

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 10th November 2004

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

Members of Public: Three

1 Apologies for absence

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

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

Mrs. McCash declared a personal interest in items 6 a iii and iv, Planning Applications, Land adjacent to 99 High Street - New dwelling house & parking; and Demolition of derelict stabling (on pages 3 and 4 of these minutes).

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

- **Remembrance Sunday**

Mr. Poulton said he looked forward to seeing Parish Councillors at the Remembrance Sunday service on 14th November, and afterwards for the laying of the wreaths at the War Memorial.

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th October**

The following amendments were made to the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th October 2004.

Page 7, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee – Additional Tennis Court, first line of penultimate paragraph.

‘Mr. Knight to obtain a letter from the Sports and Social Club’.

should read

‘Mr. Knight to obtain a letter from the Tennis Club’.

Page 7, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee – Sportsfield grass cutting , final bullet.

‘Sports and Social Club’.

should read

‘Tennis Club’.

Page 8, Environment Sub-Committee – Grass cutting on Lammas and Watton Green, first sentence.

‘Mrs. Dinnin said Michael Stanley had cut the grass at Watton Green and the Lammas and done a much better job.’

should read

‘Mrs. Dinnin said Michael Stanley had cut the grass at Watton Green and the Lammas and had done a much better job.’

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

b) Review of actions

- **Investigate the possibility of changing our bankers in the next financial year**

This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Co-operative Bank Accounts (on page 5 of these minutes).

- **Liaise with Mr. Clark re his letter to Bryan Hammond concerning Whempstead**

This action point has been completed.

Refer to item 9 b, Correspondence received - Bryan Hammond re the Highways Partnership (on page 13 of these minutes).

- **Instruct Rose Brown to vacuum the boiler room monthly**

This action point has been completed.

- **Ask Mr. Burgess to provide a quotation to install a power socket in the boiler-room**
This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Community Hall Trustees - Minutes and report on meeting held on 20th October 2004 - Electrical socket (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Accept Mr. Smith's quotation for the supply and installation of hedging plants**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to planning department re 1 Hazeldell**
This action point has been completed.
- **Give Jenny Beavan wording for plaque to go on ornate village sign**
This item to be discussed under item 7 a, Specific Items – Plaque for ornate village sign (on page 4 of these minutes).
- **Liaise with Mr. Poulton re community Hall project and contact the school if necessary**
Refer to item 7 b, Specific Items - Watton-at-Stone Primary School - Community project (on page 4 of these minutes).
- **Contact Michael Jackson re specification for computer**
This action point has been completed.

The following specification for the purchase of a Dell computer was agreed.

- Intel® Celeron® Processor (2.6GHz, 128K cache, 400MHz FSB)
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition SP2 - English
- 3Y NBD (Next Business Day onsite) + Online Training value package
- 512MB Single Channel DDR (1x512MB)
- 80GB IDE (7,200rpm) Hard Drive
- 3.5in 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- No Monitor Required
- 48X CDRW Drive
- No Speakers
- Norton Internet Security 2004 (90 day trial) - English
- No Modem
- Dell Quiet Key Keyboard
- Dell Mouse
- Microsoft® Office 2003 Basic (Word, Excel, Outlook) - English

- **E-mail Parish Councillors with computer specification and then order computer**
This action point has been completed.
Mr. Poulton said that the new computer had been delivered and is working well.
- **Weed-kill gravel drainage channel at MPPA**
This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - MPPA – general (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Obtain a letter from the Tennis Club re new tennis court project**
This action point is outstanding. **Action: I. Knight**
- **Speak to Mr. Riddle about floodlighting and then contact Mr. Knight with the outcome**
This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee, MPPA General - Floodlights (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Write to contractors re grass cutting quotes for the sportsfield**
This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - Sportsfield (on page 6 of these minutes).
- **Ask Adam Welch to provide a quotation for strimming and mowing works in 2005**
This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee - Quotation from Adam Welch (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Write to EHDC re Oak trees on Lammas**
This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee, The Lammas – Oak trees (on pages 6 and 7 of these minutes).
- **Ask Adam Welch to do the work to the Oak trees on the Lammas when EHDC has granted permission**
This item to be discussed under item 8 a, Environment Sub-Committee, The Lammas – Oak trees (on page 7 of these minutes).
- **Arrange for sportsfield gate to lock**
This action point has been completed.
- **Contact youngsters to ask them to remove the earth bike-ramp as a matter of urgency**
Mrs. McCash said that she had already spoken to the youngster but would do so again.

