

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 8th October 2003

Present:	Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman)	Mr. D. Stock (Vice-Chairman)
	Mr. C. Clark (after 1918)	Mrs. C. Dinnin
	Mr. V. Dunhill	Mr. I. Knight
	Mrs. H. McCash	Mr. J. Meischke
Police:	PC Ivens (until 1923)	

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Filer and Mr. Smith.

2 Public Participation

Mr. Poulton welcomed PC Ivens to the meeting.

PC Ivens confirmed that the crime figures he quoted during the September Parish Council meeting were correct. The figure of 195 was for all incidents (in the Watton-at-Stone area) reported to the police by members of the public.

The audited crime figures for the period 1st January to 7th October total 110. Mostly, these are theft, theft to vehicles and damage to vehicles. However, there had been 10 incidents of burglary as well as possession of drugs and weapons.

Mr. Clark arrived at the meeting.

PC Ivens said that the recent incident at Watton Station was not included in the crime figures because, although the police assisted, it was under the jurisdiction of the British Transport Police.

PC Ivens left the meeting at 1923 pm.

Mrs. McCash left the meeting for a short period to talk to PC Ivens.

3 Declaration of Interests

None.

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

None.

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

• Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th September 2003

The following amendments were made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 10th September 2003.

- Page 7, Item 7 b, Sportsfield Report.
- First paragraph,
‘Mr. Filer carried-out the sportsfield report on the 9th September 2003, accompanied by Mr. Smith, the result of which is as follows.’
Should read,
‘Mr. Filer carried-out the sportsfield report on the 9th September 2003’.
- Page 10, Item 8 a, Planning applications– 17 Lammas Road – Amended, single storey front extension
Second line, end of first sentence,
‘and they had had not objections.’ should read, ‘and they had no objections.’
Final sentence, end of third line,
‘Mr. Knight’ should read, ‘Mrs. Knight’.

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

b) Review of actions

• Obtain dates when Mobile Police Unit will be visiting Watton-at-Stone from PC Ivens

This action point has been completed.

The Mobile Police Unit visits the village on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, between 1400 and 1530 in the lay-by opposite the Bull Public House.

It was agreed to advertise these dates in the Parish News and encourage residents to visit the unit.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Write to the residents at the entrance of Hazeldell re vehicle obstruction**

Mr. Stock read out the following letter, which was sent to a small number of Hazeldell residents.

‘We are writing to let you know that there have been a number of complaints about the parking in and around the entrance to Hazeldell.

Although we are aware that, like elsewhere, Hazeldell has its parking problems, we do ask residents/visitors to avoid parking on the area of road that is marked 'Keep Clear'. This marking was laid (in response to a nearby resident who was concerned about child-safety) in an attempt to help motorists when they negotiate the right-hand bend into (and out of) Hazeldell. As we are all aware, driving round this bend can be very interesting at times and anything that we can do to make it safer would be welcomed.

We thank you for your attention and hope that you can help us with this matter.’

Mr. Stock said that he had had a lengthy telephone conversation this evening with one of the residents who received our letter.

The resident told him about the past and present parking problems in this particular area and felt that he was being picked on because other parts of Hazeldell also had similar parking problems. Mr. Stock told him that the letter had been sent to the residents as a request for help and not as a threat of any kind.

After discussing the problem and the history of why the white-lining and signage were laid at the entrance to Hazeldell, Mr. Stock told the resident that the police could not/would not proceed against anyone parking on the ‘Keep Clear’ sign unless an obstruction was being caused. He also told the resident that that he would ensure that the Parish Council is made aware of his problems and concerns during this meeting. This he did.

Mr. Stock has spoken with PC Ivens on this subject and it was confirmed that the police would only become involved in the event of an obstruction being caused. PC Ivens and the Parish Council remain in favour of keeping the current white-lining and ‘Keep Clear’ sign.

- **Collect and present the two ‘keep-sake’ trophies**

This action point has been completed.

- **Place public participation on agenda**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton said that he wished to clarify our intention for ‘public participation’ to be part of each monthly agenda. He said that Mr. Filer had been unclear on this point and was under the impression that it was for this month (i.e. October) only.

After a general discussion, it was agreed that it is the intention of this Parish Council to have ‘public participation’ on the agenda each month (directly after item 1, Apologies for absence) and that the time allowed etc. would be decided on an ad hoc basis.

