

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 5th May April 2004

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

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Dunhill.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

Mr. Poulton declared a pecuniary interest in item 8 a, Budget & Finance Sub-Committee – Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire – renewal of annual membership (on page 5 of these minutes) because he is Vice-President of the Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire.

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

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

- i) Heath Mount School, Wood Hall Park - Construction of new astro turf area and removal of existing tennis court and reinstatement. This item to be discussed under 6 a iv, Planning applications (on page 4 of these minutes).
- ii) Binding of minute books. This item to be discussed under 8 a Budget & Finance Sub-Committee (on page 5 of these minutes).
- iii) Letter from John Phillips of 9 Hockerill. This item to be discussed below.
- iv) EHDC - Rural Parish Conference on Friday 14th May 2004.

Mr. Poulton said that he would be attending the conference (which starts at 1000 and ends at 1600) and asked if any Parish Councillors would like accompany him. Mrs. McCash agreed to do so.

The Clerk to notify EHDC accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

• Letter from John Phillips of 9 Hockerill

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 2nd May) from John Phillips.

‘On the 2nd of May ‘04 I was standing in School Lane leading to School Orchard, talking to a member of the tennis club about vandalism with my dog lying not three feet away from me. A resident from School Orchard came round the corner faster than need be for the footpath come road, and ran over my dog.

Well, you might think, it was only a dog. I’ll tell you how I feel about that. She means as much to me as if it had been a child. If it had been a child, it could have been one of the councillor’s children or grandchildren. If so I wonder what would be happening now – probably people waving banners!

I admit the over-hanging hedge on the side of the road is not council property, neither is some land cleared in Mill Lane, which was in no way a hazard to walkers. My dog and myself love to walk the fields. It is doubtful if she will be able to do that again, but the person who ran over her will.

Whether they will learn from this, I do not know.

There are no signs stating speed or ‘Beware of walkers’. Think about this before someone gets hurt.

I’ll mention again, it was only a dog, but that dog means a lot to me.’

Parish Councillors agreed that this section of road/footpath is a potential danger.

After lengthy discussion, it was agreed that we write to Hertfordshire Highways (copying them with Mr. Phillip’s letter) to ask them to install appropriate signage and road-markings in the area and reminding them that there is a play school in the immediate vicinity.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Poulton said that he would be writing as a District Councillor to Hertfordshire Highways on this subject.

It was agreed that Mr. Smith contact Mr. Abel Smith to find out if he would be willing to donate part of his land for the installation of a footpath and to keep his hedges cut back.

Action: M. Smith

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th April 2004**

Mr. Stock proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

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

b) Review of actions

- **Fit new cradle swing-seats**

Mr. Meischke said that he is deferring the fitting of these seats until after the pressure washing has been done. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Check to see that work to the floodlighting column is done**

Mr. Meischke said that, because he had been unable to contact Malcolm Oakman, this action point is outstanding **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Ask Adam Welch to inspect trees on Lammas**

This item to be discussed under 8a, Environment Sub-Committee, Land Management - Poplar tree and Oak trees on the Lammas (on page 7 of these minutes).

- **Convey the Parish Council's thanks to the Tennis Club for removing barbed-wire**

This action point has been completed.

- **Inform John Meischke how many additional keys need cutting for external store & outside toilets**

This action point has been completed.

- **Arrange for additional keys to be cut for external store and outside toilets**

Mr. Meischke to arrange for one set of keys to be cut for the Clerk. **Action: J. Meischke**

- **Reschedule site-meeting with Wicksteed Leisure to discuss skateboarding surface**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Planning Department re Beane Cottage, Walkern Road**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Planning Department re Methodist Church, High Street**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to Planning Department re Blue Bury Farm**

This action point has been completed.

- **Contact Mr. Mould re ornate village sign**

This item to be discussed under 7 a, Specific Items - Ornate village sign (on page 4 of these minutes).

- **Sign ferreting licenses and post them**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Adams, Mr. Pressland and Mr. Winser have all signed and returned one copy of their ferreting licenses to the Parish Council.