Action: H. McCash

- **Inspect the bin and report findings to Mr. Poulton**

Mrs. McCash said that she had inspected the bin and although the bin is damaged it is operational and in use. She suggested that we do not replace the bin at present. This was agreed.

- **Tell the Cricket Club to scatter and not dump the grass cuttings under the hedge**

Mr. Knight said that he would defer this action point until the start of the 2005 Cricket season.

Agenda: 04/05

- **Ask Mr. Bunyan to flatten the bricks at entrance to allotments**

This action point has been completed and the work done.

- **Speak to Clare Lewis (Watton Pre-School Play Group) asking her to contact Mrs. Dinnin**

The Clerk said that she had spoken to Clare Lewis. However, Mrs. Dinnin said that she had still not been contacted by the Watton Pre-School Play Group.

- **Write article for Parish News**

This action point has been completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

- **Write to the Sports and Social Club asking for a donation of £75 towards the permanent line marking**

This action point has been completed, although payment is outstanding. Mr. Knight to chase.

Action: I. Knight

- **Transport moveable goalpost and permanently site it on the far side of the sportsfield**

This action point is outstanding.

Action: I. Knight

6 Planning

a) Applications

i) 53 Hazeldell

Small front extension and associated works

Mr. Stock said that because the application was similar to the adjacent property and in keeping with others in the area and therefore did not visit the neighbours.

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) 23 Walkern Road

Single-storey rear extension

Mr. Knight said that he visited the neighbours 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) Land adjacent to 99 High Street

New dwelling house and parking

This application is linked with the item below.

Parish Councillors studied the plans in detail and after lengthy discussion agreed to write to EHDC strongly objecting to this application for the following reasons.

- The proposed property is an over-development of the site with little amenity land.
- The proposed development is in the Conservation area and is not in keeping with the surrounding houses.
- The entrance to this proposed development has a restricted access and any increase in traffic movement onto the High Street would be dangerous.
- The proposed development would cause a lack of privacy and light to the adjacent property.
- If the proposed development were to proceed, there would be considerable disruption to the residents in White House Close whilst construction works were being undertaken.

Action: J. Allsop

iv) Land adjacent to 99 High Street

Demolition of derelict stabling

Parish Councillors studied the plans in detail.

The meeting was closed at 1936 to allow public participation.

The meeting opened again at 1939.

After lengthy discussion, it was agreed to write to EHDC strongly objecting to this application for the following reasons.

- The stabling is not derelict and appears to be fully waterproof and repairable.
- Should the Council decide to grant permission for the demolition of these stables then a fence should be installed to provide a partition to the adjacent property. **Action: J. Allsop**

v) **Land at Lamp Post 37, Ware Road**

Replacement street light telecommunications mast with 3 antennas and 2 associated equipment cabinets

Prior consent is not required for this application. However, EHDC has the right to refuse permission if it is not in keeping with the surrounding area, which they have done on two previous occasions.

Mr. Meischke said that this resubmitted application includes two (instead of three) equipment cabinets and appropriate landscaping to hide them.

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

None.

c) Recommendation going to East Herts Planning Committee

i) **90 and 101 Great Innings South**

Erection of 10 houses with associated roadway, parking and landscaping

Mr. Poulton said EHDC planning officers had recommended that this application be granted. He said that the recommendation takes into account comments made by the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council, (i.e. the protection of the Oak tree and the reinstatement of the footpath to the South of the development shown on a previous planning application).

7 Specific items

a) Plaque for ornate village sign

Mr. Meischke said that the Watton-at-Stone Millennium Mayfayre Committee had approved the Parish Council's wording for the plaque. Namely, 'This sign was donated to the village by the Watton-at-Stone Millennium Mayfayre Committee and the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council'.

Mr. Meischke to arrange for the purchase and engraving of the plaque from Concord Trophies.

Action: J. Meischke

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

Mr. Poulton said that he visited Watton JMI School on Friday 5th November and talked to the pupils in years 3 and 6 re their Community Project for the Pump area.

