

**Leisure & Community Services**  
**Voluntary Sector & Community Centre End of Year Report 2016-2017**

**Introduction**

This report encompasses the highlights from the commissioned organisations during the period 2016-2017, Year 1 on the new three year Commissioning Framework 2016-2019.

**Political oversight and governance arrangements**

An executive summary will be submitted on a quarterly basis to the Portfolio Holder and Head of Service and will detail what is going well and any areas of development or concern.

**Performance monitoring**

From a contract monitoring perspective the council is looking at consistent delivery of a high-quality, value-for-money services to our community. This is achieved by council officers working closely with our third sector partners so they can deliver the Key Performance Indicator (KPI's) set out in Service Level Agreement and service specifications.

The frequency of meetings are on a quarterly basis, with additional meetings where required.

**Commissioned organisations**

The Council funds 4 Voluntary Sector organisations and 6 Community Centres which are listed below;

<b>No:</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>2016-17 Budget</b>	<b>Descriptions</b>
1	Watford Palace Theatre	£32,500	Rent
		£257,730	Direct Grant
2	Watford CAB	£39,500	Accommodation
		£204,190	Direct Grant
3	Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT)	£79,173	Direct Grant
4	Shopmobility	£36,460	Direct Grant
5	Holywell Community Centre	£76,680	Management Grant
6	West Watford Community Association	£10,920	Rent
		£23,420	Management Grant
7	Orbital Community Centre	£72,965	Management Grant
8	Leavesden Green Community Centre	£20,000	Management Grant
9	Meriden Community Centre	£72,160	Management Grant

## VOLUNTARY SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

### WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

CAB is located in the Advice Centre next to St Marys Church and aims to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. The organisation provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities.

Watford CAB's business model relies heavily on volunteers and the in-kind economic market value of work carried out by the volunteers during 2016-2017 was valued at **£468,919**.

Areas of focus during 2016-2017 were Transforming Adviceline. They received a grant of £10k by Big Lottery Awards for all and the aim was the development of an improved Adviceline service, increasing the capacity and improving the customer experience.

There were 4 elements:

- 1) A new layout with a more user friendly office layout, increased seating space, reduced cabling
- 2) A new flexible working approach
  - A new large screen display to be used to monitor call waiting queues to make effective resource allocation decisions
  - Direct supervisory support to Adviceline staff
- 3) Increased number of Adviceline calls to provide additional capacity for ongoing volunteer recruitment
- 4) A brand new website to include:
  - Online advice content
  - Local information
  - Email advice infrastructure.

### Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total throughput – in person and by telephone	5220	4,275
<b>2</b>	Total full advice appointments	2195	1857
<b>3*</b>	Total turnaways	936	1149
<b>4**</b>	Number of unique telephone calls unanswered	4766	1644
<b>5</b>	Total no of food vouchers given	272	315

We would like to see the numbers going down in all areas as this represents less people needing the appointment service. CAB has invested in the internet and clients are able to access a lot more information online without having to rely on speaking to someone at the CAB offices.

\*Please note the turnaways do not mean that the client has not been seen, this reflects the number of people who were unable to be seen the same day and either returned following day, telephone or in some cases the information is available on line.

\*\*Calls unanswered averages at around 137 per month; this is an area that is being monitored closely. The CAB are training new volunteers, therefore we should see a reduction in this area going forward.

## **Challenges**

### **1) Volunteer Recruitment**

CAB has expanded the volunteer workforce. CAB recruited 17 trainee gateway assessors and created new admin support roles for volunteers to provide administrative support to paid staff. They also retained larger numbers of volunteers than in previous years, with 10 out of the 17 assessors recruited still volunteering.

### **2) Financial issues**

CAB has secured funding for a number of short term projects to ease the pressure on the generalist advice service and to increase capacity to support clients.

The County Council reduced their funding by 30% on the Crisis Intervention Project.

CAB has managed to reduce their operational costs to a sustainable position compared to the level of funding received from different partners.