- **Inspect High Street seat with a view to repairing it**

Mr. Poulton said that he and Mr. Meischke had inspected and repaired the bench seat in the High Street outside the Grey House/roundabout with Great Innings. Two pieces of hard-wood and new bolts had been purchased to complete the repair work.

Mr. Poulton has instructed Ted Brown to remove a tree that is growing through one of the seats on the Great Innings estate and to remove the weeds that are growing through the pavement on the corner of High Street/Great Innings (outside the Grey House).

- **Write to Hertfordshire Highways asking them to cut back the brambles**

This action point has been completed.

However, Mr. Stock said he had subsequently spoken with Mrs. Heather Chesterman (of 68 Hazeldell) about the cutting back of the brambles on her boundary with Station Road. She informed him that she had not asked the contractors to stop grubbing out the roots of the brambles and would like them removed.

Mr. Stock said that he had therefore written again to Hertfordshire Highways asking them to arrange for the roots of the brambles to be completely removed from the ground so as to avoid a repetition of the problem in the future, and the on-going costs associated with cutting back the brambles.

- **Send annual return and all relevant documentation to Lubbock Fine**

This action point has been completed.

- **Chase Wicksteed Leisure to provide a revised invoice for submission to Cornhill Insurance**

This action point has been completed.

- **Accept Ted Brown’s quotation for work on the sportsfield**

This action point has been completed.

- **Pay Mrs Graham**

This action point has been completed.

- **Accept quotation for the repair of the sportsfield fence**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton said that the work has now been completed.

- **Obtain quotations from Ted Brown and Adam Welch for the removal of a branch on the Lammas**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Trees on Lammas (on page 8 of these minutes).

- **Write to EHDC informing them that the safety-matting at the top of the slide is loose**

This action point has been completed.

- **Chase Sodexho to get sportsfield gate reinstated**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees - Report and acceptance of minutes of meeting held on 10th September 2003 (on page 7 of these minutes).

- **Write to EHDC re planning application for Crowbury, Church Lane – Amended plans**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to EHDC re planning application for the Old Post Office, 130 High Street**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to EHDC re planning application for 59 Great Innings North**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Paul Rossington (EHDC) inviting him to speak at a PC meeting on planning issues**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton said that Paul Rossington has been invited to speak at either the November or December Parish Council meeting.

- **Write to Mouchel informing them that they are trespassing on Parish Council land**

This item to be discussed under 9 a, Correspondence Received - HCC – Moor Bridge Strengthening (on pages 10 and 11 of these minutes).

- **Attend the CDA’s Annual General meeting on 17th September**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton said that he attended the meeting, however there was nothing relevant to report to the Parish Council.

- **Write to EHDC re proposals for seminars on Code of Conduct**

This action point has been completed.

- **Send a copy of Maurice Gordon’s letter to Environment agency and cc to Mr. Gordon**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Maurice Gordon re Moor bridge**

This action point has been completed.

- **Place Hertfordshire Homeless Group information on circulation**

This action point has been completed.

- **Ask Mrs. Dinnin if she can attend Parishes for Rural Environment Protection meeting on 17th October**

This action point has been completed.

Mrs. Dinnin and Mrs. Meischke said that they would try to attend the meeting.

Action: C. Dinnin/J. Meischke

- **Copy Conservation Society with letter from Forest Enterprise re access to Bramfield Wood**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Mr. and Mrs. Maskall thanking them for notifying us about tree surgery work**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Railtrack re trees at bridge in Perrywood Lane**

This action point has been completed.

This item to remain on the agenda under Specific Items until it has been resolved.

Agenda: 11/03

- **Write to John Love re meeting on 23rd September at 2030**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton reported that the meeting had been very constructive and the following issues were discussed.

- **Hedge cutting** – It has been confirmed that Stort Valley Housing is responsible for cutting back the allotment-side of the boundary hedge with Glebe Court.