Although the Abel Smith Estate probably owns the pump, the land it stands on belongs to Hertfordshire Highways. Mr. Poulton said that when the pupils of Watton JMI School have completed their plans they will invite Hertfordshire Highways to a presentation in the hope that they will be given permission to take their project forward.

c) Donation of a seat for the sportsfield

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. and Mrs. Hart would like to donate a seat, in memory of their son Paul, to overlook the MPPA on the sportsfield.

Following a site visit with Mr. Hart, Mr. Poulton had given him appropriate brochures for seats. The seat is to be mounted on a concrete base. Mr. Poulton said that it is hoped to have the seat installed by the New Year.

d) 2005 Inter Parish Conference

Mr. Poulton said that Tewin Parish Council is hosting the 2005 Inter Parish Conference. However, they had not yet set their agenda or sent out invitations.

The Clerk to e-mail all Parish Councillors with the date of the meeting.

Action: J. Allsop

e) Vandalism to the Notice Board at the junction of High Street/Great Innings

The notice board at the High Street/Great Innings roundabout has had its door vandalised and ripped off its hinges. The manufacturers, Greenbarnes Limited, have said that the price of a replacement door will be in the region of £166.50 (plus £16.50 postage and packing, plus VAT). This includes, lock, hinges, and polycarbonate (not glass). The polycarbonate adds about £36 plus VAT to the price. It was agreed that £166.50 is too expensive.

Mr. Meischke to obtain an estimate for the repair of the notice board from a local carpenter.

Action: J. Meischke

f) CPRE Hertfordshire – Planning training on 18th November

Mr. Clark and Mr. Smith have agreed to attend the CPRE training session on 18th November and will give their report during the Parish Council meeting to be held on 8th December.

Agenda: 12/05

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

- **Co-operative Bank Accounts**

After discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Filer obtain banking details from the Alliance and Leicester. This is with a view to opening current accounts and savings accounts for the Parish Council and the Community Hall. In addition to this, Mr. Filer to find out how best we can monitor the money in these accounts and transfer funds as and when necessary (e.g. via the internet or telephone banking).

Action: D. Filer

- **Budget items**

All Parish Councillors were sent an e-mail asking them to contact Mr. Filer with items for inclusion in the 2005/06 budget.

Mr. Filer said that he has had two meetings with the Clerk to prepare a draft budget for discussion at the next Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting.

- **Watton-at-Stone Parochial Church Council grant**

Mr. Filer proposed that we send the previously agreed annual grant of £400 to the Watton-at-Stone Parochial Church Council. Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Date of next meeting**

The Budget and Finance Sub-committee will meet on Wednesday 24th November to discuss the 2005/06 budget.

The Clerk to give all Parish Councillors a copy of the draft budget prior to the meeting. **Action: J. Allsop**

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Minutes and report on meeting held on 20th October 2004**

Mr. Poulton went through the main items discussed.

- **Summer Play-Scheme**

The blinds damaged during the 2004 Summer Play-Scheme have been repaired and Sunstopper Blinds have invoiced us for £49.35.

The Clerk has been instructed to send EHDC a cheque for £50.65 (i.e. their deposit cheque of £100 sent to us before the start of the Summer Play-Scheme, less the cost of the repair to the blinds).

- **Budget requirements and hire charges**

Mr. Filer proposed that the following recommendations made by the Community Hall Trustees be accepted. Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **MPPA moss-killing and pressuring-washing of the MPPA surface**

The Parish Council accepts IRS Leisure's quotation and sets a budget figure of £700 for moss-killing and pressuring-washing of the MPPA. Also, that this work is scheduled to be done once every 18 months to 2 years.

Mr. Knight to act accordingly.

Action: I. Knight

- **Sportsfield Maintenance**

The Parish Council sets a budget figure of £500 for improving and maintaining the sportsfield ("earthquaking", reseeding and fertilizing).

- **Hire Charges**

- **Hourly rate**

The Community Hall hire charges remain the same.

- **Sports & Social Club hire charge**

The Sports & Social Club hire-charge be increased from £2000 to £2070 (an increase of just over 3.5%).

- **Electrical socket**

The Parish Council accepts Mr. Burgess' verbal quotation of £65 to install a power socket in the boiler-room.

The Clerk to act accordingly

Action: J. Allsop

- **Broken window**

The window facing School Lane is broken. Mr. Poulton said that it is thought that the original chips in the window happened when the grass was being cut and stones were thrown up by the mower. However, the recent drop in temperature has now caused the window to crack. Stevenage Glass is due to repair the window tomorrow.

