

# **Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook**

## **Annual Town Meeting**

**MINUTES** of the Annual Town Meeting of Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook held at The Council Offices, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, Herts at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 14 April 2014.

**Present:** Cllr Angela Alder (Town Mayor) Chairman; 28 Local Government Electors for the ward of Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook, (including 8 Town Councillors). County Cllr Roger Beeching MBE, PCSO Paul Weston - Herts Police, Michael Jarvis H&E Observer, Kevin Steptoe – EHDC, Martin Payne – EHDC, Town Clerk Richard Bowran, Town Projects Manager Joanne Kenny, Administration Officers Laura Carter and Gill Abbott.

The Town Mayor welcomed those present to the Sawbridgeworth Annual Town meeting and explained that this was not a meeting of the Town Council but of the people of Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook.

### **14/01 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

Resolved – that the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 15 April 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **14/02 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from those minutes

### **14/03 Report by the Town Mayor**

The Town Mayor, Cllr Angela Alder, reported on the Activities of the Council in 2013/14.

Throughout the year the Town Council has been actively engaged in promoting the town and its economic development, listening to residents and continuing to work to keep Sawbridgeworth a place to enjoy living in and being part of a caring and thriving community.

We have been in our new offices now for just over a year during which time we have seen greater use of the chamber by members of the public - Sawbridgeworth Allotment Association was one of the first organisations to hold its AGM in the council chamber; Leventhorpe School is another regular user along with the Hailey Centre for some of its extended activities. As Mayor I have hosted the local primary school's School Councils after visiting them in their own school setting. This use of the chamber by local groups was a pledge given by the Council when the project of a new civic centre was first mooted. It is encouraging to note the use by the public of this facility.

From last April the Council has been running the Farmers' Market on a monthly basis. We took the decision to make it a monthly market following a survey of stall holders and the public attending the market. We have seen a steady flow of customers ranging from 800 to 1,000 people at each market. A stall for local charitable and voluntary organisations is always provided which is free and offers those groups opportunities to raise funds and increase local awareness of their individual values, ethos and activities. We also provide a stall for the retail and businesses to advertise

their wares, again at no cost to the traders.

In January of this year we carried out a survey in the car park and on-line to find out whether residents still wanted the hour free parking in Bell Street car park. The overwhelming response was a resounding "yes". Most responders were aware that it was a Town Council initiative, which we introduced to try to help our retailers. The question about paying for it was as you might expect, not met with a universal "yes". However, the council has included the cost of this arrangement at £22,000 in this year's budget. It may not be possible to continue funding this should other more pressing priorities occur in future.

We have worked alongside organisations such as Sawbridgeworth CVS in assisting with the necessary paperwork to cover road closures and liaison with local Police officers for a safe and trouble free May Fayre event. The Council's Officers have also provided support to the Isabel Hospice for the Lights of Love ceremony held annually to commemorate the loss of a loved one.

The local Police moved into the upstairs accommodation last Autumn. This is not a police office open to the public but the facility provides a rest room for local police officers when patrolling in Sawbridgeworth. It is a valuable amenity in that the officers on duty make contact with the Council's officers who regularly update them and exchange local intelligence regarding any particular concern.

The Citizens Advice Service finally took up the offer of use of the small front office for their surgeries on Monday mornings. The Council recognise this as a worthwhile service and useful from local resident's perspective, however, it does have an impact on council officer time in managing the inflow of enquirers while at the same time carrying out essential council business.

We have looked at 103 planning applications, made 84 planning comments for onward transmission to East Herts Council who are the decision makers in planning matters. We were notified of 10 planning appeals where a decision by East Herts Council was challenged by the planning applicant and ultimately adjudicated by the Planning Inspectorate. At the twice monthly Planning meetings the Council welcomes the views of residents who may be affected by a particular planning application.

Our cemetery is well regarded and maintained to a high standard. There have been 32 burials, 27 headstone applications, 5 memorial trees planted, 3 memorial wall applications and 2 memorial benches installed. We are currently carrying out major maintenance work on the parterre garden and several trees. Unfortunately there have been a few instances of vandalism and of people walking their dogs and letting them off the lead to run free in the cemetery. Please notify the council if you witness anything untoward in this area or, indeed, other areas of the town.