- **Grass cutting** – The Allotment and Garden Association is to obtain quotations for cutting the discussed part of the allotments.
- **Public liability insurance** – Mr. Filer has been given the Parish Council insurance documents so he can ascertain if the allotment holders are covered under our public liability insurance. **Action: D. Filer**
- **Allotment tenancy agreements** – the Allotment and Garden Association are to draft a tenancy agreement for approval by the Parish Council.
- **Rabbit control** – Mr. Meischke to write to the owners/occupiers of the properties adjoining the allotments (i.e. The Chestnuts, Kimberley and the Diocesan Board), because these are the main sources of the rabbit problem, asking if they would be willing to allow ferreting on their land.
Action: J. Meischke
- **TPOs** – Mr. Poulton said that he had been unable to find the list of TPOs and the associated map that Tony Bradford (former Parish Councillors) had produced.
The Clerk to contact Tony Bradford to ask him if he has a copy of the list of TPOs and map.
Action: J. Allsop

- **Write Parish News articles**
This action point has been completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

None.

6 Planning

a) Applications

i) Lane Croft, Perrywood Lane

Enlargement of approved single storey front extension

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. Filer looked at the plans for this application. He visited the properties nearest to Lane Croft with the original (approved) application and no objections had been raised. Because the enlargement of the approved single storey front extension is not visible to the neighbours, he did not feel it was necessary to contact them again and therefore instructed the Clerk to write to the planning department at EHDC stating that the Parish Council has no comment on the application.

Parish Councillors agreed with the decision.

b) Decisions

i) 14 Hazeldell

Ground floor single storey front extension - EHDC –permission granted

ii) 16 Hazeldell

New lean-to-roof to replace existing flat roof to ground floor - EHDC –permission granted

iii) 122 High Street

Front drive entrance alterations - EHDC –permission granted

iv) 17 Lammas Road

Single storey front extension - EHDC –permission granted

v) Land at Blue Hill Farm, High Elms Lane

Erection of a replacement dwelling following demolition of existing farmhouse - EHDC –permission granted

vi) Perrywood Lane

Proposed development for two new houses with detached garages
- Planning Inspectorate -permission refused

Mr. Poulton said that he attended the public hearing for this application. Also in attendance were the builders, the landowners and their solicitors (Jamison and Hill).

Parish Councillors showed their disappointment at the decision, because they felt it would tidy up this problem site.

Mr. Clark said that this would be a good topic for discussion with Paul Rossington (EHDC) when he comes to speak at a Parish Council meeting on planning issues.

Mr. Poulton then explained to Parish Councillors why this application was dealt with through the planning inspectorate and not directly by EHDC.

Many years ago the owners of this site had been advised by the planning department to limit their application to five houses. However, they did not take the advice and applied for permission to build 20 dwellings. EHDC refused permission and an appeal was lodged with the Secretary of State (planning

inspectorate), who dismissed the appeal with the recommendation that no dwellings should be built on this site.

Mr. Poulton said that if an application for this site is received by EHDC and approved, then this has to be decided by the Secretary of State and not the local planning department.

Mr. Poulton said that it would not be beneficial to discuss the refusal of the above application with Paul Rossington because it was not EHDC who had refused permission, but the Planning Inspectorate.

7 Specific Items

a) Ornate village sign

Mrs. McCash and Mrs. Dinnin said that they had not heard from Mr. Mould regarding progress on the ornate village sign.

He was due to start work on the sign during the week starting 8th September and therefore the completion date is expected to be around the 22nd of October.

If we have not heard from him by the beginning of November, Mrs. McCash to contact Mr. Mould.

Action: H. McCash

This item to remain on the agenda.

Agenda: 11.03

Mr. Poulton said that we need to investigate how to install the sign. He reminded Parish Councillors that the grassed area on which the sign is to be sited was formerly part of the road and there is only a couple of inches of top soil on top of a solid base. Mrs. McCash said that she thinks that Mr. Smith has a pneumatic drill that could break through the surface.

Mrs. McCash to contact Mr. Smith accordingly.

Action: H. McCash

b) Footpath adjacent to Bull public house

Mr. Poulton said that there was nothing further to report on this item.

It was agreed to contact Val Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways) to ask for a progress report. **Action: J. Allsop**

c) Update on 'Home to School Transport'

Mr. Poulton said that he had a very successful meeting with Councillor Brian Hammond and Sarah Davies. The responses received from Parish Councils in East Hertfordshire asking for their comments on the above policy were discussed. It was apparent from the letters that there appears to be little concern about the 'Home to School Transport Policy' within other parishes. However, Councillor Hammond did comment that both Flamstead and Redbourn (although not in our area) had similar problems regarding the policy.