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **MPPA – general**

- **Weed-kill gravel drainage channel at MPPA**

Mr. Knight said that Mr. Smith had confirmed that he had treated the weeds around the MPPA; however, they will probably need another treatment in the spring.

- **Leaves on the MPPA**

Mr. Knight said that the Tennis Club will clear the leaves on the MPPA.

- **Floodlights**

Mr. Meischke said that he had spoken to Mrs. Riddle who said that the position of the floodlights is acceptable.

Mr. Knight said that as soon as the weather permits, Harknett Street Lighting will be fitting one replacement floodlight and altering the angle of the lights so that they do not point towards the Rectory.

- **Additional tennis court**

Mr. Knight said that because the proposed tennis court is in an area of archaeological interest, EHDC has advised us that we need to contact the County Planning Archaeologist to obtain consent before we apply for planning permission.

- **Sportsfield**

The following contractors have been asked to submit their quotations for cutting the grass and strimming around the perimeter of the sportsfield during the season of 2005.

- Sodexo Land Technology
- A T Bone and Sons Limited
- Cricket Club

Because we rejected them last year, it was agreed (during the Parish Council meeting held on 13th October) not to ask Frank Cooper and Son to quote at this stage, but their original quote will be reviewed together with the any others received.

To date, only Sodexo Land Technology has submitted a quotation. However, the Cricket Club has verbally informed us that they need more time to think about what equipment they would need to purchase to do the job and consequently will not be submitting a quotation this year, but would like to be considered again in 2006.

The Clerk to chase A T Bone and Sons Limited for their quotation.

Action: J. Allsop

In addition to this, Ted Brown and Adam Welch have been asked to quote for strimming around the perimeter of the sportsfield. Ted Brown has submitted his quote, which will be discussed during the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee meeting on 24th November.

- **RoSPA safety inspection report**

Mr. Knight said that the annual play-ground inspection had been done and we have received a satisfactory report from RoSPA (i.e. no problems highlighted). However, we have been advised to check the chains on the swings on a regular basis.

Environment

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

- **The Lammas**

- **Oak trees**

- **Letter to EHDC**

Mrs. Dinnin said that she had written to EHDC re the Oak trees on the Lammas and last Friday (5th November) she met with Mr. Malcolm Amey (Landscape Officer at EHDC) on-site to inspect the Oak trees. She said that, in his opinion, both the Oak trees were safe. The tree that we thought was dead does have live growth on it and was probably originally damaged by a lightning strike.

Mr. Amey said that Oak trees could keep their dead limbs for 50 years with no trouble and that it would be a waste of our money to do any work to either of the trees.

Mr. Poulton said that not having to do any tree surgery to the Oak trees on the Lammas bank has saved us £1690.

Mr. Amey has agreed to write and confirm the details of the meeting.

He also inspected the Black Poplars by the riverbank and in his opinion they have outlived their useful life and should be cut down. He said that the money we spent on pollarding the trees was not a waste because it has made it easier for the trees to be removed.

Mrs. Dinnin to obtain a quotation from Adam Welch for the removal of the Black Poplar trees.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Quotation from Adam Welch**

Mrs. Dinnin read out the following quotation (dated 24th October) from Adam Welch for work to be done along the Lammas bank.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Clear ditch from Mill Lane to Oak tree as discussed | £160 |
| 2. Clear ditch from Oak tree to path | £1800 |
| 3. Clear bank from Oak tree to path | £1900 |

Mrs. Dinnin said that we will need to make a budget provision for some of the work and apply for a grant for the rest (see item below - Heritage Awards for All grant). If we are successful in our grant application, then we can accept Adam Welch's quotation.

- **Heritage Awards for All grant**

Mrs. Dinnin said that we are applying for a Heritage Awards for All grant towards improvements to the Lammas. Grants of between £500 - £5,000 are available and we will be applying for £3,000.

Mr. Poulton said that we should know within six weeks if our application has been successful. Sue Clarkson (the Countryside Management Service) has agreed to be our referee.

- **Quotations for weed wipe**

Mrs. Dinnin said that of the three contractors contacted, only Ben Cannon of Hyde Hall Partnership provided us with a quotation.