We have four allotment sites in Sawbridgeworth with a total of 111 plots in total. There are now only 22 people on the waiting list, 10 of whom have specifically requested a particular site and are prepared to wait until a plot becomes available. Since October 2013 12 new plots have been allocated, 8 at Bullfields and 4 at Southbrook. The allotments are now inspected every two months and the last inspection was done in March this year. The town council is fully supportive of the Sawbridgeworth Allotment

Association and very much values the contribution it makes to the health and well-being of the town.

Each year the council has built on the success of the Christmas Lights switch-on and this year was no exception, apart from the electricity supply over which the council had absolutely no control, the event was hailed as another big success with over 3,500 people attending to watch the count down to the switch on. Councillors and council staff pulled out all the stops and would wish to thank the voluntary groups for supporting the event and the retailers who stayed open.

The Council set aside £5,000 in its budget for grants to local groups the following were the beneficiaries Rivers Nursery site, the Girl Guides, the Bowling Club and the East Herts Citizens Advice Service. This year the grant allocation is £4,000 with a maximum of £500 per application. In addition we make regular grants totalling another £5,000 to the Hailey Centre, SYPRC and Town Twinning. The Council is also funding the summer play scheme on Bullfields for the benefit of local children and their parents.

We have continued to run Sawbo bus throughout the year but have reduced our fleet due to under use of the hospital transport service. In its place we have now introduced a dial-a-ride service instead. We have however, extended the service on the Sawbo bus route to include the High Wych post office facility. Our bus service is under review at present with the possibility of further expansion of routes.

We are currently holding meetings regarding a new Town Action Plan. We were pleased that all the areas identified as needing solutions in the previous plan were achieved. We look forward to taking the Action Plan forward and welcome input from all our residents.

A new initiative from the Town Council concerns refurbishment of the public toilets in Bell Street car park. We have been pressing for an improvement over many months and now we know that East Herts Council has set aside £78,000 for the work to be done. The Town council will take over the management of them after the upgrade is finished. Complaints about our lack of decent public toilets is regularly voiced to the council so we hope that the new facilities will be up and running sometime in the autumn and certainly in time for the next Christmas Lights switch-on.

As Mayor I have attended many events both in the town and beyond including such as the Leventhorpe Prom concert in July, the Lights of Love ceremony, Remembrance Day at the War Memorial, Christmas Lights switch on and visited the local schools and opened a shop and local business.

In conclusion I wish to place on record my thanks to fellow councillors and most particularly to our hard working council staff who I assure you give of their very best in the interests of Sawbridgeworth.

Thank you  
Angela Alder

**The report of the Town Council was accepted.**

**14/04 Report by the Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk, Richard Bowran, reported on the Council's Accounts to 31 March 2014. *Attached as Appendix 1.*

**The Tabled Report of the Town Clerk was accepted**

**14/05 The Mayor invited Reports from Town Charities:**

**Cllr Angela Alder, Chairman** of the **Hailey Centre** reported on activities for the year. *Attached as Appendix 2.*

**Cllr Derek Filler, Chairman** of the **Sawbridgeworth Young Peoples Recreational Centre** reported on activities for the year. *Attached as Appendix 3.*

**Cllr Andrew Wincott, Trustee** of the **Memorial Hall** reported on activities for the year. He thanked the town council for their grant. Facilities at the hall include; new roof, new external doors and windows, refurbishment of the toilet block, kitchen, bar and heating. Redecoration throughout, resurfacing the floor, some garden and tree maintenance and new seating.

Elected Trustees are John Rider, Peter Lee, Liz Hall and Linda Burns. There are other appointed Trustees and user representatives.

The objective of recycling acquitted funds from a land sale into town assets has been achieved.

Latest available accounts are for 2012 and showed a surplus on current account of £3,500.

Regular bookings have increased and there are a number on one-off public events.

For the future it is planned to replace the stage curtains, replace the stage lighting and provide an audio/visual suite.

**14/06 The Mayor invited other reports:**

**County Councillor Roger Beeching MBE JP**– congratulated the Town on all its achievements over the past year, and especially the town clerk and his staff for making sure that so many projects for the benefit of the community have been completed.

