

Minutes of the meeting of the Wotton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 9th July 2003

Present:	Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman)	Mr. D. Stock (Vice-Chairman)
	Mr. C. Clark	Mrs. C. Dinnin
	Mr. V. Dunhill	Mr. D. Filer
	Mr. I. Knight	Mrs. H. McCash
	Mr. J. Meischke	Mr. M. Smith

1 Apologies for absence

None.

2 Declaration of Interests

Mr. Filer has a prejudicial interest in item 7 a iv, Planning Application - 17 Lammas Road, single-storey front extension.

Mr. Filer will therefore leave the meeting when the item is discussed.

Mr. Smith has a prejudicial interest in item 7 a v, Planning Application – Yard at side of Ballacraigne, Walkern Road, to use to park 7.5 ton lorry and keep scaffold materials

Mr. Smith will therefore leave the meeting when the item is discussed.

Mrs. McCash has a prejudicial interest in item 6 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Approval of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31st March 2003.

Mrs. McCash will remain at the meeting when this item is discussed.

3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton said that a planning application for the yard at the side of Ballacraigne, Walkern Road had been received after the agenda was published. This item to be discussed under 7 b v), Planning Applications (on pages 12 and 13 of these minutes).

4 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th June 2003**

The following amendment was made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 14th May 2003.

- Page 8, Item 6 b, Sportsfield – Report
Under Allotments – Comments

‘Mr. Knight said that the Tennis Club would like to build an additional court behind the MPPA, together with a practise wall and a storage shed.’

should read,

‘Mr. Knight said that the Tennis Club would like to have an additional court behind the MPPA, together with a practise wall and a storage shed.’

Mr. Stock proposed that the minutes as amended be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour.

b) Review of actions

- **Visit Mr. Morrissey to discuss the requirements for the internal audit**

Mr. Filer said that he visited Mr. Morrissey who agreed to do the internal audit.

The internal audit has now been carried-out and the Clerk answered all quires raised by Mr. Morrissey.

Mr. Filer said we are now waiting for Mr. Morrissey to complete and sign the relevant parts of the annual return for the year ended 31st March 2003.

Mrs. McCash said that Mr. Morrissey has asked to have a meeting with her husband to discuss the internal audit requirements, which last year was carried-out by McCash and Hay.

Note: In the presence of the Clerk, Mr. Morrissey completed, signed and dated (14th July 2003) sections one and four of the annual return for the year ended 31st March 2003.

All Parish Councillors to be given a copy of the annual return for the year ended 31st March 2003.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Write a letter of thanks to Cled Fursland**

This action point has been completed.

- **Meet Ian Davies (Environment Agency) on 19th June on the Lammas**

This item to be discussed under 6 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Report on meeting with Ian Davies (Environment Agency) re Lammas trees and tree debris (on page 9 of these minutes).

- **Chase WAGN for a response to our request for a revised sign that points to the WAGN parking area**

Mr. Poulton said that in spite of writing again to Norma Unwin (WAGN) on 27th June, we have still not received a response to our letter of 3rd June.

It was agreed that the Clerk to send an e-mail to Norma Unwin asking for her urgent response.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Chase Mike Freeman for a response to the Jacobs River Beane Flood Study**

Mr. Freeman informed Mr. Knight that he had tried to get in contact with JacobsGIBB Limited on several occasions.

Mr. Knight drafted the following letter, which the Clerk has sent to JacobsGIBB Limited.

‘Thank you for your letter of 7th May. On our behalf, a Mr. Freeman has tried to contact you on several occasions but failed to get a response.

If you provide us with your preferred format, either a questionnaire or details of the format you want to receive the information in, we will do our best to help you.’

- **Inform Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup of new Parish Council representative**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to the Chairman of the Allotments Association re not appointing a specific PC representative**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Bryan Hammond re Whempstead issue**

This item to be discussed under 5 a, Specific Items - Traffic-calming in Whempstead (on page 5 of these minutes).

- **Find out the listing of work priorities from Hertfordshire Highways**

As requested by the Parish Council, Mr. Poulton said that he had obtained the following list of work priorities from Hertfordshire Highways.

- Hazeldell construction – Mr. Poulton will be getting the letters for this in the next week and delivering them to each house. The work is scheduled to be carried-out in September.
- Station Road damage to the guard railing – this has now been completed.
- High Street between the Post Office and the Bull Public House - A traffic survey has been carried-out, which scored 92, which is an extremely low traffic count assessment. However, it will go into the 2003 items to be looked at to see what can be done and when it can be scheduled for the work to be carried-out.
- High Street bollard – Mr. Poulton said that he had received quite a few requests, as both District and Parish Councillor, to have bollards installed on the opposite side of the road to the existing ones outside the post office. Lorries tend to parking in this area. Hertfordshire Highways hope to carry-out the work in near future.
- High Street crossing at Glebe Court entrance of School Lane – There is a problem with installing a crossing at this point because there is not a clear enough site-line coming into the village from the south to warn you that there is going to be a pedestrian crossing. Hertfordshire Highways are looking to see what can be done to improve the facility at this point in the High Street.
- The High Street lay-by near the old Post Office is being programmed for an inspection.
- The Rectory Lane hedges have been cut, this was as requested by Mrs. Sarah Davies to improve pedestrian access along the footpath.
- Whempstead/Mill Lane traffic calming – this item to be discussed under 5 a, Specific Items - Traffic-calming in Whempstead (on page 5 of these minutes).
- Walkern Road carriage-way flooding – work scheduled to increase the capacity of curb inlets. This work will be carried-out before the winter sets in.
- Request for a new grille for the culvert at Walkern Road – The land ownership records indicated that the ditch does not form part of the public highway and therefore a search is now being made with the land registry to find out the riparian owner. Mr. Poulton said that it is most likely that the Abel Smith Estate owns the ditch and they will therefore be asked to fund the new grille. Mrs. Dinnin asked what happens if the owner refuses to install a new grille. Mr. Poulton said that it will then be done on his behalf and the owner will be billed accordingly. Mr. Smith said that if the ditch drains more than a certain acreage, which it most certainly does, it should then become the responsibility of the Environment Agency and not the land owner. He said that it would be a bit much to put the