## WATFORD PALACE THEATRE

Watford Palace Theatre commissions and produces plays from a range of new and established writers. In July 2017 the Palace Theatre had confirmation from Arts Council England of their continued National Portfolio Organisation status for the next 4 year funding period 2018-2022.

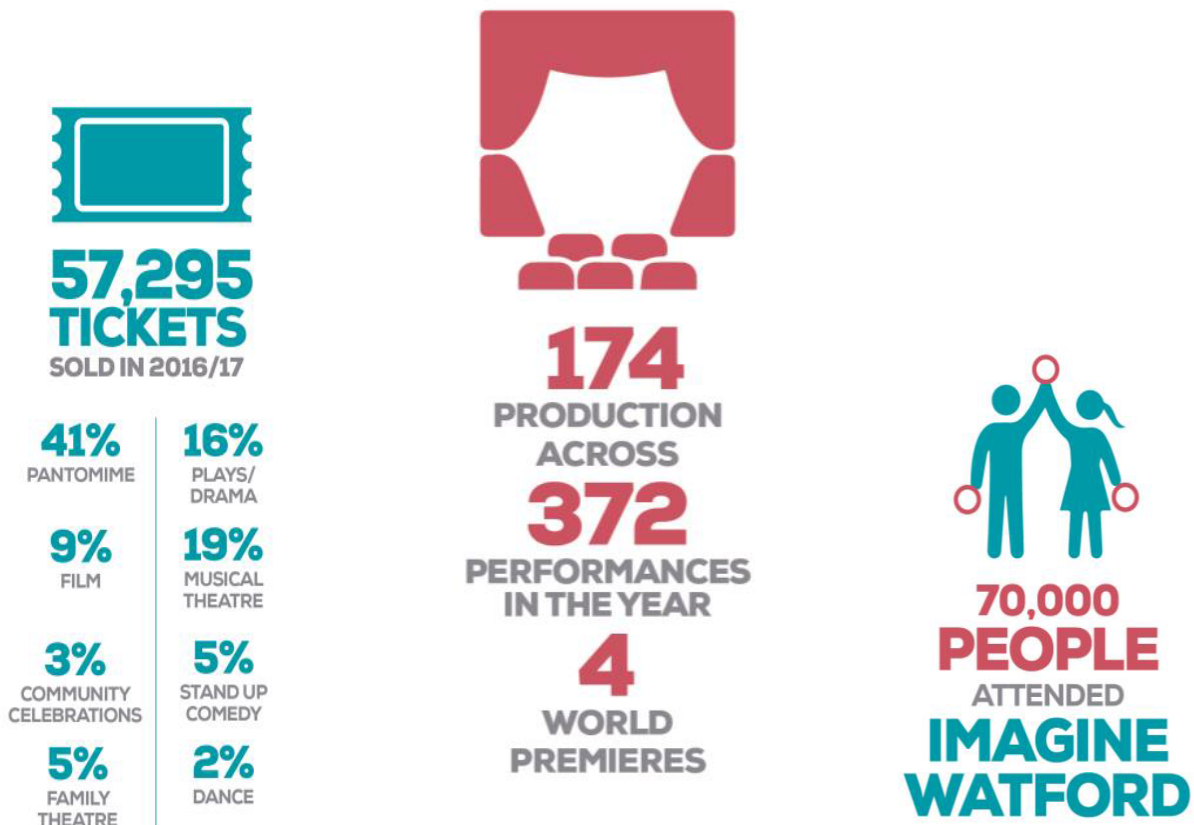
### PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY IN 2016-2017

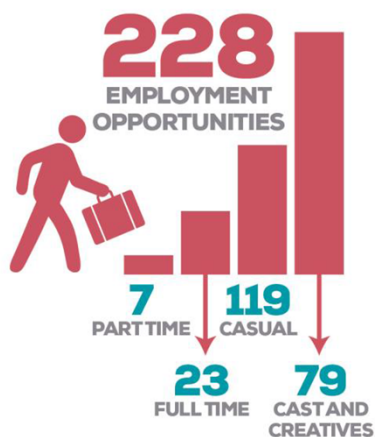
Participation activities (for young people and the community) are central to Watford Palace Theatre's mission and vision - to ensure that everyone gets the opportunity to participate in arts activities.



