

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 14th July 2004

Present:	Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman)	Mr. J. Meischke (Vice-Chairman) (after 1953)
	Mrs. C. Dinnin	Mr. V. Dunhill
	Mr. D. Filer	Mr. I. Knight
	Mrs. H. McCash	Mr. Smith

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Clark and Mr. D. Stock.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

None.

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton said that the following item had been received after the agenda was published.

- EHDC – Proposed improvements to footpath lighting. This item to be discussed under 9 f, correspondence received (on page 11 of these minutes).

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th June 2004**

The following amendments were made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th June 2004.

Page 1, Title - Wednesday 9th June April 2004 should read Wednesday 9th June 2004

Page 2, Item 5 b, Review of Actions - Complete claim form for damage to MPPA (on page 2 of these minutes).

‘Mr. Meischke said that this action point but will be completed within the next week.’

Should read,

‘Mr. Meischke said that this action point will be completed within the next week.’

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

b) Review of actions

- **Chase Val Weaver, Hertfordshire Highways, re Whempstead traffic survey**

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter from Val Weaver to Mr. Clark (dated 13th July).

‘Re: Whempstead Traffic Survey

Further to your letter dated the 27th May 2004 I have now been able to collate the traffic survey results and would wish to explain the data at a local meeting with you to facilitate its interpretation.

Notwithstanding this, you may like to know that our Safety Engineering Team is promoting accident remedial measures for Mill Lane as part of this year’s integrated works programme. This is a result of investigations into the personal injury accidents that have occurred in the last three years along Mill Lane.

I hope that you will find a joint meeting to be useful and I have copied this reply to your local councillors to keep them informed of developments.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.’

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. Clark is delivering a letter to all Whempstead residents informing them of the temporary closure of Mill Lane/Whempstead Lane sometime during the period 19th July 2004 – 31st August 2004 (when signs are in place). This is to enable carriageway patching and safety engineering work to be done.

After discussion, it was agreed to contact Val Weaver and invite her to meet with us prior to the Parish Council meeting on 8th September at 1830.

The Clerk to contact Mr. Clark to find out if the suggested date and time is suitable to him, and if it is, to contact Val Weaver accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Note:** The meeting with Val Weaver will take place on 8th September at 1030 in the Community Hall.

- **Purchase and fit a replacement end-cap for drainpipe at Community Hall**
This action point has been completed. Mr. Poulton said that he had been unable to purchase a single black end-cap, so had bought a brown one, which has now been fitted.
- **Write to Planning department re 22 Hockerill**
This action point has been completed.
- **Collect Ornate village sign from Mr. Mould**
This action point has been completed.
Refer to item 7 a, Ornate village sign – collection, erection and varnishing of the post (on page 4 of these minutes).
- **Ask Mr. Stanley to contact Mr. Poulton re the installation of the post for the ornate village sign**
This action point has been completed.
- **Arrange to cover some of Rose and Ted Brown’s duties whilst they are away on holiday**
Mr. Poulton said that he did all of Rose and Ted Brown’s duties whilst they were away on holiday.
- **Write to Mr. and Mrs. Smith re skate boarding facilities for the village**
This action point has been completed.
- **Contact the school for an update on community project and report back to the Parish Council**
This item to be discussed under 7 c, Specific Items - Watton-at-Stone Primary School - Community project (on pages 4 and 5 of these minutes).
- **Arrange for an overdraft facility on the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Co-operative Bank Accounts (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Write to EHDC re precept payments**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee - Co-operative Bank Accounts (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Post annual return and all relevant documentation to Lubbock Fine by 12th July 2004**
This action point has been completed.
- **Give a signed copy of the Community Hall accounts to McCash and Hay**
This action point has been completed.
- **Pay Ted Brown extra £50 for the work he did at Watton Green**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Cricket Club re insurance cover note for Cricket Shed**
This action point has been completed.
- **Paint the framework of the external Gents toilets**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Community Hall - Report on meeting held on 6th July (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Chase Doe sports re colouring the surface of the repairs done on the MPPA**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - MPPA – general (on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Chase Mel Bond re repair to car park brick wall**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Community Hall - Report on meeting held on 6th July (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Arrange for the repair of the moveable football goal post**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Moveable goal post (on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Agree a location for the moveable goal post**
After the Parish Council meeting held on 9th June, Parish Councillors went onto the sportsfield and agreed that the moveable goal posts should be sited near the bike ramps.
- **Write to Cricket Club re roller**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Community Hall - Report on meeting held on 6th July (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Move roller to the Cricket shed**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Community Hall - Report on meeting held on 6th July (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Speak to Mr. Stanley re the strimming of the ditch at Watton Green**
This action point has been completed.
Mr. Stanley informed the Clerk that he had strimmed the ditch on one side only and the work had not been done by another contractor.