- **Sign license re Cottage Site and deliver to Denis Filer**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Filer has duly signed and returned one copy of the license to the Parish Council.

- **Update our existing WEB site**

The Clerk said that Mr. Dunhill informed her that this action point is on-going.

- **Use the mobile speed-warning equipment**

Mr. Clark said that he used the mobile speed-warning equipment in Whempstead. But because the actual speed limit applicable to any given road (i.e. 60 mph in Whempstead) has to be used, the results were inconclusive. He extended the two-week loan of the equipment by one week; however, none of the other Parish Council volunteers were able to operate the equipment in Station Road or Walkern Road at that time.

Hertford Police will loan us the equipment again in about 12 weeks time.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting in July 2004

Agenda: 07.04

Mr. Clark said that during the last week two accidents had occurred, one of which required the closure of the Whempstead end of Mill Lane for a period.

He said that when Hertfordshire Highways sent us the raw data results of the traffic survey, which was carried out in July 2003 in December 2003, they informed us that they would analyse the figures in January and then publish their opinion of the data (hopefully in time for the Parish Council meeting in February). However, this information has not been forthcoming.

It was agreed that Mr. Clark write to Val Weaver, Hertfordshire Highways accordingly. **Action: C. Clark**

- **Produce 12-monthly summary statement of accounts for the PC & CH for Annual Parish Meeting**
This action point has been completed.
- **Submit accounts for auditing to Jim Morrissey and to McCash and Hay**
This item is outstanding. The Clerk said that she would be sending the accounts for audit before the end of June 2004. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Renew CPRE membership**
This action point has been completed.
- **Speak to the Disability Discrimination Officer at EHDC re disabled-parking facilities**
Mr. Poulton said that he had spoken to Daniel Burden, the Disability Discrimination Officer at EHDC, who said that the new Disability Act does not come into force until October 2004.
Mr. Burden felt that the new legislation would probably not require a disabled-parking facility at the Community Hall. However, until a 'test case' is proven in the courts, based on a situation similar to our own, he cannot say for definite if we will be required by law to provide this facility.
After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that a disabled-parking sign should be fitted to the front edge of the railway-sleeper closest to the Community Hall.
Mr. Filer said that the Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee have a spare disabled-parking sign, which he will obtain for the Community Hall. **Action: D. Filer**
Mr. Meischke to fit the sign to the railway sleeper. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Speak to John Phillips re opening and closing the MPPA at weekends**
Mr. Knight said that John Phillips has agreed to open and close the MPPA at weekends, until further notice.
- **Write to Frank Cooper and Son re grass-cutting quote**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Dr Norden re sportsfield hedge**
This action point has been completed.
- **Provide and apply weed killer in culverts**
This action point has been completed.
- **Accept Mr. Welch's quotation re Poplar tree**
This item to be discussed under 8a, Environment Sub-Committee, Land Management - Poplar tree and Oak trees on the Lammas (on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Ask Mr. Welch to inspect the Oak trees on the Lammas bank**
This item to be discussed under 8a, Environment Sub-Committee, Land Management - Poplar tree and oak trees on the Lammas (on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Purchase and fit a replacement end-cap for drainpipe**
This action point is outstanding. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Inspect allotments**
Mrs. Dinnin said that she had inspected the allotments with Mary Phillips.
- **Write to John Love re request for sign**
This action point has been completed.
- **Inform the Cricket Club that the Parish Council wants them to move the roller to the Cricket Shed**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write article for Parish News**
This action point has been completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

- **Chase Norma Unwin re installation of station car-park sign**
The Clerk e-mailed Norma Unwin about the installation of a new station car-park sign and received the following e-mail response on 20th April.

'I thought the sign was missing, the new sign was going to say WAGN car park as this is our company standard, as it is not looked after by our car parking management agent, if it was it would say: WAGN Car Park managed by Central Parking Systems.'