‘To supply and apply board-leaved weed killer to 5 acres of grassland
(in March or as advised) £150 plus VAT

Ben Cannon did a weed wipe for us two years ago on the Lammas.

We have applied to DEFRA for permission (Derogation Agreement) for the weed-wipe work to be done, but we have not yet received a reply.

Mrs. Dinnin proposed that, subject to consent from DEFRA, we accept Ben Cannon's quotation.

Mr. Filer seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: C. Dinnin/J. Allsop

- **Letter from Sue Clarkson of the Countryside Management Service**

Sue Clarkson has written to us (letter dated 19th October) enclosing her draft proposals for the further management and enhancement of the Lammas. A copy her letter and enclosures in currently on circulation.

It was agreed that the best way forward is to meet with Sue Clarkson to discuss the proposals.

Mrs. Dinnin to arrange a date for Sue Clarkson to meet with the Environment Sub-Committee.

Action: C. Dinnin

- **Quotations for grass cutting on the Lammas and Watton Green**

Mrs. Dinnin said that although we wrote to six contractors asking them to quote for cutting the grass on the Lammas and Watton Green, we had two responses only, as follows.

- **Groundwork Solutions**

Watton Green and the Lammas

To cut the grass and remove clippings to a corner of your site as discussed.

Both sites per cut £2,000

- **Blue Bury Contractors**

The Lammas and Watton Green

To cut and remove as indicated the grass on the above sites, and strim where appropriate.

This operation to be carried out twice, exact timing to be discussed.

I would suggest that it should be cut end of May and again late July. With an extra option of a tidy up flail cut late September.

The charge for the above cuts will be £950

The optional flail-cut will cost £210

Mrs. Dinnin proposed that we accept Blue Bury Contractors quotation for the two cuts with a possible optional flail-cut if required.

The Clerk to notify Blue Bury Contractors and Groundwork Solutions accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Quotation from Adam Welch for mowing and strimming work in the village**

Adam Welch has submitted a quotation for strimming and mowing work in the village in 2005 at £160 per cut. This is based on the same schedule of work that he did in 2004 (i.e. 9 cuts from April to September) and is an increase of £10 per cut.

Mrs. Dinnin proposed that we accept Adam Welch’s quotation. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Church Walk footpath**

Mr. Dunhill said he had spoken to Mr. Knight about the Church hedge and was informed that the hedge is due to be cut. The barbed-wire fence on the other side of the footpath is the responsibility of the Glebe Committee and in a very poor state of repair. Mr. Knight has suggested to Marietta Morrissey, the proposed new tenant of the horses’ field, that before she signs her agreement with the Diocesan Board she ensures that the barbed-wire fence is properly repaired.

Mr. Dunhill to chase HCC Rights of Way to resolve the Church Walk footpath problems.

Action: V. Dunhill

- **Quotations for kissing gate on FP 18 Datchworth**

Mr. Dunhill has obtained the following quotations for a kissing gate on Footpath no 18 (Bramfield Road, Bulls Green, Datchworth).

- Sentry Farming £425 plus VAT
- Farmcare £545 plus VAT
- Kirkham Contracts £275 plus VAT

Mr. Filer proposed that we accept the quotation from Kirkham Contracts. Mr. Dunhill seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Dunhill said that we will need to contact Datchworth Parish Council because the kissing gate is in their parish. Also, the field adjacent to the kissing gate contains horses and the owner needs to be notified so that suitable arrangements can be made to move the livestock while the work is being done.

Mr. Dunhill to act accordingly.

Action: V. Dunhill

b) Sportsfield

- **Traffic problem in the High Street**

Mr. Filer said that he had received a number of complaints about cars mounting the pavement near the Memorial Hall so as to avoid traffic congestion. He said he was very concerned that this action is jeopardizing pedestrian safety. He suggested that concrete bollards, similar to those outside the post office, should be installed along this stretch of the road.

It was agreed to write to Val Weaver of Hertfordshire Highways with a request that the traffic/parking problem in the village be looked at again and remedial improvements instigated before someone gets killed.

Action: J. Allsop

- i) **Report**

Mr. Poulton did the sportsfield report on the 7th November 2004, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	Very churned up by the footballers.
Litter	None.
Dog fouling	OK.
Netball posts	Still only one secured.
General	Apart from Football pitch, OK.

- **Children’s Play Area:**

Condition of surface	OK, but weeds need spraying around surface.
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	OK.