- **Obtain quotations from M. Stanley and Herts Tree Work for work to trees on the Lammas Bank**
This item to be discussed under 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Tree work on the Lammas, Quotations for tree work on Lammas bank (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Arrange a date to meet with the Countryside Management Service**
This action point has been completed.
Refer to item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Meeting with the Countryside Management Service on Friday 2nd July (on pages 8 and 9 of these minutes).
- **Write to the Cricket Club to ask them to refit the loose wire-netting near the swings**
Mr. Knight said that he had not written to the Cricket Club, but they had refitted the loose wire-netting near the swings.
- **Contact Wicksteed Leisure re repairs needed to play equipment on the sportsfield**
This action point has been completed and an order has been placed for the work to be done, which is estimated to be in approximately four weeks time.
This item to remain on the agenda until the work has been done. **Agenda: 09/04**
- **Write to EHDC re new see-saw at the Great Innings play area**
This action point has been completed.
- **Ask Mrs. McCash to speak to youngsters re earth bike-ramps near footpath on Lammas**
This action point has been completed.
- **Speak to youngsters re earth bike-ramps near footpath on Lammas**
Mrs. McCash said that she had spoken to some of the youngsters about the earth bike-ramps. However, they were not the same group that was originally authorised to use the area and she found them to be rude and hostile.
A large board has appeared in Mill Lane during the last few days and is obviously being used as a ramp. It was agreed that the board, and the large bike ramp adjacent to the Lammas footpath be moved as soon as possible. **Action: N. Poulton/ M. Smith**
- **Apply for additional £500 grant from PPP for work to footpath 027**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Rodney Ranzetta re free use of Community Hall for Community Service on 4th July**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Aston PC re web site**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Mr. Clark re Frogmore Hall**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to the National Trust informing them that Frogmore Hall is currently for sale**
This action point has been completed.
Refer to item 9 b, Correspondence received - The National Trust re Frogmore Hall (on pages 10 and 11 of these minutes).
- **Write to Mr. Rattue re minutes referring to dangerous cycling in the village**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Hertfordshire Highways to ask if speed-warning equipment can be installed in Station Road**
This action point has been completed.
This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on 8th September 2004. **Agenda: 9/04**
- **Place Mill Lane project plans on circulation**
This action point has been completed.
- **Put notice in Parish Magazine**
This action point has been completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

- **Ask lighting contractor to alter the angle of the floodlights on the MPPA**
Refer to item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees - MPPA Floodlighting (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Contact Mr. Abel Smith re School Lane/Old School Orchard**
Mr. Smith said that this action point is outstanding. **Action: M. Smith**
- **Contact Brian Hall re book-binding**
The Clerk said that she had left a message on Brian Hall's answer-phone.
- **Complete claim form for damage to MPPA**
This action point has been completed.

6 Planning

a) Applications

i) 44 The High Street

Replacement front door and window. New back door and alterations to kitchen and bathroom windows at rear. Replacement rear dormer window. Replacement of first floor weatherboarding

Mr. Poulton visited the neighbouring residents at 42 High Street and they had no objections to the application. He could not visit 46 High Street because the property is currently empty. He therefore instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with the decision.

ii) 7 Rectory Lane

Two storey side extension

Mr. Poulton visited the neighbouring residents and they had no objections to the application. He therefore instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with the decision.

iii) The Stables, Woodhall Park

To enclose the floor area of the Loggia with a timber and glass screen fitted between the columns in the style of the composite order

Mr. Poulton said that, because there are no neighbouring residents, he made a site visit and could see no reason for objecting to the application. He therefore instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with the decision.

iv) 25 Walkern Road

Two storey front and side extension

Mr. Knight said that he had been unable to visit the neighbouring properties.