Mrs. Davies produced a list of signatories to a petition, which she and others had raised during the summer period. It was agreed that this petition be handed to HCC at its full Council meeting on 25th November. Mrs. Davies will be unable to present the petition personally because of work commitments and therefore Mrs. Lyn Oakman (11 Beane Road) will present it instead. Letters have been sent to all parents affected by the policy, asking them to come to the meeting to give support.

d) Barrier by Old School Orchard

Mr. Poulton said that Mrs. Budd (of Hockerill) informed him that she cannot get her electric-wheelchair through the barrier by Old School Orchard and that it is difficult to see during the hours of darkness because there is no street light nearby. Mr. Stock confirmed that the barrier was very difficult to see and suggested that it should be painted white.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council write to the Hertfordshire Highways asking them to adjust the barrier so as to allow wheelchair access and that it be painted white so that it is visible in the dark.

A copy of the letter to be sent to Paula Cheesman (Rights of Way).

Action: J. Allsop

e) Revised sign for WAGN parking area

Because Norma Unwin appears to have misunderstood our request, It was agreed that we write again asking for the wording of the sign that points to the WAGN parking area at Watton-at-Stone Railway Station to be revised to read 'Station Car Park'.

Action: J. Allsop

f) Village Directory

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the January 2003 version of the Village Directory asking them to update it where necessary.

Mr. Poulton asked that any Parish Councillor who had not already done so to inform the Clerk of any amendments to the Village Directory as soon as possible.

Action: Parish Councillors

Mr. Poulton said that the Scout and Guide Group will be making several appointments within the next week and we will wait to hear from them before we photocopy the updated version of the Village Directory.

The Clerk to copy the Village Directory for distribution around the village.

Action: J. Allsop

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

In the absence of Mr. Filer, Mr. Poulton reported on the following items concerning the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee.

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

All Parish Councillors present at the meeting were given copies of the 6-monthly statements of accounts for the period ending the 30th September 2003.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on 12th November 2003 so that Mr. Filer can go through the accounts with Parish Councillors. **Agenda: 11/03**

- **Date of next meeting**

Mr. Filer to set a date for the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee to discuss the 2004/2005 budget figures. **Action: D. Filer**

- **Parish Council printer**

The Parish Council printer is taking in multiple-pages at a time and overheating and is unlikely to last much longer. The Clerk has requested that when a new printer is purchased, it should include a flatbed scanner. More and more information is being given to Parish Councillors via e-mail and a flatbed scanner will allow a wider variety of documentation to be sent to them.

Mr. Dunhill said that he had looked into purchasing an all-in-one printer/copier/scanner. An inkjet type would cost under £200. However, the ink cartridges, which cost around £22 each, only print approximately 450 sheets per cartridge. The printer is used a regular basis to copy the Parish Council minutes (e.g. over 120 sheets). Mr. Clark said that it would be a false economy to purchase an inkjet type and, because the Parish Council does not require the use of colour ink, we should consider purchasing a laserjet printer/copier/scanner.

After discussion, it was agreed that, provided the price of a laserjet printer/copier/scanner is less than £300, we should purchase it immediately. If the price exceeds £300, all Parish Councillors to be contacted to obtain their approval to proceed. **Action: C. Clark/V. Dunhill**

Community Hall Trustees

- **Report and acceptance of minutes of Trustees meeting held on 16th September 2003**

Mr. Stock proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed as a true record. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and Mr. Poulton was in favour.

- **Cricket Club building and sportsfield room**

- The Cricket Club building has been completed.
- The referee changing-rooms have been cleared of equipment and rubbish.
- The Cricket Club has not yet moved the roller to the Cricket Club building.

Mr. Meischke to chase and ensure that the roller is secured with a lock and chain.

Action: J. Meischke

- The Clerk has not yet written to the Sports and Social Club to ask for a copy of the insurance certificate for the Cricket Club building.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Gatepost on Sportsfield**

Mr. Poulton said that the sportsfield gatepost needs replacing. He has asked Mr. Smith to install a new metal gatepost (for £90).

- **Trustee Insurance**

The Trustees have agreed that they would not do anything about Trustee Indemnity Insurance for the time being. However, they would continue to monitor and review the situation on an annual basis.