responsibility all up to the landowner when most of the water is coming from other areas. Mr. Poulton said that we should leave it up to the Hertfordshire Highways to investigate.

Mr. Poulton to ask Hertfordshire Highways for an up-date for our September meeting.

Action: N. Poulton

- **Write to Hertfordshire Highways re footpath adjacent to Bull public house garden**
This item to be discussed under 5 c, Specific Items - Footpath adjacent to Bull Public House (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Purchase two trophies**
This item to be discussed under 5 e, Specific Items - Purchase and presentation of Trophies (on pages 5 and 6 of these minutes).
- **Attend Village of the Year awards**
Mr. Poulton said that he and Mrs. Dinnin attended the awards. Watton-at-Stone did not achieve anything in the competition and he felt that entering had been a complete waste of time. Not only had Mrs. McCash spent a considerable amount of time filling in the forms, but she and Mr. Poulton had also spent a morning showing the judges round the village.
- **Send letter to HCC re Hertfordshire Sustainable development Guide**
This action point has been completed.
- **Purchase a suitable tape-recorder for Parish Council meetings**
Mr. Meischke said that because of the cost involved he was loaning the Parish Council a tape-recording machine to see if taping meetings is practical before outlaying any money. The Clerk has loaned the Parish Council two tapes.

Note: The tape recorder machine was used for the first half hour of the meeting, up to the middle of item 5 e, Specific Items - Purchase and presentation of Trophies.
- **Change the supplier of the Community Hall electricity to British Gas**
Unfortunately, Business Gas has not yet sent the paperwork. The Clerk has chased and is expecting to hear from them in the next few days.
This item to remain on the agenda until it has been resolved. **Agenda: 09.03**
- **Obtain signatures from current & outgoing Parish Councillors & return forms to Co-op Bank**
The Co-operative Bank requires a signed copy of the minutes of this meeting, before any change of signatures can be accepted.

The completed change of signatures forms will be returned to the Co-operative Bank with a signed copy of the approved minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th June 2003. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Contact Cornhill Insurance to clarify the situation about Trustees liability**
This item to be discussed under 6 a, Community Hall - Trustees Insurance (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Submit Wicksteed Leisure's quote for repair of safety surface to Cornhill Insurance**
This action point has been completed.

This item to be discussed under 6 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Safety- surface under small swings and see-saw (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Meet with Turners re the poor water-pressure in the showers**
This item to be discussed under 6 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Showers (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Notify Mr. Boddy about use of Main Hall during Summer Play Scheme**
This action point has been completed.
- **Speak to Mr. Welch about the strimming and grass cutting work he does for the Parish Council**
This item to be discussed under 6 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Additional strimming and mowing maintenance works (on page 10 of these minutes).
- **Write to the Diocesan Board re requirement for additional tennis facilities**
This item to be discussed under 6 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Tennis Courts (on page 9 of these minutes).
- **Chase Michael Stanley about putting up the Byelaw notices for Watton Green and the Lammas**
Mr. Meischke said that he had tried to contact Michael Stanley everyday this week and each time a problem had cropped up. He was now hoping that the signs would be installed this coming Friday (11th July).
Mr. Filer said that a week and a half ago campers on Watton Green had left broken glass on site. It took his wife and hour and a half to clear up the mess. He said that it is difficult to approach someone to inform them that permission to camp is required on site, if no notice is in evidence.

It was agreed that permission to camp could be given to any person provided they give their name and home address.

- **Install the litterbin near bike ramp site on Lammas**

This item to be discussed under 6 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Litterbin for the Lammas (on page 9 of these minutes).

- **Inspect grass in front of the bench-seat at the Mill Lane end of the Lammas**

Mr. Poulton said that he and Mrs. Dinnin had inspected the area and agreed that the grass appears to have been flattened by campers. There was no litter in the area.

Mrs. Dinnin said however, that when she inspected the area yesterday there was an enormous piece of cardboard/board.

- **Chase Mr. Winser for ferreting licence**

Mr. Winser has now returned a signed copy of the ferreting licence.

The Clerk said that she wrote to Mr. Steve Alsford (of 24 Redvers Close, Bishop's Stortford) on 4th July asking him to sign and returned the licenses sent to him on 16th May. No response has been received.

- **Write to Mr. Warren re digging on Common Land**

This item to be discussed under 8 c, Correspondence Received - Mr F. Warren re Common Land at Perrywood Lane (on page 13 of these minutes).