Throughout 2016-2017 Watford Palace Theatre has continued its 'mission' to be a centre of excellence providing first class theatre with and for the Community. As one of the premiere cultural organisations regionally, the focus has been on localism, diversity and delivering excellence across multiple art-forms. Working with a range of diverse emerging and established artists they aim to engage and bring together all the communities which surround the theatre, through artistic programmes and projects, both inside and outside the Theatre building.

### REACH AND IMPACT





### Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total reach	432,503	448,777
<b>2</b>	Total attendance	203,120	87,658
<b>3</b>	Total engagements (Participant Sessions)	13,280	11,724
<b>4</b>	Number of participatory sessions (PT) – community hires and workshops	1,035	650
<b>5</b>	Number of Watford residents	49,649	47,157
<b>6</b>	Total no of participants in outreach activities	14,928	12,002

The reason for the reduction in the above areas was due to WPT not being directly involved in events such as The Big Beach, The Big Screen, The Big Sports Day, and The Big Skate, which they were in 2015 -2016 and this is reflected in the figures.

### WORLD CLASS THEATRE IN WATFORD

Watford Palace Theatre is proud to be ‘Hertfordshire’s Home of Drama’ and bringing world class Theatre to our stages both in Watford and beyond. 2016-17 has been an excellent year and a busy one for staging various productions and co-productions and growing the reputation of the work that is MADE IN WATFORD – developed, commissioned, set built, costumes made, rehearsed, staged and performed - at Watford Palace Theatre

### CHALLENGES AND ISSUES IN 2016/2017

Three risks were highlighted below that have placed significant challenges on the organisation in 2016 and 2017

- 1: Staffing turnover
- 2: Reduced auditorium audience attendance and box office income
- 3: Loss of set production workshop

## **SHOPMOBILITY**

SHOPMOBILITY Watford is located in the CitiParks Church Car Park in the town centre. Shopmobility is a national scheme which loans manual and battery powered wheelchairs and scooters to anyone with a mobility problem. Currently this service to users is free of charge.

### **Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators**

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total throughput	2,436	2,112
<b>2</b>	% Number of Watford Borough residents	42%	42.2%
<b>3</b>	Total no of volunteers	49	46
<b>4</b>	Total no of volunteers who are service users	20	18
<b>5</b>	New users / Registrations	533	409

Thanks to fundraising, Small Grants Fund, donations and the sale of equipment, they have been able to improve the fleet over the last year. This includes a large selection of wheelchairs and battery powered scooters ranging from children's wheelchairs to scooters for bariatric service users, needing heavy duty equipment.

### **Concerns**

- Some of our service users have commented that they can't park in the Shopmobility car park on busy days and they have to use spaces on other floors. This is OK if they can walk a short distance and use a lift. The lifts are not big enough to accommodate scooters and in some cases users have given up and gone home
- There is a general reduction of footfall in most UK town centres including Watford. The building work of Charter Place is putting some people off coming to Watford at the moment and this is reflected in the number of registration for 2016-2017
- The BID has identified pinch points in the High Street. It's difficult for everyone to use the temporary pedestrian walkway. Its single file and people become impatient with wheelchair and scooter users blocking their way. Watford residents tell us they are not using the town centre as much until the building work is finished
- CitiPark who now manage the Church Car Park has advised Shopmobility that they will put slave meters in and start to charge the organisation for electricity, water and sewerage
- The situation with damage to scooters has improved since they put up signs and started asking for donations to cover repairs.