- **Roller blinds in Pavilion**

Sunstopper blinds has given us a quotation of £156 (plus VAT) to recover the roll-down blinds on the emergency glass-doors in the pavilion. Mr. Meischke to investigate the cost of recovering the blinds ourselves.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Telegraph poles around car park**

Mr. Poulton said that all but two of the telegraph poles around the car park are rotten and need replacing. The cost of 8' 6" railway-sleepers is £18 plus VAT, including delivery. He said we would need five railway-sleepers to replace the rotten telegraph poles.

Mr. Clark said that Lewis Tyler can supply 14' railway-sleepers for a similar price.

It was agreed to investigate the purchase of three 14' railway sleepers.

Action: N. Poulton

- **Repair to roof**

All Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of a quotation from A.D.L Roofing and Slating Contractors (dated 26th September) for the following work.

‘Specification

Carry-out general inspection and overhaul of all main roof pitched slopes replacing damaged tiles with new to match.

Remove damaged tiles to verge, reinstate mortar bedding and pointing, with new tiles and fittings to verge as requested.

Clear out rainwater gutters of debris.

Supply all materials and plant required to carry-out works.

Clear all rubbish from site on completion £320 plus VAT’

Mr. Meischke proposed that A.D.L.’s quotation be accepted. Mr. Stock seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Floor cleaning**

Mr. Poulton said that Care Group Limited (of Hertford) had submitted a quotation (dated 2nd October) to professionally clean the floors of the Community Hall.

The prices quoted show a small increase in those for similar work in March 2001.

To scrub off:	Canteen (Pavilion)	£43	plus VAT
	Kitchen	£16	plus VAT
	Common parts and toilets	£19	plus VAT
	Sports Hall	£157	plus VAT
	Parish Council meeting room	£40	plus VAT
To jet wash:	Two changing rooms and two		
	Shower rooms	£72	plus VAT
To seal:	Canteen, kitchen, common parts		
	and toilets	£55	plus VAT

Mr. Poulton then read out the following comments from Care Group Limited.

‘The flooring in question is safety flooring. Whilst the application of polish will make the floor easier to maintain it should be noted that each coat of sealant applied will slightly reduce the non-slip nature of the floor.’

After discussion, it was agreed that the sealant work should not be done for safety reasons. Also, that the Main Hall and Parish Council meeting room floors do not require cleaning on this occasion.

Care Group Limited to be asked to do the work as soon as possible.

Action: J. Allsop

- **MPPA**

Mr. Meischke has repaired and re-instated the MPPA sign giving Sports and Social Club priority usage times.

Recreation & Amenities

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

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

Ted Brown has now levelled the edge of the play area where it abuts the newly installed safety-surface.

- **Six-month check**

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Stock to arrange a date to do the six-month check.

Action: N. Poulton/D. Stock

- **Painting of small swings**

Ted Brown did paint the swings, but shortly afterwards they were vandalised, so he has painted them again.

- **Tennis Courts**

Mr. Meischke said that two of the floodlights are out and he would arrange for them to be repaired/replaced.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Summer Play Scheme**

EHDC has paid for all the damage done to the Community Hall whilst they were using the facilities during the Summer Play Scheme.

Because of the problems that occurred this year, it was agreed that the Summer Play Scheme be placed on the agenda for discussion during the Parish Council meeting in July 2004.

Agenda: 07/04

- **MPPA – condition of surface**

It was agreed at the Parish Council meeting held on 12th February 2003 that this item be placed on the agenda for October 2003, so as to review the condition of the MPPA surface re the need for a moss-kill or pressure-wash treatment.

Mr. Knight said that during wet weather there had been a problem at the entrance of the MPPA, which gets very slippery because of poor drainage and muddy footwear being worn in the area.

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that no action was required at present and that the situation be reviewed again at the Parish Council meeting in January 2004. **Agenda: 01/04**

Environment

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

- **Trees on Lammas**

Quotations to clear the fallen Willow branch from the Lammas were received from Adam Welch and Ted Brown. Ted Brown's quote of £80 was accepted. Mrs. Dinnin said that the branch had been cut down, however, the debris has not been removed. The Clerk said that Ted Brown would be clearing the site within the next week.

Mr. Poulton said that he had spoken with Ian Davies (Environment Agency) who informed him that they would be starting work on the Lammas trees along the riverbank in the next two weeks.