- **Inspect the condition of the small swings (i.e. seats, paintwork and squeaking parts)**

Mr. Poulton said that he had inspected the small swings today and found no evidence of squeaking parts. However, the framework does need painting sometime in the future. One of the seats is damaged but he did not feel that it was a safety hazard and would last a bit longer. Mr. Meischke said that he did not think there was any point in doing any work to the small swings until after the safety-surface had been repaired.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on 10th September 2003.

Agenda: 09/03

- **Obtain quotations for the staining of all of the exterior woodwork at the Community Hall**

This action point has been completed.

- **Inspect the three loose cross-bars on the MPPA fence**

Mr. Meischke said that he had tightened up the loose cross-bars and hopefully they will stay as they are now.

- **Obtain quotations for the staining of the kicker boards from Tim Clark and Mick Taylor**

This item to be discussed under 6 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Quotations for the staining of kicker-boards on MPPA (on page 8 of these minutes).

- **Remove the wheelbarrow from bike-ramp site on Lammas**

Mr. Poulton said that the wheelbarrow does belong to the youngsters who use the Lammas bike-ramp site and he has asked them not to leave it in such a visual position.

- **Show Ted Brown how to do a weekly visual-inspection of the sportsfield**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to EHDC Planning department re 1 Hazeldell**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to EHDC Planning department re decision on Old Coach House**

This action point has been completed.

This item to be discussed under 8 b, Correspondence received - EHDC re planning decision for the Coach House (on page 13 of these minutes).

- **Write to Hertfordshire Highways re Conservation Society's suggestion of yellow lines at Hazeldell**

This action point has been completed.

To-date no response has been received from Hertfordshire Highways.

- **Notify EHDC of which Parish Councillors are attending Summer Conference on 8th July 2003**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton said that it was a reasonably good afternoon. Mr. Poulton asked Mr. Meischke if he wished to make any comments on the conference.

Mr. Meischke said that one thing the Parish Council may need to look into was rural inter-parish conferences to fight any major developments that are coming. They are advocating having a village plan, which entails quite a lot of work, which would need to be taken on by a sub-committee. He said that we should wait for further communications on the subject from EHDC.

Mr. Poulton is placing on circulation documents they picked up at the conference. **Action: N. Poulton**

- **Write Parish News articles**

This action point has been completed.

c) **Action points outstanding for more than two months**

- **Send Community Hall accounts to McCash and Hay for auditing**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 6 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Approval of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31st March 2003 (on page 7 of these minutes).

5 **Specific Items**

a) **Traffic-calming in Whempstead**

Mr. Clark said that Hertfordshire Highways started doing a traffic survey about two weeks ago. There was a day when there was a number of people counting on the by-pass and Mill Lane and another person parked in Mill Lane. They have also left wires across the road attached to a meter. However, they are not counting anything on the north/south Bennington Lane. He said he spoke to Ms Weaver this morning and she did not even know it was taking place. She said that it was quite normal for her not to know. He asked her what would happen next and she said she would have to wait for the results of the survey, which would take about three months.

It was agreed to put this item on the December agenda.

Agenda: 12/03

Mr. Poulton produced a map of where the traffic counts were taking place, which Parish Councillors studied. Mr. Poulton did query with Danny Kyan why they were not doing the survey with one fell swoop and he was told that it was not really necessary, they just have to ensure that they do not do it on school holidays or weekends. Mr. Clark said that you would have thought if you did it all on one day a more accurate result would be obtained.

b) **Ornate village sign**

Mr. Mould has faxed another updated version of one-side of the ornate village sign. He has now included the roof of the Methodist Chapel but did not reduce the size of the large duck. The Clerk's eldest son has modified Mr. Mould's drawing so that the large duck is the same as the medium-sized one. Mr. Mould has been sent the modified version asking him to proceed with making this version of our village sign.

Mr. Poulton asked Mrs. McCash to write to Mr. Mould asking when we could expect delivery of the sign and to confirm the price of the work.

Action: H. McCash

This item to remain on the agenda under Specific Items.

Agenda: 09/03

c) **Footpath adjacent to Bull public house**

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter dated 4th July from Val Weaver (Assistant District Manger, Hertfordshire Highways).

'Thanks you for your letter dated 26th June regarding the above.

The highway adoption records indicated that the location of the alleged accident was in fact public highway and therefore repairs were undertaken. I would have been unable to undertake any repairs on any private sections of footway.

However, I understand your request that the remaining sections, on the attached plan as coloured red/yellow, become a right of way.

I will therefore contact the Rights of Way Section in order to obtain their comments on your request and will advise you of their findings in due course.'

Mr. Poulton showed Parish Councillors the map. Mr. Meischke noted that slippery area of the footpath is in fact in the ownership of Hertfordshire Highways. Mr. Poulton said the most important thing is that it is being sorted out by Hertfordshire Highways and the last thing the Parish Council wants to do is claim ownership. After discussion, it was agreed to wait for a response from Ms Weaver.

This item to remain the agenda.

Agenda: 9/03

d) **Walkern Road – flooding**

This item was reported on under 4 b, Review of Actions - Find out the listing of work priorities from Hertfordshire Highways (on pages 2 and 3 of these minutes).

e) **Purchase and presentation of Trophies**

Mrs. Dinnin said that the two trophies had now been purchased from Concord Trophies and at a price of £79.48, cost less than originally anticipated. She showed Parish Councillors the trophies that will be presented to the school. The overall size of the trophy is smaller than she expected because the marble base

that was chosen is lower than the plastic one shown in the catalogue. Parish Councillors agreed that the trophy looked very good.