I have just spoken to David (the Clerk) and the sign is ok and is facing the right way.'

It was agreed that because the wording on the sign has to be WAGN Company standard, there is no point in pursuing further the installation of a sign reading 'Station Car Park'.
- **Open separate account for Youth Club funds**
Mrs. McCash said that the account would be opened shortly.
This item to remain an action point. **Action: H. McCash**

6 Planning

a) Applications

i) 119 High Street

Change of use to Beauty Salon

Mr. Dunhill visited some of the neighbouring residents and those who were available had no objections. Mr. Poulton said that he was aware that the owner of Hairwork's was concerned that there could be a conflict of business interests between her hairdressing salon and the proposed beauty salon.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans. Mr. Stock then proposed that, in view of our past representations re this site, we should write in support of the application. Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Write to EHDC informing them that the Parish Council actively supports this application.

Action: J. Allsop

ii) Land off School Lane

Construction of no. 1, one and half storey dwelling

Mr. Poulton reminded Parish Councillors that the original application for this site was for a bungalow.

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

iii) 103 Great Innings South

Single-storey garage. Conversion of garage to living room

Mrs. McCash said that she had only been able to get in contact with one of the neighbouring residents, who had no objections because they were moving shortly.

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

iv) Heath Mount School, Wood Hall Park

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

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

Action: J. Allsop

b) Decisions

None.

7 Specific Items

a) Ornate village sign

Mrs. Dinnin said that she had spoken to Mr. Mould and arranged for herself and Mr. Stock to visit him tomorrow to inspect the sign and agree the work required to complete it prior to its collection by us.

Action: C. Dinnin/D. Stock

b) Footpath adjacent to Bull public house

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter, dated 15th April, from Sean Hanratty (Definitive Map Officer, Rights of Way, HCC).

'Footpath between Rivershill and High Street, Watton-at-Stone

The above matter has been passed to the Rights of Way Unit from Val Weaver at Hertfordshire Highways.

We already have a case file open for the route, which refers to a proposal for Ind. Coope Brewers to dedicate a route through the car park of the Bull Inn Public House. However despite an number of letters (dated 1993/94) from the Rights of ay Unit, no agreement was forthcoming.

The situation then lay dormant until June 2002, when the case file was opened to add the route to the Definitive Map and Statement by making a modification order if appropriate. This will involve investigating all the available evidence and if the evidence shows that a public right of way exists, we will then make an order.

The case (reference number EH74/DISC) is currently at number 94 in the Statement of Priorities and it is likely to be a number of years before it is investigated. If the current landowner were willing to dedicate the route as a footpath, we would once again be happy to consider such a proposal.'

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on 11th May 2005.

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

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

Mr. Filer said that he wanted to clarify certain points in the 12-monthly statement of accounts for the Parish Council and Community Hall, because he was not present at our April meeting when the accounts were presented to Parish Councillors.

He said that the main items in the Community Hall accounts that were over budget were the services (i.e. gas, water and electricity) and also maintenance charges. It is almost certain that 2004/05 budget figures for the services items will not cover the actual cost. However, hirings for the start of the year 2004/05 are looking good and hopefully will off-set the increased costs.

The Parish Council expenditure for 2003/04 is mainly over-budget because of the cost of the ornate village sign. The £2,500 given to the Parish Council in April 2002 by the Watton Fayre Committee are not shown anywhere in the 2003/04 accounts.

Mr. Filer said that next year the summary of accounts presented at the Annual Parish meeting would show a break-down of the expenditure items for the Community Hall (e.g. cleaning costs, maintenance, etc.).

- **Insurance premium for Parish Council**

We have now received the annual renewal of the Parish Council policy, which is £1056.10 for the period starting 1st June 004. The budget figure for 2004/2005 is £1000.

It was agreed that the premium be paid to Cornhill Insurance.

- **Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire – renewal of annual membership**

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

After a short discussion the meeting was closed at 1930 so that Mr. Poulton could return to answer questions on the subject.