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

b) Decisions

i) Heath Mount School, Wood Hall Park

Construction of new astro-turf area and removal of existing tennis court and reinstatement

EHDC – Permission granted

7 Specific Items

a) Ornate village sign – collection, erection and varnishing of the post

Mr. Poulton said that he and Mrs. Dinnin had collected the ornate village sign from Mr. Mould on 24th June. He and Mrs. Dinnin agreed that the finished sign looked very good.

Mr. Poulton e-mailed all Parish Councillors inviting them to inspect the sign on Saturday 26th June.

Mr. Dunhill attended on the Saturday and Mr. Meischke inspected the sign on Monday 28th July.

Mr. Poulton showed Michael Stanley where the sign is to be erected (opposite the War Memorial).

Mr. Stanley has informed us that he has not yet bolted the ornate sign to the post because of the recent high winds.

b) Skateboarding facilities for the village and response to second advertisement in Parish News

Mr. Poulton was sad to report that, despite the perceived need for skateboarding facilities in the village, we have had no response to our second notice in the Parish news. To date, Mr. and Mrs. Smith (17 High Street) are the only volunteers to put their names forward.

After discussion, it was agreed that because of the lack of public support, we have no option but to put this item on hold.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith to be notified accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

c) Watton-at-Stone Primary School - Community project

Mr. Poulton said that Dominic Long, the Deputy-Headteacher at Watton-at-Stone Primary School, is still keen to do a community project. He will start the project with his new class in September and intends to hold a competition for the best plan and then take the project forward from there.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on 13th October 2005.

Agenda: 10.05

d) Resurfacing of the Hazeldell footpaths

Mrs. McCash said that she had inspected the recently-resurfaced footpaths in Hazeldell. Weeds are growing through the new surface and it is also breaking up where it meets different surfaces (i.e. driveways). In addition to this, the contractors have also poured tarmac over the service inspection-covers (i.e. water, cable etc.) and they cannot be opened.

Mr. Poulton said that he has contacted Val Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways) regarding the resurfacing problems and given her every opportunity to come up with an excuse for the poor workmanship.

Mrs. McCash to send a letter to Val Weaver highlighting the footpath resurfacing problems and asking her to take necessary action to resolve the situation. **Action: H. McCash**

e) EHDC – 2004 Summer play scheme

Mr. Knight and Mr. Meischke will meet with Jo Rodwell (Play Officer at EHDC) prior to the start of the 2004 Summer play scheme. **Action: J. Meischke/I. Knight**

f) Traffic-calming

It was agreed, providing there is sufficient time, to discuss traffic-calming for Station Road and the High Street during the meeting with Val Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways) on 8th September 2004.

Action: Parish Councillors

As previously reported, Mr. Poulton wrote (as a District Councillor) to Val Weaver asking her to investigate the traffic speeding in the High Street. The Parish Council also wrote to her concerning Station Road and suggested that speed-warning equipment (of a similar style to that in Stapleford) be installed.

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

- **Co-operative Bank Accounts**

Mr. Filer went through the history of the recent unauthorised overdrafts on both the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts. The Co-operative bank have refunded £140 of the £170 they originally charged for our unauthorised overdrafts, leaving us to pay £30 plus interest charges of £14.63.

Mr. Filer wrote to Dave Tweedie (Assistant Director [Financial Services], EHDC) about the precept payment they sent to our bank, which took 12 days to arrive and thus resulted in our account being overdrawn. He asked if EHDC could reimburse us the £44.63 of bank charges we incurred. EHDC has verbally agreed to do so. EHDC had agreed that future precept payments would be made CHAPS transfer.

Mr. Filer said that that we have two options open to us regarding the monitoring of the bank account balances.

- Do nothing
- Obtain access via telephone or Internet banking.

After discussion, it was agreed that Internet banking should not be used because it would allow the user full access to transfer money and make payments without having to obtain the Parish Council's approval.

It was agreed to register for telephone banking, which will allow the Clerk access to bank balances and order statements, etc.

The Parish Council resolved that:

1. We agree to use the Co-operative Bank P.L.C ('the Bank') Customer Services ('the service') subject to the Bank's standard terms and conditions of use of the service, a copy of which was produced at the meeting.
2. In all other respects our mandate with the bank will continue unaffected.

The Clerk to instruct the Co-operative Bank accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

It was agreed to instruct the Co-operative bank to provide us with weekly bank statements for our current accounts. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **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 2004.