Lucy Jenkins (from the Scout and Guide Rainbow Group) was awarded the 'Watton-at-Stone Parish Council Outstanding Effort Award's) at the Community Service held on 6th July 2003.

'Watton-at-Stone Parish Council Good Citizenship Award' will be awarded at the Watton-at-Stone Primary School Leaver's Service on 18th July 2003 in the Parish Church. The award will be presented to the Year 6 child (aged 11 years) who, in the opinion of the staff, has been the 'best citizen' in the whole of their time at the school. Mrs. Dinnin agreed to present the award.

Note: This year's award was made to Miss Casey Crossley.

At the Parish Council meeting held on 11th June it was agreed not purchase 'keep-sake' trophies because it burdened future Councils with an annual purchase. However, after discussion Mr. Meischke proposed that the Parish Council reverses its decision and Mrs. Dinnin to purchase two 'keep-sake' trophies (at a cost of £10 - £15 each, including engraving). These will be given in retrospect this year, but in future years will be presented at the same time as the trophies. Mr. Poulton seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mrs. Dinnin to act accordingly.

Action: C. Dinnin

f) 2003 Hertfordshire Village of the Year competition

This item was discussed under 4 b, Review of Actions - Attend Village of the Year awards (on page 3 of these minutes).

g) Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association

Mr. Stock said that before the first meeting of the Allotment and Garden Association, the Watton-at-Stone Horticultural Society held their last meeting. They agreed to transfer all existing funds held by the Horticultural Society and to merge with the Allotment Association to become the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association.

A new committee was formed at the first meeting of the Allotment and Garden Association. Mike Freeman agreeing to stand on the committee for the next 12 months, as a former member of the Horticultural Society, so that he could keep an eye on the spending of the transferred funds. John Love was elected as Chairman.

h) WAGN meeting

Barbara Knight from the Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society and the Parish Council had arranged another Public Meeting to discuss, with WAGN representatives, problems associated with our railway station. The meeting will be held on Wednesday 17th September 2003, starting at 8 pm, in the Community Hall.

Mr. Stock said that it would be good for our cause if as many Parish Councillors as possible could attend the meeting.

i) Report on 'Home to School Transport' meeting held on 8th July 2003

Mr. Poulton said that the meeting to discuss the Home to School Transport policy was reasonably well attended by parents of Watton-at-Stone Primary School and went well. Mrs. Davies chaired the meeting with Bryan Hammond (County Councillor) and Mr. Poulton in attendance. After discussion with parents, the following action was agreed.

- Mrs. Davies to draw up a petition opposing the policy and obtain signatures from parents of Watton-at-Stone primary school. The petition to be given to Bryan Hammond to present to HCC.
- Watton-at-Stone Parish Council to be asked to send letters to all Parish Councils in East Herts to find out if they are aware of the Home to School Transport policy and if so how it affects families in their parish.
- Bryan Hammond to find out when the scrutiny committee are next meeting and how best to pursue our objections forward.

Mr. Poulton asked it to be minuted that we appreciate and thank Mrs. Davies for all the work she has done to try to overturn the Home to School Transport policy for families of Watton-at-Stone.

j) Maintenance work at Watton Station

Mr. Poulton said that Mrs. Byrnes of 30 Moorymead Close brought to his attention that WAGN were carrying-out engineering work at Watton-at-Stone station during the night and early hours of the morning. The work which residents of Moorymead Close were informed was scheduled to take one week took over four weeks to complete. Part of the work involved installing 23 copingstones with the use of noisy machinery in the early hours of the morning. This severely disrupted the sleep of the residents of Moorymead Close, many of whom have young families. Mr. Poulton was informed that WAGN told residents that the work had to be done at these times and any complaints re noise would be ignored.

The feeling from residents of Moorymead Close was that the noise level and length of time to undertake the work was totally unacceptable. This work should have been carried-out during the day when only one train

per hour is scheduled to stop at Watton station. WAGN should have appreciated the needs of the general public and realised that sleep detriment due to being kept awake night after night is very distressing.

Mr. Poulton said that he wrote to Norman Unwin twice and received several e-mails in return informing him that the work was in fact being carried out by Network Rail and not WAGN. In her e-mail of 8th July she sent a copy of Ian Blanchard (GN Property Manager) e-mail on the subject.

‘Network Rail’s station maintenance contractors (Serco) carried out works in May and June of this year to replace 23 platform coping stones and reinforce the supporting beams. The first night’s work was done as an emergency item but I am advised that the following day a leaflet drop was done to local residents explaining what was being done and apologising for any inconvenience. The only outstanding work as at the end of last week was replacement of a small area of tarmacadam.

Norma spoke to me last Thursday regarding complaints from local residents and we were under the impression these related to works earlier last week.

I checked the position with our Property Maintenance team and was advised that Serco had not been at the station for nearly 3 weeks.

I am copying this email to our Area Maintenance Delivery Manager, who has responsibility for overseeing the track maintenance contract, in order that he is aware of the concerns in relation to any track maintenance or renewal works which may be proposed.’

6 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

Mr. Filer reported on the following items concerning the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee.