Mr. Dunhill said that there is a branch down on one of the large Poplar trees near the riverbank. Mr. Poulton said that Mr. Davies would be arranging for the branch to be cleared.

- **Trees in Hazeldell**

Mrs. McCash said that quite a few of the residents in Hazeldell are having their kerbs dropped during the footpath resurfacing works to be done by Hertfordshire Highways.

She said that some residents in Hazeldell had caused damage to a tree outside their property. One resident who wants to have the width of their driveway increased was told that they cannot do so because of the tree outside number 101/103 and have therefore tried to remove the tree themselves.

After discussion, it was agreed to write to Hertfordshire Highways and EHDC informing them of the situation and asking them to investigate this situation as a matter of urgency. **Action: J. Allsop**

Although in the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th September 2003, it states that Hertfordshire Highways 'are unable to replant any trees removed due to this years financial constraints', it remains the policy of the Parish Council that all trees that are removed must be replaced.

- **Lammas – Report on Mr. Poulton's meeting with Mr. Abel Smith**

Mr. Poulton said that he had had a very amicable meeting with Mr. Abel Smith. One of the issues discussed was the on-going management of the Lammas bank. This includes clearance of the debris on the bank, looking at the condition of the Oak trees and the on-going control of rabbits.

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. Abel Smith had agreed to assist the Parish Council in any way he can. It is likely that the Parish Council and the Abel Smith Estate will be able to apply for grants towards the cost of improvements.

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Stock to arrange to meet with Mr. Abel Smith to discuss the matter further.

Action: C. Dinnin/D. Stock

- **Review grass cutting - Lammas and Watton Green**

It was agreed that due to the extremely dry weather the grass did not need cutting on the Lammas and Watton Green.

- **Bonfires on the allotments**

Mrs. Dinnin said that there has been a problem with bonfires on the allotments. Mr. Poulton said that one particular resident in Glebe Court is very distressed by the bonfires.

Mrs. Dinnin wrote the following letter to John Love (Chairman of the Allotment and Garden Association) on 1st October.

'You will recall that at the meeting between yourselves and the Parish Council concerns were raised by the Parish Council regarding bonfires and the nuisance this causes to local residents.

You agreed to write in your next news letter asking allotment holders to take care and consideration when lighting fires on the allotment. You also agreed to distribute the EHDC leaflet on bonfires to all allotment holders.

I have to report that on Saturday afternoon and again on Monday afternoon the Parish Council received complaints from the residents of Glebe Court that smoke from bonfires on the allotment was causing considerable distress to those residents.

The Parish Council realises that fires need to be lit in order to burn the rubbish but care needs to be taken that the wind does not blow the smoke towards Glebe Court.

The Parish Council would appreciate that all allotment holders take extra care when lighting fires so as not to annoy local residents.

Thanking you for your cooperation on this issue.'

John Love has informed her that he has issued some (but not all) of the EHDC leaflets about bonfires.

• **Parish Council land situated between 48 and 50 Rivershill**

The minute of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th May 2003 states that:

'In October 2002, Tim Clark (of Windrush, Whempstead) was contracted to clear an access path from the entrance gate to one point on each boundary fence on the Parish-Council-owned land at Rivershill. This will be repeated during October this year.

It was agreed that this item be placed on the agenda for discussion at the Parish Council meeting to be held on 8th October 2003.'

Mr. Dunhill said that there is a bush/tree growing just inside the access to the land and it could prevent entry if allowed to grow.

Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Meischke to make a site visit.

Action: C. Dinnin/J. Meischke

b) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mr. Knight carried-out the sportsfield report on the 3rd October 2003 the result of which is as follows.

• **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	Dry – needs rain.
Litter	OK.
Dog fouling	OK.
Netball posts	OK.
General	Clean up around the new cricket shed needed. Scrub at base of Oak tree at rear of MPPA.

• **Children's Play Area:**

Condition of surface	Good.
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	-

• **Bike ramps area:**

Junior Jump	OK.
Double Ramp	OK.
Fun Box	OK.

• **Community Hall:**

General Condition (Exterior)	Good.
Litterbin	OK.
Car Park	OK.
General	OK.

• **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**

Surface	OK.
Boundary Fencing	OK.
Tennis nets	OK.
Litter	OK.
General	OK.