"I was very pleased in May 2013 to be re- elected to the County council for a further 4years , serving the Sawbridgeworth 24 division. I should like to thank all who voted for me, for the compliment you pay me in trusting me to serve you once again. This I will do irrespective of your political allegiances.

I at present serve on the following panels and committees; Health Scrutiny, Standards, Adult Health and Care, plus Princess Alexander Trust, Harlow Gateway Transport Board. During a year I attend as many meetings as I can when they arise. As well as most of the meetings of the Parish Councils of Eastwick and Gilston, Hunsdon, Widford, Wareside and Stanstead Abbots and the Town Council of Sawbridgeworth. At East Herts I attend many meetings and I am now Vice Chairman.

The County Council has had a successful year, freezing Council tax for the fifth year running. Due to government cutbacks we need to save from the inflation depleted budget of 144 million over the next three years, This will prove difficult, but we are determined to succeed without frontline cuts to services.

One of our biggest challenges at present are as ever is potholes and road conditions, and we seem to be getting to grips with some of the repairs but we are not yet totally successful. More hard work by contractor's is needed and we must continue our pressure on them.

Cars speeding through villages is an on-going problem as you know, I pick away at this where possible by introducing speed awareness measures, but finances and regulations limit what can be done sometimes.

School places can be short due to large increases in the population of school age children in the County. Mainly in the west at present but it will soon appear in East Herts. This is being tackled as best we can and plans are being formulated now. The advent of another 15,000 houses in East Herts by 2031, an edict from government will further strain our already stretched infra-structure and resources.

Recycling becomes more expensive, currently £82 per tonne for land fill, and there is in excess of 250,000 tonnes per year of this across the county, We are fortunate that East Herts has such an efficient mixed recyclable collection service, this saves on landfill charges and brings in some income from the sale of recycled materials.

Another area of contention to deal with is the perceived requirement for 20mph limits areas in some towns, These are extremely complicated to administer and put in to force and will have to be dealt with on an individual basis.

Those that have street lights should find they are switched off from 12.00 midnight to 6.00am on side roads and non A roads. However the supplier of the sensors is having difficulty with their accuracy and all 110,000 of them having to be replaced slowly. This is an expensive exercise for the manufacturer, and not the County council tax payer.

Finally at the more local level I have my Highways Locality Budget, this amounts to £90,000 and is used to rectify local highways faults. This year I have had carried out 20 different schemes improving local roads. You can see where these are happening by going on the County website and looking under my name for Highways Locality Budget. I take these in a strict priority of disrepair and am making my list for the forthcoming year, So please let me or your Council know of areas you would like considered for improvement, local knowledge is most important to me. I also have the Locality Budget of £10,000 to spend on worthy community projects. I have spent out on 15 such projects this year, again you can see the list on the website under my name,

If you have any other requests please let me know as this year's money stopped at the end of March but starts again in April.

I hope this has given you all an indication of my sphere of activities and problems and wish you all a successful and peaceful 2014.

Q: is the county liable for damage to cars from pot-holes?

A: yes, if they are reported, of sufficient size and not repaired within a finite time.

Q: in any development will Herts CC be doing the road improvements or the developer?

A: the question will be addressed at a later point in the meeting.

**District Councillor Eric Buckmaster** – advised on his attendance at meetings, and that for EHDC he sits on the Health and Wellbeing Panel, the Environment Scrutiny committee, the Licensing Sub Committee and is leading on Members training. He advised that progress on the District Plan was slow. In Sawbridgeworth he is a Trustee at the Hailey Centre, and is involved with Town Twinning, the Scouts, the Sri Lankan Orphanage.

**PCSO Paul Weston** – reported the main activities in Sawbridgeworth. These included:

will have a new Community Sergeant in PS Ricky Bartlett. East Herts has experienced a big reduction in burglaries although there was still an unacceptable level of vandalism, including the “keying” of cars, in the town. There has been the successful of two non-local males for these and the execution of a drugs warrant. There has also been work with some school children addressing speeding matters. Preparations are in hand for the May Fayre which although well policed will not have such a high profile as last year.

## **14/07 Town Action Plan**

### **TOWN ACTION PLAN – THE SIX KEY ISSUES**

Elsewhere there is a review of progress against the Town Action Plan that was created in 2009. Having resolved there is no economic benefit to the town by creating a Neighbourhood Plan at an estimated cost of £40,000, we plan to create a successor Town Action Plan for 2014-18.