- **Approval of the Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31st March 2003**

Mrs. McCash did not leave the meeting while this item was discussed.

McCash and Hay have completed their audit of the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall accounts for the year ended 31st March 2003. All Parish Councillors were given a copy of the accounts prior to the meeting.

The deficit figure in these accounts refers to.

31.03.02	£5632
31.03.03	£28144

These amounts need to be reversed to read:

31.03.02	£28144
31.03.04	£5632

Mr. Filer proposed that Mr. Poulton sign the audited accounts for the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall provided that McCash and Hay alter the deficit figures. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to contact McCash and Hay accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

When the accounts have been signed by Mr. Poulton a copy to be sent to McCash and Hay.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Audit of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2003**

This item was discussed under 4 b, Review of actions - Visit Mr. Morrissey to discuss the requirements for the internal audit (on page 1 of these minutes).

- **Quarterly statement of accounts for the Parish Council and Community Hall**

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were given a copy of the 3-monthly statement of accounts for the period ending the 30th June 2003.

Mr. Filer went through the expenditure and income.

- **Maintenance of flowerbeds in High Street**

Mr. Filer read out a letter dated 29th June from Derek Monk

‘Further to my conversation with Mr. Poulton regarding the maintenance of the shrub beds in the High Street

2003 Price as agreed		= £135
2004 Price =	January – March	= £80
	April – June	= £80
	July – September	= £80
	October – December	= <u>£80</u>

£320

I trust this meets with your satisfaction.’

Mr. Filer proposed that Mr. Monk’s price for 2004 be accepted. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

This figure to be included in the budget figures for 2004/05.

Budget: 2004/05

- **Quotations for exterior decoration of Community Hall**

The following quotations have been obtained for the exterior decoration of the Community Hall.

M. Taylor

Estimate for decorations to exterior of Pavilion, excluding high hall windows.

Woodwork, prepare and apply two coats of Sadolin woodstain

Labour and materials £600

Robert Adams

1. Window, doors and frames: Clean down, lightly rub down and apply two coats of Sadolin Extra £480

2. Rough timber – Fascia boards, eaves legs and batons: Dust off and apply one coat of Sadolin Classic. £230

Mr. Poulton proposed that Mr. Adams’ quotation be accepted. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **Quotations for the staining of the kicker-boards on the MPPA**

The following quotations have been obtained for the staining of the kicker-boards on the MPPA

Adam Welch – the creosoting of the wooden fencing around the tennis courts based on a single coat and the Parish Council supplying materials: £450

Julie Graham – the creosoting of the wooden fencing around the tennis courts based on a single coat and the Parish Council supplying materials: £195

M. Taylor

Estimate for decoration to boarding around Tennis Courts

Clean down and apply one coat of preservative stain (equivalent of creosote)

Labour and materials £600

After discussion, Mr. Meischke proposed that Mrs. Graham’s quotation be accepted. Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to write to Mrs. Graham, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Welch accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Meischke to obtain the materials required to do the work.

Action: J. Meischke

Community Hall Trustees

- **Trustees Insurance**

After a brief discussion, it was agreed that this item should be placed on the agenda for the next Community Hall Trustees meeting.

Agenda: CH

- **Date for next meeting**

The date for the next Community Hall Trustees meeting was changed from Tuesday 2nd September 2003 to Tuesday 16th September at 1900.

Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Meischke reported on the following items concerning the Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee.

- **Safety- surface under small swings and see-saw**

At the Parish Council meeting held on 14th May, it was agreed that we submit a claim to Cornhill Insurance for the damage done to the safety surface under the small swings and see-saw.

Mr. Meischke was pleased to report that Cornhill Insurance have accepted Wicksteed Leisure’s quotation (dated 6th June 2003) of £4406 plus VAT. This is for the removal of all the damaged safety-surface under the small swings and see-saw, and the installation of a new safety-surface, with concrete edging, which will be flush with the ground (i.e. the same style as that installed under the Rainbow multi-play and slide).

Wicksteed Leisure expects to start work on the safety-surface in late August.

This item to remain on the agenda until the work has been completed.

Agenda: 9/03

- **Showers**

Mr. Meischke said that he met with Turners (who de-scaled the shower-system pipe-work earlier this year), on Monday 16th June, re the poor water pressure in the showers. They have found out the problem,

which is a faulty pressure control value. A new part is on order and will be fitted as soon as it has been received.

This item to remain on the agenda until the work has been completed.

Agenda: 9/03

- **Tennis Courts**

Mr. Knight said he had a meeting with Mr. Stock and Ian Vosper to discuss the proposals for additional tennis facilities. It was agreed that before a letter is sent to the St. Albans Diocesan Board, Mr. Knight arranges to meet with Mr. Abel Smith (who is on the Diocesan Board) to seek his support and advice.

Mr. Knight said that he had not yet arranged a meeting with Mr. Abel Smith, but would do so in the next two to three weeks.

It was agreed that when funds have been raised, the Parish Council will be responsible for building the facility and its future maintenance. The facility however would be for tennis only and would not be a multi-purpose play area.

This item to be placed on the agenda for our meeting to be held on 10th September 2003. **Agenda: 9/03**

- **Allotments maintenance**

Mr. Poulton said that we have obtained the following quotations for strimming and mowing of the area along the fence by the allotments.

- Ted Brown £50
- Adam Welch £95

Mr. Meischke said that Adam Welch's quotation showed a typing error and the figure should have been £45 and not £95.