• **Great Innings Play Area:**

Equipment	Good.
Surfaces	OK.
Litter	OK.
Dog fouling	OK.
Comments	OK.

• **Allotments Area:**

Access	OK.
Condition of paths between Allotments	OK.
Condition of Allotments under cultivation	OK.
Condition of Allotments not under cultivation	OK.
Litter	OK.
Comments	OK.

• **Culverts on Mill Lane**

Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts	Overgrown – a lot of rubbish in BMX bike area
Dog-fouling	OK.
Comments	OK.

• **Salt bins**

Perrywood Lane	OK.
Entrance to Great Innings	OK.
Great Innings South – outside number 93	OK.
Station Road	OK.
Moorymead Close	OK.
Hazeldell	OK.

• **Dog-waste bins**

Footpath 17	OK.
Sportsfield	OK.
Church Walk	OK.
Walkern Road	OK.
Station Road	OK.
High Street (by Memorial)	OK.
Great Innings	OK.
Mill Lane	OK.

• **General Comments**

All in order.

• **Oak tree at the rear of MPPA**

Mr. Knight said that there is a lot of scrub growing at the base of the Oak tree at the rear of the MPPA. He said that the tree would look much better if the scrub was cleared.

There was no conclusion.

• **Bike-ramp area on the Lammas**

Mr. Knight said that during his inspection on Friday 3rd October, he had found a lot of rubbish around the bike-ramp area on the Lammas. Mrs. McCash said that during the weekend of 4th and 5th October she had asked the bike-ramp users to clean up the site.

Mrs. Dinnin agreed to inspect the site to see if it had been cleared.

Action: C. Dinnin

Mrs. McCash agreed to talk to the users asking them to use the bin.

Action: H. McCash

ii) **Weekly report and action**

Mr. Poulton said there was nothing to report from Ted Brown's weekly inspections.

Mr. Poulton said that each week more and more litter is being deposited in the area in and around the sportsfield. Ted Brown starts work at 0600 each morning and yesterday had to clear up four loaves of bread.

It was agreed to write to Ted Brown to find out if we need to increase his scheduled hours.

Action: N. Poulton

Also, Mr. Poulton to visit Ted Brown to assess his hours of work.

Action: N. Poulton

9 Correspondence received

a) Hertfordshire Highways - Moor Bridge Strengthening

Mr. Poulton said that we had received three letters from Stuart Froud (Assistant Engineer, Hertfordshire Highways) concerning work on the Walkern Road bridge over the River Beane.

- An apology for installing a pedestrian footpath on Parish Council land in Walkern Road without our permission.
- An agreement to cut back all the weeds and brambles on the Parish Council owned land from the grassed area down to the riverbank (the width of the land being from the bridge to Beane Cottage), for no charge.
- To inform the Parish Council of a delay in the completion of the strengthening work to bridge. Mr. Poulton said that the work is now due to be completed in one weeks time.

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. and Mrs. Taylor of Beane Cottage have agreed to monitor the situation re youngsters hiding under the bridge and possible drugs taking.

b) John Booker re Ted Brown

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter from John Booker (80 High Street).

‘I write to congratulate you and all members of the Parish Council who had the foresight to appoint Mr. Ted Brown as the litter guardian for the area of the Sports field and beyond. Every morning, seven days a week, Mr. Brown can be found cheerfully and diligently carrying out the task of clearing the litter, cans, broken bottles etc. left behind by the thoughtless users of this beautiful part of the village. The manner and thoroughness with which he carries out his duties are an example to all of us. I am certain I am not alone in recognising his achievements and would respectfully ask you to make him aware of our appreciation of his considerable efforts.’

It was agreed to send a copy of Mr. Booker’s letter to Ted Brown and also express our appreciation of the work he does for the Parish Council.

Action: J. Allsop

c) Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils

Mr. Poulton asked if any member of the Parish Council would like to attend an open meeting of the Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils (formerly known as Hertfordshire Association of Local Councils) on 14th October to discuss the following new initiatives.

- County Training Partnership
- Parish Council web sites and e Government
- Quality Parish Councils
- Creation of new parishes in Herts.

No Parish Councillors present were able to attend.