The Town Action Plan identified six key issues:

- Roads and Transport -
- Plan Housing Sensibly -
- Car Park Charges -
- Support for the Voluntary Sector -
- Support for Local Businesses -
- Replacement Scout Hut -

Cllr Eric Buckmaster introduced the intention to create a new Town Action Plan to cover the years 2014-18 as a successor to the 2009-13 Plan which was nearing the end of its life. This new plan will revise and reflect the views and wishes of Sawbridgeworth and Spellbrook parishioners and be a mechanism to make a credible input to the District Plan.

He was looking for volunteers from parishioners who would be willing to participate and wanted there to be more parishioners than council

members in the working party. Approaches would be made to people with key interests in various town matters. The Clerk will publicise the programme.

*Attached as Appendix 4.*

**14/08 District Plan – Preferred Options**

Cllr Eric Buckmaster outlined the process that had been followed in order to reach the present consultation stage of the District Plan Preferred Options. EHDC Head of Planning Kevin Steptoe and EHDC Senior Planning Officer Martin Payne were available to answer questions.

**14/09 Resolutions for which written notice had been received**

None had been received

**14/10 Open Forum**

There being no other business the meeting was closed.

The Meeting closed at 21:45

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

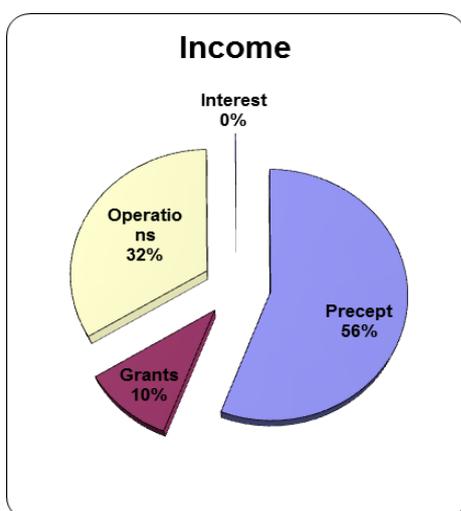
## Appendix 1

### CLERK'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 14 APRIL 2014

At the Annual Town Meeting the role of the Clerk is to report on the finances of the Council for the year just ended.

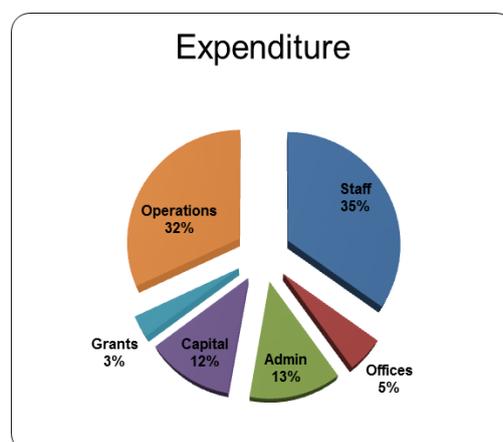
In the year 2013/14 the Town Council's Precept was £187,500, this was 56% of the Council's total income.

The Council derives other income from its operations in the town, such as the Town Cemetery, the four Allotment Gardens and the Community Bus services. Income relating to these other activities amounted to £146,736; and so the Council's total income for the year was £334,236.



Our ordinary income is shown in the diagram on the left. The Council is aiming to continue to develop Operations Income to minimise any increase in the Precept.

We have used the resources in the way shown in the diagram on the right. We spent a total of £325,126 this year.



The surplus of £9,111 has been taken to our general reserves.

Staff costs amounted to 35% of this; we have two full time employees, three part time administration officers, the town ranger and three part time bus drivers. All other services are carried out by contractors.