### **Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT)**

Watford and Three Rivers (is the brand name for the old Council for Voluntary Services CVS) is based at the Holywell Community Centre and deliver a wide range of services and work with local authorities, public service providers, businesses, community groups and individuals so that everyone can contribute to improving their community.

One key development in the year is the new web services based at <http://herts.community> and <http://teamherts.org>. W3RT secured additional funding from other CVS's and have bought a larger range of services to Watford's groups including an improved database of volunteering opportunities.

During 2016-2017 the W3RT restructured its management team. Michal Siewniak the new Service Manager at W3RT is helping W3RT Chief Executive Officer Bob Jones to produce a forward planning document on sector development and to reconfigure CVS services accordingly.

The number of groups W3RT offered support to over the year had increased from 47 to 72 and types of support have been more in-depth, challenging and impactful. They continue supporting groups with traditional levels of advice such as business planning, reviewing small applications, providing model documents, helping with registrations.

A monthly newsletter is sent to over 500 recipients each month. This highlights significant events in the local voluntary sector as well as raising awareness of funds, projects, training and events. This is very well received and W3RT have had positive feedback on this method.

### **Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators**

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Update 'Directory of Local Voluntary Organisations'		On-going
<b>2</b>	Number of CVS member organisations	398	421
<b>3</b>	Develop the W3RT CVS Yammer group as key information source for local voluntary groups	114	W3RT are encouraging people to move to county-wide platforms and preparing people to move to the website currently in development.
<b>4</b>	Organisations receive business planning advice	47	72
<b>5</b>	Organisations receive support on fundraising	22	53
<b>6</b>	Successful fundraising applications	4	4

### **Looking back and looking forward**

W3RT have and are continuing to work on:

- 1) A long-term sector plan for Watford's Voluntary Sector;
- 2) New radio station with a community and voluntary focus, to be run and hosted entirely by volunteers, and broadcast to the internet (including with mother-tongue programmes);
- 3) Options for Watford Connect;
- 4) Reviewing programme of events;
- 5) Reviewing programme of support and engagement with front-line organisations.

## COMMUNITY CENTRES

### HOLYWELL COMMUNITY CENTRE (HCC)

Holywell Community Centre hosts a wide range of community activities and events and is set in King George V Park on Chaffinch Lane. HCC is situated in West Watford and falls under Holywell Ward.

#### **Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators**

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total attendance	26,812	36,381
<b>2</b>	No of local residents	90% based on responses	53% based on responses
<b>3</b>	No of Watford residents	10% based on responses	87% based on responses
<b>4</b>	No of 'open' community hires	300	1,212
<b>5</b>	No of 'closed' Private & Commercial hires	21	128

HCC have focused on health and well-being. There had been an increase in the range of activities. Having taken over The Barn during this period, this also provided an alternative venue for events and user groups.

Community programmes equate to 89.5% of all activity taking place at the Centre, private events (celebration events and charity meetings etc) equate to 10% and commercial bookings (meeting room hire by businesses) equates to 0.5% of activity. It was necessary to balance the needs of the community against the income from private events. The Trust hosted other groups within the facilities, including Watford Cycle Hub, the Polish School and Herts Inclusive Theatre. Office space was rented out to community groups at reasonable costs.

Areas of focus have been;

#### Attendance and programming

Continue to increase attendance at the Centre year on year and have set targets for growth – both for community activity and private hire.

#### Partnerships and community engagement

Work with existing partners and seek out new partnership opportunities in order to engage with and serve the needs of Watford's diverse community.

#### Health and Wellbeing

Deliver a range of services including health and wellbeing programmes for the over 55s. Develop strong relationships with Herts Valley Clinical Commissioning Group, Watford and Three Rivers Health and Wellbeing partnership and other health and wellbeing providers. These organisations have utilised the Centre to deliver activities including conferences, CPD events, community health events, case review meetings and Carer support meetings. HCC will seek to develop new opportunities to engage the broader Watford community (individuals, providers, professionals and other stakeholders) through health and wellbeing provision.