The meeting opened again at 1932.

Mr. Knight proposed that the Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire annual membership be renewed. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Binding of minute books**

Mr. Poulton said that the minute books had not been bound into book form for 5 years. The Clerk contacted the bookbinder, Brian Hall (who bound two books, at a cost of £22.50 each, in February 1998 and again in September 1999), who told her that the cost would be £30 per book. He said that he had recently charged Tewin Parish Council £40.

After discussion, it was agreed that (for financial reasons) we wait until later in the financial year to see if we have sufficient funds available to have the work done this year. If there are insufficient funds to cover this amount, a provision to be made in the 2005/06 budget accordingly.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on 13th October 2004.

Agenda: 10/04

The Clerk to notify Brian Hall accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Co-operative Bank Accounts**

The Clerk apologised for errors she made in allowing the Parish Council and Community Hall current accounts to go overdrawn.

The Co-operative Bank has made unauthorised overdraft charges of £110 on the Parish Council account and £60 on the Community Hall account. These charges are based on £10 per day. The Clerk said that she had wrongly presumed that the Parish Council account was in credit because EHDC had copied us with their letter (dated 22nd April) instructing the Co-operative Bank to pay their cheque of £11,372 into the Parish Council's current account. However, the Co-operative Bank said that they did not receive the cheque until the 4th May and would be crediting it to our account on 5th May.

The Clerk asked the Co-operative Bank if it is possible for our accounts to have restricted Internet-access (i.e. balance enquires only). She was informed that this was not possible. She then asked if it is possible to have an automatic transfer to and from our deposit account so that the current accounts are never overdrawn. She was told that this facility would cost £25 per quarter (per account).

After discussion, it was agreed that we write to the Co-operative Bank querying the time taken between EHDC sending the cheque to them and its receipt. Also, because we have substantial sums in both our 14-day accounts (£6924.30 in the Parish Council account and £5092.41 in the Community Hall account), we ask them to reconsider the charges, particularly in view of the fact that it took 12 days from East Herts District Council sending the cheque and the cheque being credited to our account.

Action: D. Filer

A letter also to be sent to EHDC asking them to confirm when they sent the cheque to the Co-operative Bank and when the money was debited from their account.

Action: D. Filer

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Stock reported on the following item concerning the Community Hall Trustees.

- **Internal storage cupboard (for sports equipment) in the Main Hall**

Mr. Stock said that, as reported in the minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall Board of Trustees held on 20th April 2004, letters had been sent to Jim Keen and Dave Boddy asking them to help us resolve the problems associated with the storage of sports equipment in the cupboard in the Main Hall.

Jim Keen asked the Clerk if the internal storage cupboard could be locked so that casual hirers cannot gain access to his equipment. It was agreed that this was not a practicable proposition.

Mr. Stock said that Mr. Keen had already asked him if he could install a locked box in internal storage cupboard, and was told he could. To date, this has not been done.

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **Fun Day - 25th July 2004**

The Sports and Social Club is having a Fun Day on 25th July to raise funds for the Mill Lane sporting-facility project. They have booked the pavilion facilities at the Community Hall and the Cricket Club is aware that the event is taking place and do not have a home-fixture on that day. The Fun Day will therefore have full use of the sportsfield.

- **Vandalism on the MPPA**

Mr. Meischke said that the pressure washing on the MPPA needs to be done before Doe Sport do the repair work to the surface.

The Clerk to chase Doe Sport to obtain a date for the repair work on the MPPA surface. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Meeting on 27th April 2004 to discuss need for skateboarding facilities in the village**

Mr. Poulton, Mr., Meischke, Mrs. Dinnin, Mr. Stock and Mr. Knight met on 27th April to discuss the need for skateboarding facilities in the village. It was agreed, at that meeting, that we need to find out what public interest and support there is for a skateboarding facility in the village. Therefore, the best way forward is to place a notice in the Parish News asking anyone interested in helping to form a development committee to look at the possibility of providing a skate-boarding facility within the village to write to the Clerk.