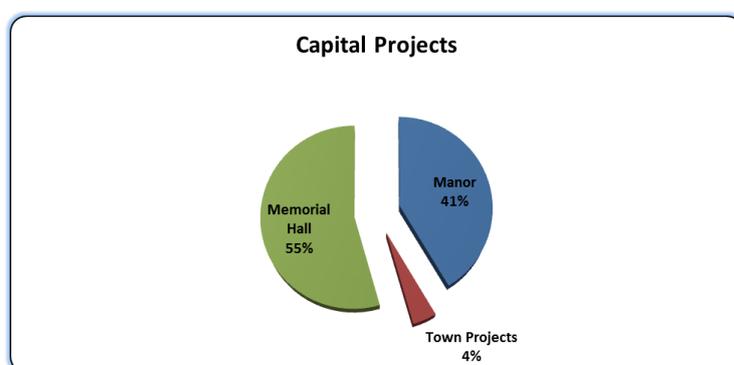
Our operations costs were 32% of our spend, and included management of the Town Cemetery, the Allotment Gardens, the two Community Minibuses, recreation areas, footpaths, the Town Ranger, provision and maintenance of Floral Displays and the Christmas Lights.

Our administration costs at 13% of the total included our responsibilities as a Consultee on planning applications and matters relating to the town, monitoring and action against the Town Action Plan, Fly Posting, Town Council Newsletters, Civic Events, Community Transport, Floral Decorations, Promoting the Town, subscriptions, insurances and our duty to provide Democratic Services including meetings, committees, elections and representation on outside bodies including liaison with the County and District Councils.

During the year, the Council continued the operation of Sawbobus, now in its fourth year. This has been financed by a grant from EHDC, support from HCC and from commercial sponsorship. It started Sawbobus 2 which provided a link to hospitals in Harlow and Bishops Stortford, this has not been well used and so has been discontinued. It continues to manage the Farmers Market which will be expanded in 2013/14 to be a monthly market and community event. and the two Community Minibuses, both of these activities are self financing although take up significant administration time.

The Town Council continues to step in to preserve services to the community when other organisations are unable to continue.

The Council made grants totalling £5,000 to five different local organisations during the year, these were the Citizens Advice Service, the Girl Guides, the Bowling Club and the Rivers Nursery Site and Orchard Group. In addition it made donations totalling £5,000 to support the activities of the Town Twinning Association, the Hailey Centre and the Young Peoples Recreation Centre.



**The main capital** projects for the year have been the final tranche of grant monies for the repair and development of the Memorial Hall, this has amounted in total to £149,500. We have completed the works on the Council Offices and

spent some money on preliminary works for the town centre CCTV system.

The other project we had provided for was the refurbishment of the Bell Street conveniences. However negotiations with East Herts District Council have resulted in a partnership agreement with them which will relieve the town council from bearing the capital cost, although we will be responsible for the maintenance of the new facility when it is completed.

For this coming year the precept has been increased to £223,746. This amounts to an extra 18p per week for a Band D household. The increase will make a contribution to the estimated cost of £22,000 that will be payable to East Herts District Council to subsidise the one free hour parking scheme, to the decrease in Council Tax support grant and because of an increase in vandalism to the cost of employing extra help to maintain our footpaths and open spaces. Income from other operations will continue to be around £100,000 this coming year, thus keeping the precept to parishioners at the second lowest level of any town in East Hertfordshire.

Major projects the town council is undertaking in the coming year are the complete renewal of the Bell Street public toilets, the development of the Town Green, and the completion of the CCTV system covering the town centre. The capital cost of these projects is being met by grant funding.

## Appendix 2

### HAILEY CENTRE

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 14 APRIL 2014

#### Objects and Powers

**The Trust is established for the benefit of older people in the Parish of Sawbridgeworth with the object of improving their quality of life.**

The Board met on five occasions during the period covered by this report and has dealt with matters relating to the efficient running of the Centre including reviewing the health and safety policy, financial management arrangements, staffing issues and rates of pay together with the upgrading of the Centre.

The serving Trustees are:

Councillors - Mrs. Angela Alder     )  
                  Mrs. Pat Coysten     ) four year terms until May 2015  
                  Mr. Peter Mitchell     )

Community - Mr. Colin Gill             )  
                  Mr. Tony Fitch             ) three year terms until May 2014  
                  Mr. Ralph Reed             )  
                  Mr. Steve Robertson     )  
                  Mr. Eric Buckmaster     )

The Trustees are very grateful to the Town Council for the grant towards the cost of utilities and to Hertfordshire County Council Health and Community Services for its grant towards staffing costs. During this year the Board was grateful for a grant from County Councillor Roger Beeching from his Locality budget towards the cost of a replacement of a wall mounted hot water heater in the kitchen. The Board gratefully acknowledges the contribution from all sources of financial support which are helping to keep the Centre a welcoming, attractive and vibrant place to visit for the older people of Sawbridgeworth.