**ORBITAL COMMUNITY CENTRE (OCC)**

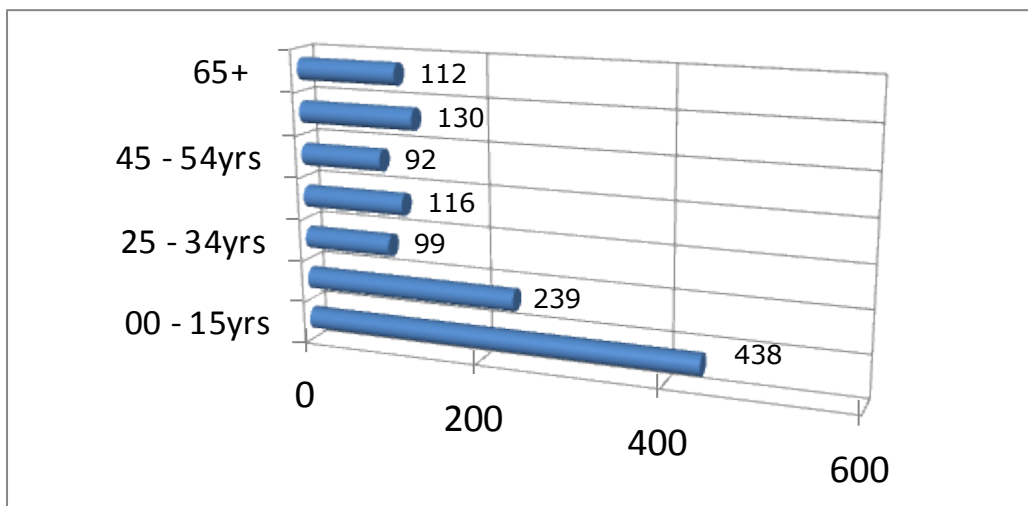
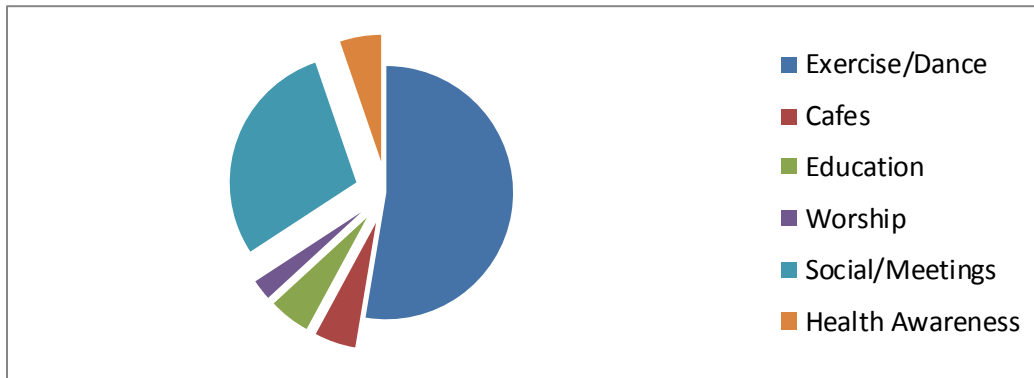
Orbital Community Centre host a wide range of community activities and events OCC is in Woodside Ward and is run by One YMCA.

**Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators**

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total attendance	41,617	44,897
<b>2</b>	No of local residents	15,003	34,384
<b>3</b>	No of Watford residents	2259	5,784
<b>4</b>	No of 'open' community hires	1963	2,428
<b>5</b>	No of 'closed' Private & Commercial hires	73	98

Orbital Community Centre increase in numbers was due to a new system being put in place which improved data collection. Also, Terms of hire arrangements included; asking hirers to provide information on those attending sessions on a more regular basis.

The centre hosts 50+ Activities per week with a variety of User types and age ranges (see below) of which 8 of these Groups meet more than once a week. They also had 3 Groups who occupied exclusive space within the Centre.



One YMCA Invested into CCTV and a new telephone system.