Mr. Filer went through the expenditure and income.

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Meischke reported on the following items concerning the Community Hall Trustees.

- **Report on meeting held on 6th July**

- **Cricket Club shed**

Mr. Knight has written to Rob Clayton (Chairman, Watton at Stone Cricket Club) requesting a copy of the Cricket Club shed insurance.

This item to remain on the agenda under Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee until resolved.

Agenda: R & A

- **Cricket Club roller**

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Smith to arrange for the roller to be moved to the Cricket Club shed.

Action: N. Poulton/M. Smith

- **MPPA Floodlighting**

Harknett Street Lighting have repositioned the MPPA floodlight that was shining directly into the back of Mr. and Mrs. Riddle's property at 132a High Street. Mr. Meischke said that he did not know if this had been a success or not, because Mr. and Mrs. Riddle had not contacted him further about the problem.

- **Charity Commissioners Annual Report**

Mr. Poulton has completed and signed the Annual Return and the Trustee Detail Update Form for 2004. These have been sent to the Charity Commission together with the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall Trustees report and a copy of the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2004.

- **Use of the building by the Cricket Club**

Mr. Poulton wrote to Rob Clayton (Chairman of Watton-at-Stone Cricket Club) on 28th July about the disgusting condition they had left the Community Hall in on Sunday 25th July (refer to minutes of the Community Hall Trustees dated 6th July).

The Cricket Club left the pavilion and kitchen in a similar state on Saturday 3rd July. On Sunday 4th July, the pavilion and kitchen areas had to be tidied up by the organisers of the Community Hall service before it could be used. Later that day, the Cricket Club again left the facilities in a disgusting state.

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke agreed to inspect the Community Hall on Monday 12th July, which they did. On this occasion the facilities had been left in good order.

Mr. Poulton said that he had still not received a response from Rob Clayton. Refer to item 8 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee - Request from Cricket Club to put pictures up in the Pavilion (on page 7 and 8 of these minutes).

- **External toilets**

The external Gents toilet door has not yet been repaired. The door will remain locked until the repair work has been done.

Mr. Poulton has painted the walls of the external Gents toilet to a height of approximately 6 feet.

The external toilets will be unlocked for visitors during the Sports and Social Club's Fun Day on 25th July 2004.

- **Repair to brick wall**

Mr. Meischke is arranging for a contractor to finish the repairs required to the car-park brick wall and also to do repairs to the retaining wall adjacent to the Community Hall. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **MPPA**

Mr. Knight to obtain quotations for pressure washing and moss killing, so that the cost can be included in the 2005/06 budget. **Action: I. Knight /Budget: 2005/06**

- **Update on new tennis court**

Mr. Knight said that the Diocesan Surveyor had informed him verbally that the Glebe Committee had approved the Parish Council's request for the lease of an additional piece of Glebe Land to allow a single tennis court to be built.

Mr. Meischke proposed that we write to Mrs. Michelle Manders (Estates Secretary, Diocese of St Albans), as outlined in the minutes of the Community Hall Trustees dated 6th July 2004.

Action: I. Knight/J. Allsop

Mr. Knight said that the Diocesan Board is of the understanding that the Parish Council does not want the field rented out again for grazing horses.

It was agreed to write to the Diocesan Board informing them that the Parish Council are happy to see horses grazing in the field. **Action: I. Knight**

- **Approval of minutes of meeting held on 6th July**

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were given a copy of the minutes.

The following amendment was made to the minutes of the Community Hall Board of Trustees meeting held on 9th June 2004.

Page 4, item 13, Date and times on next meetings.

- ‘Tuesday 5th April 2004’ should read ‘Tuesday 5th April 2005’

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

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **MPPA – general**

Mr. Knight said that a tree root is pushing up a small section of the surface of the MPPA. He has instructed Doe Sport to remove the tree root and reinstate the surface. Doe Sport will repaint this area at the same time as they repaint the previously repaired areas of the MPPA.

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

Agenda: 09/04

- **Additional tennis court**

Mr. Knight will obtain quotations for the installation of the additional tennis court.

Action: I. Knight

Note: This item was first discussed during the Parish Council meeting held on 11th June 2003 (see item 6 a, Recreation & Amenities Sub-Committee on page 8). It is minuted that: ‘the Tennis Club would raise all the funds required for the project. They would then like to donate the new facility to the Parish Council, which would be available for public use (subject to priority playing-times allocated to the tennis Club, e.g. as now on the MPPA). However, the additional court would be for tennis only and not for other sports (e.g. netball and football practise).’