After discussion, Mr. Meischke proposed that Ted Brown's quotation be accepted. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to notify Ted Brown and Adam Welch accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Window cleaning**

Mr. Poulton said that Christine Bewley is no longer willing to clean the windows at the Community Hall. Mr. Meischke and the Clerk have obtained a quotation from Gary Smith for £56 for the cleaning of the interior and exterior lower level windows every six weeks. Mr. Smith has already cleaned the windows once and Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke confirmed that the standard of his work was good. No budget provision has been made for window cleaning in the year 2003/04. After discussion, Mr. Filer proposed that Gary Smith's quotation be accepted on the basis that the windows are cleaned every three months. Mr. Stock seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Gary Smith to be notified accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

It was agreed to monitor the situation to see if once every three months is sufficient.

Environment

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items concerning the Environment Sub-Committee.

- **Byelaw notice boards for Watton Green and the Lammas**

This item was discussed under 4 b, Review of actions - Chase Michael Stanley about putting up the Byelaw notices for Watton Green and the Lammas (on pages 3 and 4 of these minutes).

- **Report on meeting with Ian Davies (Environment Agency) re Lammas trees and tree debris**

Mrs. Dinnin said that she and Mr. Poulton had met Ian Davies (our local Inspector at the Environment Agency) on site on 19th June to discuss the work that is required to the trees along the riverbank on the Lammas. Mr. Davies was very helpful and said that the Environment Agency would carry-out the work in autumn, free of charge.

Mr. Davies will need to identify the trees that need removing because the markings made by Mr. Stock and Mr. Dunhill earlier this year are no longer visible.

The Environment Agency will be contacting the Abel Smith Estate to see if they will agree to work being carried-out to trees in their ownership along the riverbank.

- **Litter bin for the Lammas**

Mr. Poulton reported that the bin had now been installed by Mr. Smith.

- **Grass cutting - Lammas and Watton Green**

Mr. Stanley has now cut the grass on both the Lammas and Watton Green.

Parish Councillors discussed the need for the first grass cut to take place earlier than the first week in July.

This item to be placed on the agenda for January 2004 so that quotations can be sort.

Agenda: 1.04

- **Renewal licences**

This item was discussed under item 4 b, Review of Actions - Chase Mr. Winsor for ferreting licence (on pages 3 and 4 of these minutes).

- **Additional strimming and mowing maintenance works**

Adam Welch, who does the grass cutting and mower maintenance works, informed Mr. Poulton that the grass cutting needs doing on at least one more occasion during the growing season. The current schedule of works, is as following.

- First week in April
- First week of May
- First week of June
- Second week of July
- Third week of August
- Second week of September

Mr. Poulton proposed that this be changed to the following.

- First week in April
- First week of May
- First week of June
- Fourth week of June
- Third week of July
- Second week of August
- First week of September

The situation to be reviewed in September with a possible final cut at the end of September/beginning of October.

The cost of each cut is £139.17.

Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour. Mr. Meischke to notify Mr. Welch accordingly.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Cleaning of the War Memorial**

Mr. S. C. Dass (Stonemasons) has now carried-out the cleaning of the War Memorial. It was agreed that he had done an excellent job.

- **Trees overhanging the pedestrian footpath in the High Street**

Mrs. Dinnin said that some trees (in the front garden(s) of property numbers 90-92 High Street) are overhanging the pedestrian footpath in the High Street.

In May 1998, the Parish Council wrote to the Abel Smith Estate, who owns the 90 – 92 High Street asking him to cut back the obstructing branches, which he then did.

In this instance, it was agreed to write to the occupants of 90 – 92 High Street asking them to carry-out the work required.

Action: C. Dinnin

b) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mr. Meischke carried-out the sportsfield report on the 7th June 2003, accompanied by Mr. Smith, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	OK.
Litter	3
Dog fouling	3
Netball posts	3
General	Cut hedge? Football bars.

- **Children's Play Area:**

Condition of surface	Insurance claim pending.
Litter/Litterbin	OK.
Large swings	OK.
Small swings	OK.
See-Saw	OK.
Rainbow multi-play and slide	OK.
Two spring sit-on	OK.
Teen shelter	OK.
General	Good but some painting required after repairs.

- **Bike ramps area:**
 - Junior Jump OK.
 - Double Ramp OK.
 - Fun Box OK.
- **Community Hall:**
 - General Condition (Exterior) Broken vent grille on sportsfield wall.
 - Litterbin OK.
 - Car Park OK.
 - General Good.
- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**
 - Surface OK.
 - Boundary Fencing OK.
 - Tennis nets OK.
 - Litter OK.
 - General Kicker boards paint required. Tree very near light, wood from Cricket Club lying in drain channel.
- **Great Innings Play Area:**
 - Equipment OK.
 - Surfaces OK.
 - Litter OK.
 - Dog fouling OK.
 - Comments Very clean.
- **Allotments Area:**
 - Access OK.
 - Condition of paths between Allotments OK.
 - Condition of Allotments under cultivation Good.
 - Condition of Allotments not under cultivation Overgrown.
 - Litter OK.
 - Comments Some fencing of individual plots.
- **Culverts on Mill Lane**
 - Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts OK, but very overgrown.
 - Dog-fouling OK.
 - Comments Good.
- **Salt bins**
 - Perrywood Lane 3
 - Entrance to Great Innings 3
 - Great Innings South – outside number 93 3
 - Station Road 3
 - Moorymead Close 3
 - Hazeldell 3
- **Dog-waste bins**
 - Footpath 17 3
 - Sportsfield 3
 - Church Walk 3
 - Walkern Road 3
 - Station Road 3
 - High Street (by Memorial) 3
 - Great Innings 3
 - Mill Lane 3
- **General Comments** -
- **Hedge cutting**