**Concerns**

During that time they lost a regular hire The Music Gym (moved to the Meriden Community Centre) and as a result the £15k income that generated. With additional space available, current users have been able to expand activities and opportunities are available for new custom.

## **WEST WATFORD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (WWCA)**

WWCA hosts a wide range of community activities and events. WWCA is situated in West Watford and falls under Vicarage Ward.

### **Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators**

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total attendance	9170	10,624
<b>2</b>	No of local residents	1681	1882
<b>3</b>	No of Watford residents	288	251
<b>4</b>	No of 'open' community hires	633	698
<b>5</b>	No of 'closed' Private & Commercial hires	21	41

WWCA have a good Volunteer base and the market value of work carried out by them during 2016-2017 was £9,446. This is broken down by 57 volunteers, who gave 1,312 hours of their time.

Having implemented a computer system they now have over 400 people who receive regular Friends of WWCA emails promoting activities and providing updates.

Westie LETS - This is the name of a cashless community barter scheme that has been operating since 2013. Since the LETs scheme started there have been over one thousand transactions where people have helped each other with lifts, pet care, small jobs in the home and gardening to name a few.

WWCA mission is that they aim to be accessible to all and provide a centre with community activities for: informal learning; opportunities to improve health and well-being; support and social interaction; fostering a community spirit and equality of opportunity.

Concerns raised by WWCA were regarding the upstairs rooms that WWCA took over the management of. Whilst there has been some interest, turning this into firm bookings has proved difficult for them. It is an area of focus for the coming year.

### **MERIDEN COMMUNITY CENTRE (MCC)**

Meriden Community Centre hosts a wide range of community activities and events. MCC is in Meriden Ward and is run by Watford Football Club Trust (WFCT).

Following the refurbishment, User groups returned and an updated programme of events was implemented.

WFCT officially opened its doors on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2016. The 2016-2017 information below is based on approximately 5 months throughput.

#### **Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators**

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total attendance	15,919	18,627
<b>2</b>	No of local residents	1,349	859
<b>3</b>	No of Watford residents	977	478
<b>4</b>	No of 'open' community hires	843	927
<b>5</b>	No of 'closed' Private & Commercial hires	22	6
<b>6</b>	Number of members	682	1013

They have 1,013 individual members, of which 169 are also gym members. They have 18 regular weekly team bookings on the all-weather turf pitch, alongside the free inclusion sessions that are being run weekly. There are 22 regular user groups.

An annual survey was carried out and MCC received positive feedback about the look and feel of the building. The standard of service was rated at either Good or Excellent and 98 users said they would recommend the centre to others.

## **LEAVESDEN GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE (LGCC)**

Leavesden Green Community Centre hosts a wide range of community activities and events. LGCC is in Stanborough Ward and is run by Watford Community Housing Trust (WCHT).

### **Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators**

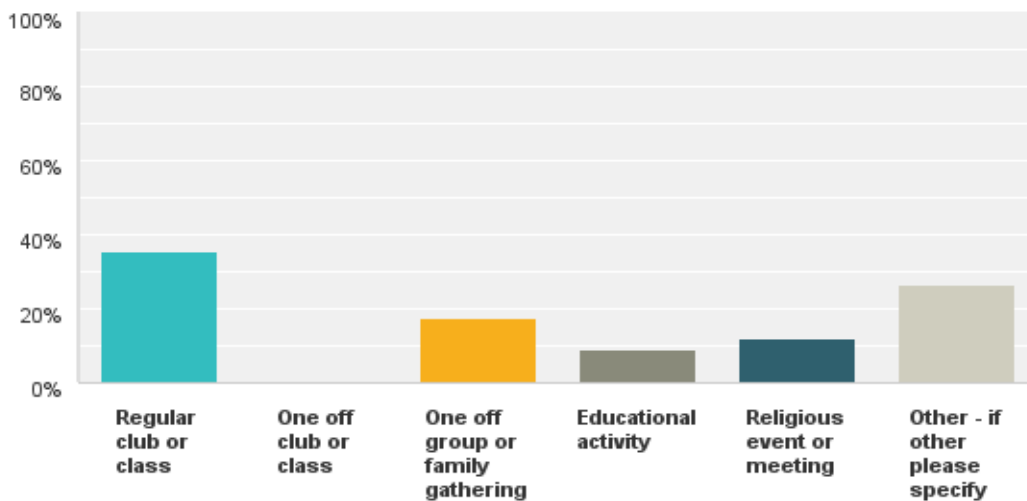
		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total attendance	14,214	16,016
<b>2</b>	No of local residents	2,533	2,559
<b>3</b>	No of Watford residents	1,507	2,263
<b>4</b>	No of 'open' community hires	1,014	1,082
<b>5</b>	No of 'closed' Private & Commercial hires	220	351