After discussion, it was agreed that a notice be placed in the Parish News accordingly. Refer to item 11, Items for Parish News on page 12 of these minutes.

- **Pressure washing**

Mr. Monk is expected to do the pressure washing sometime next week.

- **Signs on MPPA and Lammas**

The new signs for the MPPA and the Lammas have been made.

The Tennis Club fitted the replacement sign at the MPPA.

Mr. Stanley fitted the replacement byelaw sign on the Lammas. He also set the posts for the byelaw signs (which were previously pushed directly into the soil) in concrete on both the Lammas and Watton Green.

- **Insurance claims**

- **Community Hall break-in**

Mr. Meischke said that Cornhill Insurance had requested confirmation that we have adhered to the regulations of the policy concerning the security of the Community Hall etc. He said that he would complete and return the information required.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Community Hall break-in**

Mr. Meischke said it would be sometime before a claim form is submitted to Cornhill for the repair work at the MPPA.

Action: J. Meischke

Environment

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

- **Land-management**

- **Clearance work on the Lammas and Watton Green**

Mrs. Dinnin said that the agreed clearance work on the Lammas is complete, apart from the removal of some branches and some additional burning of debris.

Mr. Poulton has moved all the logs to the Mill Lane end of the Lammas. He suggested that a notice be placed in the Parish News inviting members of the public to help themselves to the logs. It was pointed out that the gate to the Lammas is kept locked, which means that vehicles could not get close to the logs. Mr. Poulton said that it was not necessary to keep the gate unlocked because the logs were not heavy (he had carried them on his own across the Lammas to their present position).

Ted Brown has been doing clearance work in the wooded part of Watton Green, however Mrs. Dinnin was unsure if the work had been completed or not.

- **Grant application towards work on the Lammas**

Mr. Poulton was pleased to report that EHDC has awarded us a £500 grant, from their 'LEAF' fund, towards the clearance work on the Lammas. He said that the grant was awarded from last year's budget (2003/04). We can therefore apply again this year (2004/05) for an additional £500 from the 'LEAF' fund.

The Clerk to claim the £500 grant from EHDC.

Action: J. Allsop

Parish Councillors agreed that we should submit another grant application to EHDC' this autumn.

Action: N. Poulton/10.04

- **Poplar tree and Oak trees on the Lammas**

Mrs. Dinnin said that Adam Welch has completed the tree surgery required to the storm-damaged Poplar tree. He has also inspected the Oak trees on the Lammas bank. One Oak has died and two others need pollarding. However, the trees are not in a dangerous condition and therefore the work can be scheduled for later in the season.

This item to be placed on the agenda for October 2004.

Action: 10/04

- **Letter from the Countryside Management Service re Restoration and Management Plans for the Lammas**

All Parish Councillors were given a copy of a letter from Sue Clarkson, of the Countryside Management Service (dated 11th April), and the Restoration and Management Plans for the Lammas.

It was agreed that Mrs. Dinnin write a letter of thanks to Sue Clarkson and invite her to meet on-site on the Lammas with members Environment Sub-Committee to discuss the plans further.

Action: C. Dinnin

- **Stile on Allotments**

Mr. Clark said that during his sportsfield inspection he had noted that the new stile, incorporating a dog-flap underneath, has been installed and looks good.

b) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mr. Clark carried-out the sportsfield report on the 3rd May 2004, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	Recently cut, good condition.
Litter	None.
Dog fouling	None.
Netball posts	Present.
General	Very good.

- **Children's Play Area:**

Condition of surface	Good.
Litter/Litterbin	In use.
Large swings	OK.
Small swings	Safety rubber needs replacing, bare metal in places.
See-Saw	OK – but needs oiling.
Rainbow multi-play and slide	Good.
Two spring sit-on	OK.
Teen shelter	OK.
General	One bench seat has plank missing.