The sportsfield hedge is due to be cut in late September/early October.
- **Football bars**

Mr. Meischke to ask the Football Club to move the football bars. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Small swings**

The painting of the small swings will not be carried-out until after the safety-surface has been completed.
- **Broken Vent Grille at Community Hall**

Mr. Meischke to ask David Bunyan to repair.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Tree adjacent to floodlight on MPPA**

Mr. Meischke to investigate

- **Wood from Cricket Club Screen in drain**

Mr. Meischke to ask the Cricket Club to remove the debris from the drain and ask the screens to be re-sited.

Action: J. Meischke

- ii) **Weekly report and action**

Mr. Poulton said there was nothing to report from Ted Browns weekly inspections.

7 Planning

a) Applications

- i) **Moor Bridge, Walkern Road**

Strengthening of Moor Bridge

All Parish Councillors were sent the following e-mail.

‘We have received a planning application from EHDC for strengthening work to the Moor Bridge on Walkern Road. This is the stone bridge over the river Beane. The applicant is HCC. As you are probably aware, the stonework on this bridge is breaking up and in need of attention.

Could you please e-mail me before Wednesday 25th June, if you are happy (or not) for the Parish Council to make no comment on this application.’

No objections were raised by Parish Councillors raised, however, Mr. Dunhill said that it might be worth making a comment on the desirability of preserving as much of the Caleb bricks as practicable. He also produced a supporting extract from Village guide.

The following letter was sent to the Planning Department.

‘The Parish Council would like to comment on the desirability of preserving as much of the ‘Caleb Hitch bricks’ on the bridge as practicable.

Please see below an extract from the Watton-at-Stone Village Guide.

‘The Walkern Road bridge over the River Beane is an interesting industrial monument to the 19th century, being constructed of the large Caleb Hitch bricks, although it is now much repaired.’

- ii) **Flat 5, Watton House**

Second-floor roof and dormer extension

Mr. Dunhill and Mr. Stock had looked at the plans for this application. No residents were visited because the applicant will need the permission of the Watton House management committee before any work is carried-out. It was therefore decided to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors agreed with the decision.

- iii) **36 Hazeldell**

Single-storey front extension, including garage conversion

Mr. Stock said that he had spoken to the residents of the adjacent properties. Because no objections were raised and the application was in keeping with the street scene, Mr. Stock had instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors agreed with the decision.

- iv) **17 Lammas Road**

Single storey front extension

Mr. Filer left the meeting while this item was discussed.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Filer returned to the meeting.

- v) **Yard at side of Ballacraine, Walkern Road**

To use to park 7.5 ton lorry and keep scaffold materials

Mr. Smith left the meeting while this item was discussed.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and after discussion agreed to write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council objects to the above application for the following reasons.

1. As far as Watton at Stone Parish Council is aware the yard attached to the property known, as “Ballacraine” does not have planning permission for use as a commercial yard.

2. The yard is situated in a rural area with adjacent residential properties and any proposed commercial use on this yard would have a detrimental effect on these properties.
3. The Parish Council is very concerned about the noise from this site if planning permission were granted. Scaffolding poles do make a considerable noise whilst they are being loaded and unloaded off lorries, which would have an impact on neighbouring properties.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Smith returned to the meeting.

b) Decisions

i) Windrush, Whempstead

Erection of conservatory - EHDC –permission granted

ii) 1 Motts Close

Extension to 1st floor and minor extension of garage - EHDC –permission granted

8 Correspondence received

a) HCC – Request for removal of guard railing outside 130 High Street

Mr. Poulton read out a letter dated 23rd June from Valerie Weaver (Assistant Manager at Hertfordshire Highways).

‘I write to inform you that I have receive a request from the new owners of the Old Post Office, for the removal of the guard railing as the property is now residential.

I have informed Mr. Bramley that I would contact you to see if your Parish Council considered his request was acceptable.

I presume the original intention of the rails was to stop children leaving the post OFFICE, form running straight out onto the carriageway. It may have also been to stop occasional parking for visiting the shop.

Please advise me of your view on this matter, so that consideration can be given to Mr. Bramley’s request.’

After discussion it was agreed to write to Ms. Weaver saying that the Parish Council have no objections to the railing being removed.

Action: J. Allsop

b) EHDC re planning decision for the Coach House

This item to be placed on circulation.

Action: J. Allsop

c) Mr F. Warren re Common Land at Perrywood Lane

Mr. Filer said that he had written to Mr. Warren on 20th June to inform him that we had received a complaint about him digging outside his property in Perrywood Lane and that the full permission of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council should be obtained before carrying out this sort of work on what is Common Lane.

Mr. Warren responded stating that he had no knowledge of this and he would be checking with his contractor on his return from holiday.