- **Seat overlooking MPPA**

The seat overlooking the MPPA has been vandalised and is not repairable. The police have been notified of the incident.

Mr. Poulton agreed to remove the seat.

Action: N. Poulton

A provision for a replacement seat to be placed in the 2005/06 budget.

Budget: 2005/06

- **Moveable goal post**

Mr. Knight said that the goal post is to be repaired and welded together and then permanently sited on the far side of the sportsfield, near the bike ramps (i.e. out of the way of the Cricket and Football pitches).

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

Agenda: 09/04

- **Contact with Cricket Club**

Wilf Emsley has asked if the Cricket Club can convert the area under the bench seating in the home changing room into lockable cupboards to store cricket equipment. Also that in the meantime, they are allowed to store their equipment in the referees changing room.

After discussion, it was agreed that we write to Wilf Emsley informing him that the Parish Council would agree to the work being done subject to the following conditions.

1. The Parish Council views the proposed plans before any work commences.
2. The work is done by a professional carpenter and must be in keeping with the high standard of work in the Community Hall
3. The Parish Council will not be held responsible for the equipment stored in these lockers.
4. The Cricket Club meets the full cost of constructing the lockable cupboards.

However, the Cricket Club must not use the referee’s changing room as a storage facility because it is used on a regular basis by hirers of the sports hall.

Action: N. Poulton

- **Request from Cricket Club to put pictures up in the Pavilion**

Mr. Poulton said that he had received a request from Cled Fursland (Cricket Club) to hang pictures (some of which are 150 years old) in the Pavilion.

After discussion, it agreed that Mr. Poulton write to the Cricket Club informing them that before we agree to their request, the Parish Council wants to meet with them to discuss the lack of response to our letters concerning the disgusting condition of the Community Hall after Cricket Club use and our request for a copy of the insurance cover note for the Cricket shed. (We would also need to agree to the siting of any photographs before they are hung.)

Action: N. Poulton

Note: Mr. Poulton sent the following e-mail to all Parish Councillors on 16th July.

‘Went to a meeting this morning and Wilf Emsley was present. He asked if I could spare a few minutes after the meeting.

We had an excellent discussion. He fully appreciates the problems we have been having with the cricket club and finds it unacceptable the way they have been leaving the Community Hall. He is going to speak to the cricket club players to ensure this type of thing does not happen again.

I told him about Cled wanting to put pictures up in the Pavilion and he was pleased that we had agreed subject to us meeting with Cled. He is NOT impressed with Rob Clayton for not replying to our letter and sends his apologies on behalf of the Cricket Club.

We went on to talk about storing the cricket club equipment in the changing room. I explained our predicament about other users and that the equipment should not be stored in any of the changing rooms. He stated we allowed the footballers but I explained this has now been stopped. He asked if they could build a lockable cupboard under the seats. I saw no problem in this but I would welcome your comments.

Could I suggest that the meeting with the Cricket Club only involves Cled and we talk about the pictures as I think to go through the whole argument again would be counter productive. Again your comments please before the Clerk sends out the letter.'

All Parish Councillors who responded to Mr. Poulton's e-mail agreed that the meeting with the Cricket Club should only involve Mr. Fursland.

Mr. Poulton wrote to Mr. Fursland on 19th July as follows.

'I am pleased to inform you that the Parish Council has no objection to you hanging cricket photographs in the Pavilion subject to agreeing the type of photographs and where they should be hung.

As you know I go to America on Friday for five weeks, but will telephone you on my return to arrange a convenient time for us to meet and discuss the above issues.'

Environment

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

- **Tree work on Lammas**

- **Tree damage to Black Poplars**

Mrs. Dinnin said that during the storms two weeks ago damage was sustained to the large poplars near the riverbank on the Lammas. Michael Stanley was instructed to clear the branches that had fallen onto the footpath but the trees now required pollarding as soon as possible.

Two quotations have been sort to pollard the trees to 40 feet (and stack the wood) as follows.

Adam Welch	£800
Michael Stanley	£700

It has been agreed that Mrs. Marshall, (19 Lammas Road) whose garden backs onto this section of the Lammas, can use the wood from the poplar trees to rebuild her section of the riverbank.