The new build has opened up new ways of co-operation and mutual benefit between the Centre and Town Council for shared use of some of the facilities. One of the things I requested was wooden floor in the council chamber so that the Hailey people could enjoy tea dances and I am pleased to report that we have had a couple of such dances. One unfortunately had to be abandoned last October due to a power cut, however, we were able to hold the Christmas Fayre with the stalls in the council chamber and the refreshments in the main hall. Likewise the Town Council was able to use the Hailey Centre as an over flow as in the recent case of the District Plan consultation and this evening when the proposed plans are laid out for inspection and the kitchen is being used for catering purposes.

As last year I am able to report continuing success of the catering at the Centre and we fully acknowledge that it is very much due to Mrs. Gill's catering expertise and the wonderful support she receives from the volunteers who assist her with food

preparation. The volunteers also serve the lunches week in and week out and without whom the Centre would not be able to survive. Incidentally, I am delighted to report that on a recent inspection by the environmental Health Officer that we have been upgraded from a four to a five star category. The test now will be to maintain that standard to ensure the same award next year.

The Management Committee has met regularly throughout the year and offered sound and practical advice to the Board which has been warmly received and acted upon.

In March the Board organised the annual “Thank you” lunch for our wonderful volunteers which was well attended by the volunteers plus their partners or friends. Mrs. Gill and her family cooked and served the delicious meal much to the enjoyment of all.

The Centre activities throughout the year have been well supported and the outings and events enjoyed to the full by Centre users and their friends. The Centre provided 4900 lunches this year, 600 users for the lunch time transport and 534 seats on food shopping trips, 15 days out and 2 holidays. The use of the community bust this year has decreased to the extent that the Centre no longer uses it as more people are making their own way to the Centre. We still cater for those who need transport either by volunteers picking them up or by the use of taxis. The Centre now runs two keep-fit sessions, on Mondays and Tuesdays each with a full complement of participants. The Silver Surfers on Thursday mornings is “manned” by volunteer instructors and has all slots filled. The whist, bingo, and art sessions along with craft and decoupage are also fully supported.

The quiz and film show afternoons continue to prove highly popular. The new Camera Club started two years ago has gone from strength to strength and apart from the fun and pleasure the members derive from the Club itself where they have been out and about taking photographs, some of which have been used as front covers for our monthly Newsletter, they have assisted with the fund raising activities at the Centre. At the Christmas Fayre they were taking family portraits, framing them ready to give as Christmas presents. They did a roaring trade and after expenses the surplus was given to the Centre. Many of the Centre users have taken advantage of the Camera Club in having their pictures taken for bus pass renewals. Two of the members photographed Centre visitors who needed to renew their bus passes and the Camera Club also provided a photography session at last years Mayor’s Civic dinner in May.

The usual fund raising events such as the May Fayre, Summer Fete and Christmas fund raiser together with the various raffles throughout the year and the bi-monthly Farmers’ Market have all contributed to the vitality of life at the Centre. All these activities have increased not only the income but raised the profile of the Centre and what it can offer to older people in Sawbridgeworth.

The visiting Chiropodist delivered 450 treatments this year, the Hearing Aid Specialist has attended the Centre on a regular basis and their professional expertise is very much appreciated by the people they serve. This year we have had to ask those using the Hearing Aid facility for a small contribution of 50p per visit to help cover some of the cost associated with running the Centre. The Centre Manager is continually looking to see where new activities might be introduced for the benefit of the Centre users.

In January the Centre held a special celebration lunch to commemorate twenty years since its launch. The lunch at the Hunters' Meet at Hatfield Heath was delicious and we were pleased to have the County Councillor Roger Beeching and his wife Jean enjoying the occasion with us. The function was a huge success and attended by nearly hundred of the regular users of the Centre.

The Centre has received regular press coverage over the twelve months giving a positive picture of a Centre for older people being active, leading fulfilled lives and enjoying themselves with much of this attributable to our present and former Managers with their vision for engaging older people in a proactive role.