Mr. Filer said that he wrote again the Mr. Warren to say that a visual inspection will indicate that digging has indeed taken place and to inform him that this part of Perrywood Lane has been affected in the past by blocked drains and the Parish Council’s concern is that the work carried-out will make this situation worse. Also, that we note that he will be checking with his contractor on his return from holiday and look forward to hearing from Mr. Warren further.

Mr. Filer said that no further response has been received from Mr. Warren. It was agreed not to pursue the matter further.

d) Conservation Society – donation towards purchase of litterbin for the village

The Conservation Society has sent a donation of £44.63 towards the cost of new rubbish bin for the village.

It was agreed to send a letter of thanks to the Conservation society for their kind donation. **Action: J. Allsop**

e) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister – New ethical framework regulations

This item to be placed on circulation.

Action: J. Allsop

f) EHDC – Hertford and Parishes Community Planning meeting on 24th July 2003

Mr. Poulton said that EHDC have written (letter dated 3rd July) to invite the Parish Council to attend a special meeting of people interested in progressing the Community Plan, which has recently been endorsed by the Executive of EHDC.

No Parish Councillors are able to attend the meeting.

9 Reports from other Organisations

- Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society

Mr. Stock reported that at the last meeting of the Conservation Society, John Love (Chairman of the Allotment and Garden Association) attended to present his plan for maintaining the disused part of the allotments land as a conservation area. This would include rabbit fencing, which they would fund from grant-aid and not the use of the former horticultural funds.

Mr. Stock asked Mr. Knight if the Tennis Clubs had plans to use this piece of land for an additional Tennis Court. Mr. Poulton said that during a site meeting it was agreed that this site was not suitable for Tennis Courts. Mr. Knight confirmed that the Tennis Club would not be using the site.

Mr. Stock to contact Mr. Love accordingly.

Action: D. Stock

• **Tennis Courts**

Mrs. Dinnin asked if anyone had considered if the person who rents the horses field from the Diocesan Board would mind the Tennis Club using part of the land for Tennis Court. Mr. Knight agreed to check with the Diocesan board after he had spoken to Mr. Abel Smith on the subject.

Action: I. Knight

• **Watton-at-Stone Sports and Social Club**

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- The Sports and Social Club will be holding a Fun Day on 20th July to raise money for the Mill Lane sports project.
- The Sports and Social Club are applying for charitable status.

• **Watton-at-Stone Pre-school Playgroup**

Mr. Smith said that he had attended the last meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Pre-school Playgroup. There was nothing really to report except that they are looking for additional funding towards various items, including the cutting to their hedges.

• **Police Mobile unit**

Mr. Poulton said that the police mobile unit had visited Watton-at-Stone, but had been poorly attended, in spite of an article being placed in the July issue of the Parish News.

Mr. Filer said that he visited the mobile unit and was impressed by the services it offered. Mr. Poulton said that the unit is due to visit the village again in August and if attendance is again poor we are in danger of losing this valuable facility.

Mr. Meischke said that the Summer Play Scheme is due to start in the village on Monday 28th July. He said that the additional police presence that PC Ivens had arranged for the village in previous years during the summer holidays had a very positive effect on the behaviour of the youth of the village.

Mr. Meischke proposed that we write to PC Ivens asking him to arrange for regular police visits to the Community Hall and the surrounding areas during the summer holidays. A copy of the letter to be sent to Inspector Pat Rawle.

Action: J. Meischke

10 Items for Parish News

Articles on the following items discussed by the Parish Council to be sent to the editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the next issue (September issue).

- Presentation of Parish Council Trophies to Scout and Guide Group and Year 6 pupil at Watton School
- Renewal of the safety surface under the small swings and see saw
- Home to School Transport Policy

Mr. Filer agreed to write the articles accordingly.

Action: D. Filer

11 Accounts/Correspondence

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

None

Payments

None

Cheques required

Diocesan Board	Allotments rent	300.00
Inland Revenue	Tax and NI	156.27
S. C. Dass	War Memorial Maintenance	780.00
D. R. Monk	Flowerbed maintenance	85.00
D. R. Monk	War Memorial garden maintenance	31.25
J. Allsop	July salary	505.25
Tec Brown	14 hours litter pick + 3 hours safety inspection	93.50
C. Dinnin	Two trophies from Concord Trophies	79.48

Adam Welch	Grass cutting and strimming work – June 2003	129.17
Boardmans Photocopying	Charges to June 2003 (meter read 1 st time in 18 months)	<u>120.41</u>
		<u>2280.33</u>

Cheques received

Cornhill Insurance	Rebate for removal of mower & leaf blower from policy	49.88
Conservation Society	Donation towards purchase of litterbin	<u>44.63</u>
		<u>94.51</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall	80.00
N. Poulton-donation for paper towels	2.50
Floodlighting to 11.06.03	<u>20.00</u>
	<u>102.50</u>

Payments

Window cleaning	56.00
HCC – cleaning materials	80.50
Mr. J. Phillips	<u>20.00</u>
	<u>156.5</u>

Cheques required

H. M. Customs & Excise	VAT return for 05/03	42.16
Three Valleys Water	Supply of water	116.46
McCash and Hay	Audit fee	<u>95.17</u>
		<u>253.79</u>

Cheques received

Mrs. Hamilton	Main Hall and Pavilion	<u>48.00</u>
		<u>48.00</u>

Mr. Meischke proposed that accounts be paid, Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **The meeting closed at 2148.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 10th September 2003.**