After discussion, it was agreed that because the work needs doing as soon as possible, we should accept the higher quotation from Mr. Welch. This is because Mr. Stanley appears to have a heavy workload at the moment.

Mr. Knight proposed that Mr. Welch's quotation be accepted. Mr. Smith seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **Quotations for tree work on Lammas bank**

Mrs. Dinnin said that because the Countryside Management Service has suggested that extensive work is required on the Lammas, she has not obtained quotations for the tree work required on the Lammas bank.

- **Meeting with the Countryside Management Service on Friday 2nd July**

Mrs. Dinnin said that she, Mr. Poulton, Mr. Filer, Mr. Stock and Mr. Dunhill met with the with Sue Clarkson (of the Countryside Management Service) to discuss work needed on the Lammas.

Sue Clarkson has agreed to prepare a 5-year plan. She was impressed with the work recently done by Adam Welch and suggested that we continue to do clearance work as and when finances allow.

The poor condition of the grassland area was discussed. She suggested that the pattern of grass cutting needs to be changed. Early June and mid-September may be more appropriate than the early July and early September. This would prevent weeds from being allowed to seed. However, because of the Parish Council's agreement with DEFRA, she would need to contact them before any changes are made.

The Countryside Management Service will organise working parties to clear the far end of the Lammas, remove the tree protection guards that are strangling some of the trees and replace any trees that have died.

The Parish Council would need to apply for grants to fund the work, as well as increasing the budget figure for next year.

Mr. Poulton was pleased to report that Tony Bradford (a former Parish Councillor) who works for the Countryside Management Service will now be working in our area, the Eastern Region.

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

The grass cutting on the Lammas and Watton Green has not yet been done.

Mrs. Dinnin to chase Mr. Stanley.

Action: C. Dinnin

- **Clearance work at Watton Green**

Mr. Brown has now completed the clearance work at Watton Green.

- **Public liability insurance cover**

After discussion, it was agreed that it is the Parish Council's responsibility to ensure that all regular contractors provide us with a copy of their public liability insurance cover note.

All regular contractors to be contacted accordingly.

Action: J. Meischke

b) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mr. Knight carried-out the sportsfield report on the 13th July 2004, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	Good.
Litter	OK.
Dog fouling	OK.
Netball posts	OK.
General	Some work need on chicken-wire fence. Base of Oak tree needs cleaning up – Elderberry.

- **Children's Play Area:**

Condition of surface	OK.
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.

- **Bike ramps area:**

Junior Jump	OK. }
Double Ramp	OK. } Not used at all.
Fun Box	OK. }

- **Community Hall:**

General Condition (Exterior)	Damp patch/ window to be fixed.
Litterbin	OK.
Car Park	OK.
General	Wall to be fixed.

- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**

Surface	Repairs to be painted/ tree root.
Boundary Fencing	OK.
Tennis nets	One burnt.
Litter	OK.
General	Good.

- **Great Innings Play Area:**

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

- **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	No rubbish, litterbin full.
Dog-fouling	OK.
Comments	OK - not overgrown.

• **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	-
Sportsfield	-
Church Walk	-
Walkern Road	-
Station Road	-
High Street (by Memorial)	-
Great Innings	-
Mill Lane	-
General	Lids missing.

• **Elderberry growing at base of Oak tree by MPPA**

Mr. Poulton agreed to cut back the elderberry at the base of the Oak tree. **Action: N. Poulton**

• **Damp patch on pavilion entrance side of Community Hall**

Mr. Knight and Mr. Meischke to inspect the damp patch and take necessary action.
Action: I. Knight/K. Meischke

• **Broken window**

The Clerk to chase Stevenage Glass to find out when they will be replacing the broken window in the pavilion fire-exit door. **Action: J. Allsop**

ii) **Weekly report and action**

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

9 Correspondence received

a) **Gary Phesay re footpath problems in Hazeldell**

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 10th June) sent to Mr. Stock from Gary Phesay.

‘Re: Footpath problems in Hazeldell

I write to thank the Parish Council for their support in resolving the above problem and to thank especially yourself, Vice-Chairman together with the Clerk, Mrs. J. Allsop for the time and effort that was spent in achieving such a positive outcome.

