the Autumn for adventurous training activities such as mountain biking, hill walking and paddlesports.

Cadets at 864 Squadron are pushing themselves to achieve more through our Progressive Training Syllabus. They are able to earn a variety of badges in different subjects from shooting and military skills to first aid and space studies. Our organisation is soon to reintroduce BTECs in Aviation Studies and Spaces Studies so cadets will be able to earn nationally recognised qualifications just by participating in our regular training.

We are keen to continue supporting our community throughout 2026 and have a busy schedule as always! We are looking forward to supporting many of our town's events this year, such as the Watton Carnival, Spring Market and Town Crier Competition.

Without the hard work of cadets and staff at 864 Squadron, we would not be able to provide exciting and engaging training opportunities for our young people. I would like to thank the local community for their continued support for our unit and hope that this continues into the future as we continue to move from strength to strength.