- **Bike ramps area:**
 - Junior Jump }
 Double Ramp } Little evidence of use.
 Fun Box }
 Comment Litterbin – inner bin missing. Post needs straightening.
- **Community Hall:**
 - General Condition (Exterior) Broken tile on roof.
 - Litterbin Nearly empty.
 - Car Park Clean and tidy.
 - General OK.
- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**
 - Surface OK.
 - Boundary Fencing Middle wire broken on pitch side.
 - Tennis nets OK.
 - Litter None.
 - General OK.
- **Great Innings Play Area:**
 - Equipment Good condition.
 - Surfaces Clean.
 - Litter None.
 - Dog fouling None.
 - Comments OK.
- **Allotments Area:**
 - Access Clear.
 - Condition of paths between Allotments Good.
 - Condition of Allotments under cultivation Good.
 - Condition of Allotments not under cultivation OK.
 - Litter None.
 - Comments Good.
- **Culverts on Mill Lane**
 - Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts None.
 - Dog-fouling None.
 - Comments Soil erosion under concrete bridge.
- **Salt bins**
 - Perrywood Lane Full.
 - Entrance to Great Innings ½ full.
 - Great Innings South – outside number 93 Full.
 - Station Road Full.
 - Moorymead Close Full.
 - Hazeldell Full.
- **Dog-waste bins**
 - Footpath 17 Full.
 - Sportsfield Empty.
 - Church Walk In use - lid missing.
 - Walkern Road Empty.
 - Station Road Full - lid missing.
 - High Street (by Memorial) In use and lid missing.
 - Great Innings Empty.
 - Mill Lane Empty.

- **Bench seat behind play area**

Mr. Poulton said that Ted Brown has got the missing plank for the bench seat.
 Mr. Meischke and Mr. Knight to arrange for its repair. **Action: J. Meischke/I. Knight**
- **Broken tile on roof**

Mr. Clark said that there is a broken tile on the pavilion-side of the Community Hall.
 Mr. Meischke and Mr. Knight to inspect. **Action: J. Meischke/I. Knight**

ii) Weekly report and action

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

iii) 6-monthly check of MPPA, Play Area on sportsfield and Community Hall equipment

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Stock did the six-monthly check on the 22nd April 2004, the result of which is as follows.

MPPA

Area	Check	OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
Hard surface	Is it free of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holes • Cracks • Litter/debris • Weeds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moss etc. Court marking	Yes Yes Yes No Yes Yes		} } Viewed from outside the area. } Weeding around external fence and trim.
Kicker boards	Are they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure • Graffiti-free • In good condition. Check for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protruding nails • Protruding screws • Splinters/cracks • Missing nails/screws Are the gates free of graffiti, loose/missing nails/screws, cracks and splinters Do the gates open, close and lock	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes		} } Unable to gain access, but } from exterior nothing noticed. } Locked, unable to gain access.
Tennis posts	Condition	Yes		
Tennis nets	Condition	Yes		
Flood lights	Are the lamps in contact with the trees Are the lamp posts in good order and free of graffiti	Yes Yes		
Wire fence	Is the wire mesh: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured to posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free of cuts/breaks • In good condition Is the metal-work (e.g. posts, etc.) secure and in good condition	Yes Yes Yes Yes		
Notice board	Is it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legible • Free of graffiti • Secure • Free of damage 			} } One broken. } }
Boundary	Is it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free of litter • In need of a cut <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free of problem growth 	Yes Yes Yes	Yes	
General/additional comments (if any): - We need to make contact with the Sports and Social Club over their wire fence. The poles supporting this fence are loose and at an angle. Could possible cause injury to a child.				

