

PARISH REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2002/2003

The Parish Council met eleven times in the last financial year.

The Parish Council operates three sub-committees. The Recreational and Amenities sub-committee, chaired by John Meischke, the Budget and Finance Committee chaired by Denis Filer and the Environment sub-committee chaired by David Stock.

These sub-committees met as and when necessary, discussed issues and made recommendations to the full council.

A new post-and-rail fence has been erected between the Glebe field and the Sportsfield.

The manhole covers on the Sportsfield have been renewed.

Due to ill health, the Parish Council lost the services of Don Chandler who looked after the Sportsfield and surrounding areas. However, the Council has been very fortunate in securing the services of Ted Brown to continue this work.

New byelaws have been drafted and adopted for Watton Green and the Lammas

The issue of flooding in Walkern Road, traffic speeds in Whempstead and the access from Mill Lane onto the by-pass is being taken up with Hertfordshire Highways to see if remedies can be found.

The Parish Council has made grants of:

£100 to the Scout and Guides to purchase badges

£75 to the Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup to assist towards a new entrance gate.

£100 to the Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society for discs and markers for the new Millennium Walk.

The Parish Council is to award two trophies, one to the Watton-at-Stone Primary School and the other to the Scout and Guides. These trophies will be for "Good Citizen Awards" and "Cup for Outstanding Effort" respectively.

The Parish council has been trying to solve the problem of rabbit infestation on the Lammas and the allotments. Various meetings have taken place with consultants and contractors. The Council commissioned a report on the best way forward. The outcome of these meetings and the report is to continue ferreting the land.

Parish Paths Partnership has allowed us to receive grant money for hedge cutting and strimming work, especially on the 'Rights of Way' footpaths.

The University of Hertfordshire is to name one of its halls after the village. The hall will be called "Watton Hall". The Parish Council would like to thank Denis Filer for instigating this.

The Parish Council have commented on the following documents:

Hertfordshire Police Authority Best Value Review

Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review

Hertfordshire Structure Plan

Hertfordshire-Airport Expansion

Secondary Schools, review of admission rules

Home to School Transport Policy

Elected Regional Assemblies.

The Police visited the Parish Council twice during the Civic Year, once in September 2002 the other in March 2003, and Councillors were updated on policing issues with regards to the village.

Councillors have attended the following:

Hertfordshire Constabulary-Members Evening

Herts Rural Social Inclusion Forum

Crime and Disorder Act Section 17

Rural Enterprise Project-Helping your Local Communities

Parishes for Rural Environmental Protection.

In association with Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society, the Council held a public meeting with WAGN. Items discussed were station maintenance, information systems, security and vandalism, quality and reliability of the trains and ticketing. The meeting was well-attended by members of the public, PC John Ivens and Norma Unwin, Group Station Manager WAGN.

Following that meeting, WAGN has installed a new notice board at the Station and promised to investigate all problems raised by the public. A follow-up meeting is to be arranged for the autumn.

On the 13th November 2002, the Parish Council adopted the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Parish notice board has been moved from the High Street to outside Summans. Our thanks to Paul Summan for allowing this notice board on his land.

The Village Directory has been updated, together with the new bus and train timetables, and distributed to all the residents in Watton-at-Stone and Whempstead.

Work is progressing with the ornate village sign which, when completed, will be erected at the southern end of the village.

ROSPA has undertaken a safety inspection of all our play equipment.

The Parish Council attended the 2003 Inter-Parish Conference at Walkern. Speakers were present from the Hertfordshire Constabulary (rural policing), Community Development Agency (Parish Grants) and Hertfordshire County Council (pre and after-school clubs).

The Parish Council has representatives on local organisations so that we may assist in any ideas, projects or plans they might have. The list is as follows:

- Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society
- Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee
- Watton-at-Stone School Governors
- Watton-at-Stone Scout and Guide Group
- Watton-at-Stone Sports and Social Club
- River Beane Restoration Association
- E. H. Community Playbus
- Police Authority
- Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup.

It is the policy of the Parish Council to view all local plans and make appropriate planning comments to the local authority.

The Council has expressed its grave concerns over the County Council's new Home to School Transport Policy and Sarah Davies is pursuing these issues with parents, Oliver Heald MP and the County Council.

Can I thank all Councillors who have assisted me throughout the year, especially David Stock, my Vice-Chairman.

Finally, none of our work would have been possible without the assistance of our Clerk, Mrs Jane Allsop, who has put in many hours beyond her normal duties. On behalf of all Parish Councillors, I would like to say a big thank you to her for all her hard work.

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council	
Summary statement of expenditure and income	
for the year 2002/2003	
Expenditure	
Sportsfield/Recreation Areas	3,761.92
Administration	9,475.24
Grant to Community Hall	5,632.00
Footpaths/Amenities	4,151.07
	<u>23,020.23</u>
Income	
Hire of sports facilities	918.00
Agency work	1676.60
General income	1844.67
Funds received from Truck Pull and May Fayre for ornate village sign	2500.00
Precept	<u>19594.00</u>
	<u>26533.27</u>
Reconciliation	
Total Expenditure	<u>23,020.23</u>
Total Income	<u>26533.27</u>
Income minus Expenditure (change in reserves)	<u>3,513.04</u>