The works have now been completed prior to the final phase of the footway resurfacing works taking place and with a little additional maintenance help from myself and Amanda I am sure we will now be able to keep the grass verge in the best possible condition for all to enjoy.

Appreciation and thanks once again.’

b) **The National Trust re Frogmore Hall**

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 24th June) from the National Trust.

Thank you for your letter of 17th June 2004. I have obtained details of Frogmore Hall from the agents and learn from them that terms have already been agreed for its sale.

The National Trust has a number of criteria for fulfil when acquiring new properties. The main ones require such buildings or land to be of national importance, recognised by some national designation, and that there are sufficient financial and management resources offered or available not just to purchase the property but to maintain it in perpetuity.’

c) E-mail from Rodney Ranzetta re Community Hall service

Mr. Poulton read out the following e-mail (dated 4th July) from Rodney Ranzetta.

'I am writing to thank the Parish Council for letting us use the Community Hall for the service. The event was a great success, with about 160 people attending the service. As well as collecting £200 for bibles for school leavers from Watton at Stone School, Revd John Butt handed out the Harry Camp Scouts and Guides cups and Nigel Poulton did the same for the Parish Council Awards. Altogether, it was a very good occasion.'

Mr. Filer said that he did not like the use of e-mails for this type of correspondence.

d) Robinson and Hall

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter from Robinson and Hall (dated 7th July).

'Countryside and Rights of Way Act – land forming Watton Green and Land known as Lammas Land at Watton-at-Stone

Further to my letter of 10th June I have now heard back from Mr. Abel Smith. He has asked me to investigate why the land has been designated the Countryside and Rights of Way Act as common land as this was not the intention when it was conveyed from his father to the Parish Council in June 1966.

I enclose a copy of my letter to the Countryside Agency for your information.

As soon as I receive a response from them I will update you.'

e) River Beane Restoration Association

The River Beane Restoration Association has written (letter dated 29th June) requesting a donation of £25 towards their running costs. Mr. Knight confirmed that donations of £25 have also been requested from Ardeley, Aston, Benington, Walkern, Waterford and Stapleford Parish Councils.

Mr. Poulton said that because the River Beane runs through Watton-at-Stone he felt that it was important that the Parish Council supports the River Beane Restoration Association.

Mr. Meischke proposed that we send the River Beane Restoration Association a donation of £25.

Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

f) EHDC – Proposed improvements to footpath lighting

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter, dated 2nd July, from Gillian Field (Senior Engineer, EHDC)

'The Council currently has a budget to provide additional footpath lighting in the East Herts District area. In Parish Council areas it is proposed that improvements would be arranged for footpath lighting only.

I would be grateful if you could let me know specific areas of locations that would benefit from improvements and forward details to this office.

Should any scheme be successful the Parish Council would be responsible for the additional energy costs through existing budgets currently arranged with the County Council. At present we are trying to identify future need as the budget for this financial year is committed.

If you have any queries please contact me at the offices in Hertford.'

After discussion, it was agreed not to apply for additional footpath lighting for Watton-at-Stone.

10 Reports from other Organisations**• Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association**

Mr. Poulton said that Wally Pressland had been issued, in error, a licence to ferret the allotments.

Mr. Pressland has now destroyed the agreement.

Mr. Filer suggested that Mr. Pressland be given a licence to ferret the wooded area of Watton Green.

This was agreed. The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

The Allotment and Garden Association has spoken to Paula Cheesman (HCC, Rights of Way) and been given verbal approval and advice on the following.

- Straightening the Right of Way by levelling the bank alongside the Chestnuts to within 15 inches or so of the fence but not interfering with its stability.
- Erecting a rabbit proof fence 15 inches or so from the existing fence along the boundary of Chestnuts from the stile to the brick pillar on Roger Green's boundary.
- Applying, at the Allotment and Garden Associations' own risk, a week killer or Roundup along the base of the rabbit proof fence in a band 12 inches or so side. (They would also like to apply a similar herbicide, probably ammonium sulphate along the base of the new rabbit proof fence parallel to Kimberley).
- Affixing the approved Parish Council notices to access to the allotment on the existing post at the Glebe Court entrance and erect another post at the stile to carry this notice.

They have received several requests for allotments and would like to develop some of the uncultivated area to provide three new allotments. The approximate area of each allotment would be 7 metres wide by 30 metres long. They would also like to provide a car-parking space and turning area near the stile.