Play Area on sportsfield

Check the following points on all pieces of play equipment (i.e. Large swings, small swings, seesaw, multi play/slide 2 spring sit-on).		OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
1	All structures and frameworks should be checked to ensure there is not bending, warping, cracking, loosening or breaking.	Yes		
2	Platforms should be free from trip hazards and protruding bolts.	Yes		
3	Fixed items of equipment should be checked to ensure parts are not bent, broken, loosened, worn, or missing.	Yes		
4	There should be no sharp points or protrusions.	Yes		
5	Welds should not be damaged or corroded.	Yes		
6	Access points should be checked to ensure there are no missing or broken rungs, and steps or treads are not loose.	Yes		
7	Exposed mechanisms and moving components have no pinch or crush points.	Yes		
8	Guards, handrails, or swing barriers are not missing, bent or broken and have no loose components.	Yes		
9	All drain holes are clear.	Yes		
10	All fastenings are secure.	Yes		
11	Swing seats and seats in general are not damaged; do not have sharp corners, insecure fittings, chain wear and have no loose or missing components	Yes		
12	Foundations are not cracked, loose in the ground or corroded at the base.	Yes		
13	Mechanical devices and other moving parts have no worn bearings, are not seized or have excessive or unduly noisy motion, have incorrect clearances and/or missing covers.	Yes		
14	There is no play in bearings and they are greased/lubricated. If, after adjustment, there is still play in the bearings, they should be replaced immediately. Note – special attention should be given to “sealed for life” parts.	Yes		
15	For all types of protective surfacing there should be no trip points, areas where water will lay, holes or litter.	Yes		
16	The surface finish of equipment should be free from rust and other corrosion, cracks, splinters, sharp edges and broken or open joints.	Yes		

Community Hall

Area	Check	OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
Pavilion				
Tables	Condition	Yes		
Chairs	Condition	Yes		
Corner seat unit	Condition	Yes		
Blinds	Condition		Yes	Blinds broken, but in hand to repair.
Clock	Condition	Yes		
Main Hall				
2 Benches	Condition	Yes		
Badminton posts *	Condition	Yes		
Badminton net	Condition	Yes		
Sports floor	Condition	Yes		
Floor markings **	Condition	Yes		
External toilets	Condition	Yes		
Internal toilets	Condition	Yes		
Showers	Condition	Yes		
Kitchen	Condition	Yes		
First Aid box	Contents: Are they out of date or damaged. Are there any items missing.	Yes		
Fire exit signs		Yes		
Fire extinguishers		Yes		
General/additional comments (if any): None.				

- **Weeding and strimming around MPPA**
Mr. Poulton said that Ted Brown had done the weeding and strimming required around the MPPA.
- **Wire fence in hedge near cricket table**
Mr. Knight said that the Cricket Club has repaired the fence.
- **Repair of blinds**
Mr. Poulton said that he has arranged to meet Sunstopper Blinds on site on Friday 7th May so that they can repair the damaged vertical blinds. To stop further vandalism, Sunstopper Blinds has been instructed to fix the high-level vertical blinds in such a way that they cannot be opened. **Action: N. Poulton**

9 Correspondence received

a) EHDC – street number and naming – 23 Walkern Road

EHDC wrote on 19th April to inform us that 23 Walkern Road is to be known as ‘Tawny Oak’ 23 Walkern Road.

b) Mr. and Mrs. Evernden – rabbit-proof fencing on the Allotments

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 15th April) from Mr. and Mrs. Evernden.

Re: The Rabbit Fence to be erected on Allotment Land adjacent to the Hawthorn hedge boundary of ‘Kimberly’ High Street, Watton-at-Stone

Following advice from our solicitor, the legal department of the National Farmers Union and Mr. Amey of the East Herts District Council, who has visited us, we wish to inform you of our concern at the proposed siting of the rabbit fence and the required two foot deep trench.

Mr. Amey suggests that the trench and fence be sited not less than two metres from our hawthorn hedge boundary, in order to preserve the roots of the hedge and to provide access for continued maintenance of the hedge.

We trust this recommendation is acceptable and you will notify Mr. Love (Chairperson, Watton-at-Stone Allotment Association) accordingly before further work is undertaken.’