The Board wishes to acknowledge with grateful thanks the valuable contribution of the volunteers who give over 200 volunteer "man" hours per month to the running of the Centre and without whose willing help the Centre would not be the vibrant and happy place it is today. The Board would also wish to place on record its thanks for the efforts of all staff who provided a friendly and welcoming environment for all visitors and users of the Hailey Centre throughout the period of this report.

Angela Alder  
Chairman of the Board of Trustees  
April 2014

## Appendix 3

### SAWBRIDGEWORTH YOUNG PEOPLES RECREATION CENTRE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 14 APRIL 2014

#### Objects and Powers

**The purpose of the Centre is to help and educate the children and young people of Sawbridgeworth through their leisure time activities so to develop their physical, mental and spiritual capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and as members of society and that their conditions of life may be improved.**

The Management Committee met on four occasions during the period covered by this report and has dealt with matters relating to the efficient running of the Centre.

The Management Committee consists of the following individuals

Cllr. D. Filler – Chairman (Appointed May 2012)  
Cllr. Mrs. A. Alder – Hon. Secretary and Vice Chair)  
Cllr. T. Reeks  
Cllr. B. Rochester Resigned July 2013  
Cllr. Mrs. R. Buckmaster Appointed September 2013

Mr. R. Alder – Hon. Treasurer  
Mrs. G. Hawkins  
Mrs. J. Kenny  
Mr. C. Lynch  
P.C. Ray Larcombe

Mrs. L. Dale – Centre Manager attends all Management Committee Meetings, manages the hall bookings, deals with problems, oversees the cleaning and sends out the invoices. She is paid a small honorarium.

The High Wych Pre-school Nursery continue to hire the Centre from Monday to Friday during school term time. The Management Committee is delighted to report that the Pre-school Nursery in its Ofsted report was categorised as Excellent.

The Management Committee is pleased to record the high level of hiring of the Centre which enables the Committee to finance additional facilities.

Last year the Management Committee refurbished the kitchen area with new cupboards and work tops. The next major refurbishment is replacement of the floor in the hall and stairwell as it has become cracked in places. It is the intention to apply for grants for this work to be done and to match it to the new floor in the entrance hall, kitchen and toilet areas which was replaced with new composition flooring last year. The life expectancy of the existing floor covering is only ten years and the Centre is over eighteen years old. The hall and stair well have been redecorated during this year from the Centre's own resources.

The plan to alter the current changing rooms into a large workshop space has been on hold for some time, however, it is hoped to make some progress towards adapting this area during the coming year. The Management Committee will be having discussions on the various options open to them for better utilisation of this space.

We have again suffered vandalism this year and it is a troubling symptom of the times and needs constant vigilance on our part. Litter is another ongoing problem which despite providing additional litter bins is a continuing battle to keep the field clean.

We were pleased to accede to the request from the Town Council to provide parking spaces for the Town's busses and we were also delighted with the installation of cameras to ensure any anti social behaviour was recorded. Firm action will be taken by the Committee against any one committing an offence.

The Summer Play Scheme was fully booked for every session and was again well supported. The summer scheme will take place this year and at £5 per child per session. We have kept the daily charge at the same rate so that our local children can benefit from a safe and secure well run play scheme so that parents can have full confidence when sending their children to attend a professionally managed scheme.

The play equipment has been well maintained throughout the year and we are grateful for the regular inspection and litter picks carried out by the Town Ranger. The junior section of Sawbridgeworth Town Football Club continue to play regular football matches on the field which we are pleased to encourage as part of keeping our young people fit and healthy with regular physical activity. The Management Committee intend to upgrade the equipment in the small children's gated area by laying down a concrete area with road and hop scotch designs to encourage eye coordination. We also hope to install a small round about for the younger children to play on.

The standard of cleaning in the hall, kitchen, toilets and other areas has been well maintained thanks to Mrs. Dale the Centre Manager.

In conclusion the Management Committee wishes to record its grateful thanks to the Town Council for the generous grant and especially for the allocation of funding for the Play Scheme.

**Derek Filler**  
**Chairman**  
**April 2014**

## **Appendix 4**

### **SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN ACTION PLAN 2009 – 2013 FINAL REPORT**