10 Reports from other Organisations

• Watton-at-Stone School Governors

HCC is making a number of changes affecting school governing bodies which may have implications for our Parish Council. Currently, most governing bodies are required to include among their membership a representative from their local council (or minor authority). Recently published regulations require all governing bodies to be reconstituted between 1st September 2003 and 31st October 2006. Under the new constitutional arrangements, there is no reserved place for a minor authority nominee.

Mr. Clark said that this item was on the agenda for discussion by the Watton-at-Stone School Governors at their meeting in September. They agreed that a working-party should investigate the new arrangements, which include the opportunity to decide how many Governors they want to run with in the future.

He said that he would be very surprised if a Parish Council representative wasn't included in the new arrangements.

• Mobile Police Camera

Mr. Clark said that PC Ivens informed him that the police mobile speed-warning equipment, that he agreed could be used in Watton and Whempstead, has to have someone in attendance at all times. Mr. Clark said that he would be happy to stay with the equipment while it was being used in Whempstead.

It was agreed to write to PC Ivens to ask him when we will be able to use the mobile speed-warning equipment.

Action: J. Allsop

• Watton-at-Stone Sports and Social Club

Mr. Meischke reported that:

- the Sports and Social Club is moving towards obtaining charitable status
- Paul Sharky is the new contact for Sunday Football.

11 Items for Parish News

An article on the following item discussed by the Parish Council to be sent to the editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the October issue.

- Dates and times when Mobile Police Unit will be visiting Watton-at-Stone

The Clerk to write the article accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

12 Accounts/Correspondence

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

D. Wolf – Allotment rent

5.00

5.00

Payments

Laminating A4 sheet

2.00

2.00

Cheques required

St. Albans Diocesan Board	MPPA ground rent	90.00
I. Knight	For Map of the Parish	16.59
Adam Welch	Grass cutting and strimming work on 2.09.03	139.17
J. A. Morrissey	Internal Audit fee	100.00
C. Dinnin	2 'keep sake' trophies	26.18
Ted Brown	20 hours litterpicking	110.00
Ted Brown	Repair of sportsfield fence	119.66
N. Poulton	Materials to repair bench seat in High Street	21.48
N. Poulton	Materials to repair bench seat in High Street	14.66
J. Allsop	October salary	505.25
D. R. Monk	War memorial and flower bed maintenance	81.25
J. Allsop	Phone charges to 03.09.03 and 03.10.03	<u>51.00</u>
		<u>1275.24</u>

Cheques received

EHDC	Precept – 2 nd instalment	11083.00
John Love	Allotment rent 2003/2004	30.00
I. Beadle	Allotment rent 2003/2004	5.00
M. Inman	Allotment rent 2003/2004	30.00
B. Beadle	Allotment rent 2003/2004	10.00
Riddle	Allotment rent 2003/2004	10.00
J. Knight	Allotment rent 2003/2004	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. Philips	Allotment rent 2003/2004	30.00
Phil Moor	Allotment rent 2003/2004	10.00
J. Bunyan	Allotment rent 2003/2004	5.00
J. Barnett	Allotment rent 2003/2004	15.00
D. Wolf	Allotment rent 2003/2004	5.00
M. Moore	Allotment rent 2003/2004	20.00
D. Whitaker	Allotment rent 2003/2004	10.00
P. Haskins	Allotment rent 2003/2004	<u>10.00</u>
		<u>11293.00</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall	110.00
Floodlighting	<u>100.00</u>
	<u>210.00</u>

Payments

Powergen	43.96
Sunstopper blinds	49.35
Gary Smith – window cleaning	56.00
J. Philips – 9 weeks	<u>45.00</u>
	<u>194.31</u>

Cheques required

C. Bewley	45 hours cleaning	247.50
R. Adams	External decoration of Community Hall	710.00
Wicksteed Leisure	Excess on insurance claim for resurfacing work	75.00
Three Valleys Water		101.32
Kidde Fire Protection	Annual inspection of fire equipment	98.62
K. S. Burgess	Annual inspection of electrical equipment	<u>150.00</u>
		<u>1382.44</u>

Cheques received

Sycamore Way residents Association	Pavilion hire	14.00
EHDC	Donation towards damage caused by Playscheme	162.51
C. Dinnin	Pavilion hire	49.00
Badminton Club	Main Hall hire	<u>135.00</u>
		<u>360.51</u>

Mrs. McCash proposed that accounts be paid, Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **The meeting closed at 2115.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 12th November 2003.**