A survey was carried out during this period and 94% of people were either satisfied or Very satisfied with the Centre.

100% of people surveyed all said they would recommend the facilities to others and are happy with the mix of activities taken place, see graph below.

### **Q3 What sort of activity?**

Answered: 34 Skipped: 0



2016-2017 was the last year of funding for LGCC. A Community Use Agreement is now in place with WCHT and a report is to be submitted to the council annually.

## **CENTREPOINT COMMUNITY CENTRE (CCC)**

Centrepont Community Centre hosts a wide range of community activities, events and has rooms for hire, one of which is an IT Suite. CCC is situated in the Centre of Watford and falls under the Tudor Ward. CCC is run inhouse and consists of Centre Manager, Centre Officer & Cleaner.

### **Service Level Agreement – Key Performance Indicators**

		<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>1</b>	Total attendance	7,361	8,528
<b>2</b>	No of local residents	2,104	4,763
<b>3</b>	No of Watford residents	814	2,781
<b>4</b>	No of 'open' community hires	440	1,233
<b>5</b>	No of 'closed' private hires	100	108

A funding application for £2k was submitted to Watford Community Housing Trust, which was successful and as a result the Centre was able to expand its programme following a resident survey of what the people wanted to see at the centre. This along with a programming review contributed to the increased attendance at the Centre.

The below grid shows the types of activities which cover each age range. The centre is looking at increasing the early years & under 18 activities;

<b>Early Years</b>	<b>Children Age 5+</b>	<b>Young People Upto age 18</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Older people 50 years+</b>
Nurture Group Baby Yoga Vathalayam NCT (paediatric first aid)	Street Dance Activity Club Vathalayam Karaoke	Street Dance Lunch Club Activity Club Youth Club Vathalayam Karaoke	Zumba Lunch Club Seated Exercise Coffee Morning PHAB Meditation Yoga Vathalayam Spurgeons (separated parents group) Walsingham Support Group NCT (paediatric first aid) Bingo Karaoke NHS Service User Group	Zumba Lunch Club Seated Exercise Coffee Morning PHAB (physical & able bodied group) Meditation Yoga Restorative Yoga Vathalayam (spiritual Group) Watford United Pentecostal Church Walsingham Support Group Bingo Karaoke NHS Service User Group

### **Conclusion**

The Commissioning Framework is set in the context of current budget pressures on Watford Borough Council, and future further budget pressures due to Central Government reducing the council's revenue support grant to zero.

The council recognises that the voluntary and community sector has an important role in providing services within the borough which provide many positive benefits for those who live, work and visit Watford. As a commissioning organisation it is important that the council is able to measure the expected outcomes and evaluate trends in service delivery over the period of time of the new Commissioning Framework. Therefore the new framework and its commissioned organisations need to be flexible to adapt to future service demands.

The services offered by our Community Centre and Voluntary organisations links with the councils vision, values and priorities, they provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities, understanding their needs and catering for them with a varied programme of activities to suit all abilities. Financial support beyond Year 2 of the framework will be subject to the availability of funding during that period as set out in the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and annual budget setting process.