It was agreed to notify the Allotment and Garden Association that they can provide three new allotments and a car-park space for approximately six cars. **Action: N. Poulton/C. Dinnin**

The Allotment and Garden Association has asked if leases issued to all new allotment holders can include a clause to state that if their allotment has not been cultivated for a certain period the lease will be terminated. This item to be discussed further with the Allotment and Garden Association.

Action: N. Poulton/C. Dinnin

Several of the allotment holders have complained that the hedges and path along the Right of Way, especially from the Glebe Court entrance to the car park area, are now overgrown and making vehicular access difficult. Mr. Meischke has asked Ted Brown to cut back the hedge. Mr. Riddle has agreed to cut back the hedge at the end of his garden and that of his next-door neighbour, which back onto the allotment land.

The Right of Way through the allotments is not obvious and therefore members of the public often accidentally walk through the allotment area.

- **Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee**

Mrs. McCash reported that the Memorial Hall's back room is to be painted.

The Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee is looking into the hire agreement relating to child protection policy for users. Mr. Filer to obtain any information on this subject for the Parish Council. **Action: D. Filer**

11 Items for Parish News

The following items to be sent to the Editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the next issue.

- Vandalised seat overlooking the MPPA
- 5-year plan for the Lammas
- Parish Council Awards
- Donation to the River Beane Restoration Association

Mr. Filer to write the article accordingly.

Action: D. Filer

12 Accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

Donation for photocopying

1.00

1.00

Payments

Engraving of 2 perpetual trophies

7.00

7.00

Cheques required

Ted Brown	Clearance work at Watton Green – additional hours	50.00
Diocesan Board	Allotment rent	300.00
Adam Welch	Grass cutting and strimming – April 30 th and May 24 th	300.00
G. Morgan	Work to ornate village sign	488.00
J. Allsop	Purchase and engrave two 'keep sake' trophies	32.43
J. Allsop	July salary	519.27
J. Allsop	Phone calls to 3 April, 3 May, 3 June 3 July	102.00
Boardmans Photocopying	Charges to 30 th June 2004	13.75
Community Hall	Grant - payment of 2 nd quarter	1372.50
Ted Brown	31 hours	170.50
D. R. Monk	Flowerbed maintenance 1/4/04 – 30/6/04	80.00
Jim Morrissey	Internal Audit fee	100.00
Inland Revenue	Tax and NI	<u>159.03</u>
		<u>3687.48</u>

Cheques received

Sports and Social Club	2 nd quarterly payment for hire of sportsfield facilities	<u>250.00</u>
		<u>250.00</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall	115.00
N. Stichbury – Main Hall	50.00
Floodlighting	40.00
Barry Moor	<u>40.00</u>
	<u>245.00</u>

Payments

Homebase – paint for Gents toilet	43.47
VAT return	64.84
Drainage centre – gutter-stop-end	<u>2.08</u>
	<u>110.39</u>

Cheques required

John Phillips	Opening and closing duties from 1 st June – 2 nd July	32.00
Sunstopper Blinds	Repair of pavilion blinds	51.70
Three Valleys Water	Charges to 12/06/04	71.89
Gary Smith	Window cleaning	56.00
P. J. Roofing	Replace roof tile and remove debris from gutter	111.63
Rose Brown	23 Hours cleaning	<u>126.50</u>
		<u>449.72</u>

Cheques received

C Straker	Main Hall hire	10.00
D. Boddy	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	117.00
C Straker	Main Hall hire	6.00
Datchworth Football Club	Hire of pavilion and changing room facilities	59.00
Badminton Club	Main Hall hire – July and September	126.00
Tennis Club	Pavilion hire	28.00
Sports and Social Club	Hire of Community Hall facilities -payment of 2 nd quarter	250.00
Parish Council	Grant - payment of 2 nd quarter	1372.50
Audrey Calveley	Pavilion hire	<u>35.00</u>
		<u>2003.50</u>

Mr. Knight proposed that the Parish Council approve the above payments, Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **Aerial photograph of village**

Mr. Poulton presented the Parish Council with an old Aerial photograph of the village (approximately 12 years old), which he purchased at the village fete. It was agreed to hang the photograph in the Parish Council room.

Action: N. Poulton

- **The meeting closed at 2118.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 8th September 2004.**