Mr. Poulton said that we have written to John Love informing him that we require the Allotment and Garden Association to install the trench and rabbit-proof fence at least two metres from Mr. and Mrs. Evernden's boundary hedge. A letter has been sent to Mr. and Mrs. Evernden informing them that we have instructed the Allotment and Garden Association accordingly.

c) Marconi – T-mobile (UK) Ltd – Proposed telecommunications Installation in the Watton-at-Stone area

Mr. Poulton sent the following e-mail to all Parish Councillors on 22nd April 2004.

‘As your District Councillor I have received a letter from Marconi asking if I would comment on T-Mobile (UK) Ltd installing a replacement street lighting column, incorporating a telecommunications installation, at the same height as the existing street light column. The proposed site is at the junction of Whempstead Road and the A602 Ware Road. David and I have discussed this issue and see no problems. Before I respond I would like to hear from you as to your thoughts on this issue. If they do proceed they would need to submit a planning application and obviously at that point the Parish Council would be asked for their views.

I look forward to hearing from you shortly.’

Because no objections were received from the Parish Councillors who responded to Mr. Poulton’s e-mail, he wrote to Mr. Jeyes of Marconi APT on 26th April as follows.

‘The Parish Council thanks you for your letter of 20th April with enclosures regarding the proposed telecommunications mast at the junction of the A602 and the Whempstead turn off.

Based on the information provided it is unlikely that the Parish Council would object to your proposals.’

10 Reports from other Organisations

- **Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society**

Mr. Stock said that he was very hopeful that the Conservation Society will pursue its intentions to replace trees in Hazeldell. The subject is to be discussed with them again in September 2004.

- **River Beane Restoration Association**

Mr. Knight reminded Parish Councillors that the River Beane Restoration Association will be meeting on 11th May in the Community Hall to discuss its concerns that plans to close down the pumping station at Whitehall (as promised), and move it to Goldings, have been put on hold.

Representatives from Waterford, Stapleford, Aston and Walkern will be present. He also hoped that members of the Watton-at-Stone Conservation Society would attend.

Mr. Poulton suggested that Mr. Knight invite Paul Brackley (Mercury correspondence) to the meeting to report on the matter.

- **Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association**

The Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association will be holding its first AGM on Monday 10th May 2004.

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

The Sports and Social Club has asked that the movable goal-post be secured in a permanent position. Currently it tends to be placed at the Community Hall-end of the football pitch where one of the main goalmouths is. This area needs re-seeding at the end of the football season and will not recover if it is played on.

It was agreed to ask the Sports and Social Club where they would like the moveable goal post to be permanently sited.

Action: I. Knight

11 Items for Parish News

The following item to be sent to the editor of the Parish News for inclusion in the next issue.

‘Skate boarding Facility

If anyone is interested in helping to form a development committee to look at the possibility of providing a skate-boarding facility within the village, we ask that they write to the Clerk at 9 Beane Road.’

Action: J. Allsop

12 Accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

Donation re 40 sheets of photocopying	2.00
	<u>2.00</u>

Payments

Boardmans Photocopying	18.08
	<u>18.08</u>

Cheques required

CPRE	Annual subscription	25.00
Tec Brown	Lammas clearance work (plus £10 for disposing rubbish)	160.00
Community Hall	¼ of annual grant	1372.50
Adam Welch		395.00
Ted Brown	32 hours litterpick + 3 hours nettle clearance	192.50
J. Allsop	May salary	519.27
		<u>2664.27</u>

Cheques received

None

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall	70.00
N. Stichbury – Main Hall	38.00
	<u>108.00</u>

Payments

Banked	200.00
	<u>200.00</u>

Cheques required

Rose Brown	22 Hours cleaning	121.00
Collier Turf Care Ltd	Tennis equipment	400.68
		<u>521.68</u>

Cheques received

S. Daniels	Pavilion hire	49.00
Parish Council	¼ of annual grant	1372.50
Emma Fowler	Parish Council room hire	252.00
Conservative Association	Pavilion hire	64.00
Mrs. Bailey	Main Hall hire	64.80
		<u>1802.30</u>

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

- The meeting closed at 2135.
- The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 9th June 2004.