- **Bike ramps area:**

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

- **Community Hall:**
 - General Condition (Exterior) Window still broken, weed spraying required.
 - 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 OK.
 - Surfaces OK.
 - Litter OK.
 - Dog fouling None.
 - Comments OK.
- **Allotments Area:**
 - Access OK – stones in track are now bedded down.
 - Condition of paths between Allotments }
 - Condition of Allotments under cultivation } Good for time of year.
 - Condition of Allotments not under cultivation }
 - Litter None.
 - Comments Very good. Association has worked hard.
- **Culverts on Mill Lane**
 - Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts OK.
 - Dog-fouling None.
 - Comments OK. [Earth bank still in position.]
- **Salt bins**
 - Perrywood Lane OK, cleared rubbish.
 - Entrance to Great Innings OK.
 - Great Innings South – outside number 93 OK.
 - Station Road OK.
 - Moorymead Close (2) OK for both.
 - 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 -

• **Sportsfield grass**

The Football Club will not be playing on the sportsfield this weekend because the pitch is too wet and would cause damage to its surface.

Mrs. McCash said that during a recent match footballers had used an excessive amount of bad language. She asked how she could complain if this happens again in the future. Mr. Knight and Mr. Meischke said that complaints should be made directly to the referee. However, if he does not deal with the situation satisfactory, a complaint can be lodged with the Football Association.

• **Weeds Around Community Hall and play area**

Mr. Knight said that Ted Brown had weed-killed around the Community Hall and the play area.

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, Mr. Meischke and Mr. Knight did the six-monthly check on the 3rd November 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 • Moss etc. Court marking	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓	Doe Sport need to Repair.
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	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		
Tennis posts	Condition	✓		
Tennis nets	Condition	✓		
Flood lights	Are the lamps in contact with the trees Are the lamp posts in good order and free of graffiti	✓ ✓		
Wire fence	Is the wire mesh: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured to posts • Free of cuts/breaks • In good condition Is the metal-work (e.g. posts, etc.) secure and in good condition	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓	Needs 'wiring in' Mr. Meischke to deal with.
Notice board	Is it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legible • Free of graffiti • Secure • Free of damage 	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		
Boundary	Is it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free of litter • In need of a cut • Free of problem growth 	✓ ✓ ✓		
General/additional comments (if any): - No comments.				

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.	✓		
2	Platforms should be free from trip hazards and protruding bolts.	✓		
3	Fixed items of equipment should be checked to ensure parts are not bent, broken, loosened, worn, or missing.	✓		
4	There should be no sharp points or protrusions.	✓		
5	Welds should not be damaged or corroded.	✓		
6	Access points should be checked to ensure there are no missing or broken runs and steps or treads are not loose.	✓		
7	Exposed mechanisms and moving components have no pinch or crush points.	✓		
8	Guards, handrails, or swing barriers are not missing, bent or broken and have no loose components.	✓		
9	All drain holes are clear.	✓		
10	All fastenings are secure.	✓		
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	✓		
12	Foundations are not cracked, loose in the ground or corroded at the base.	✓		
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.	✓		
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.	✓		
15	For all types of protective surfacing there should be no trip points, areas where water will lay, holes or litter.	✓		
16	The surface finish of equipment should be free from rust and other corrosion, cracks, splinters, sharp edges and broken or open joints.	✓		
General/additional comments (if any): - Need to spray area around safety-surface with seek kill.				

Community Hall

Area	Check	OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
Pavilion				
Tables	Condition	✓		
Chairs	Condition	✓		

Corner seat unit	Condition	✓		
Blinds	Condition	✓		
Clock	Condition	✓		
Main Hall		✓		
2 Benches	Condition	✓		
Badminton posts *	Condition	✓		
Badminton net	Condition	✓		
Sports floor	Condition	✓		
Floor markings **	Condition	✓		
External toilets	Condition	✓		
Internal toilets	Condition	✓		
Showers	Condition	✓		
Kitchen	Condition	✓		
First Aid box	Contents: Are they out of date or damaged. Are there any items missing.	✓		
Fire exit signs		✓		
Fire extinguishers		✓		
General/additional comments (if any): Need new Parish Council employer's liability certificate in pavilion.				

- **Surface of MPPA**
Doe Sport is to repair the damage to the MPPA surface caused by a thistle growing through it.
- **MPPA – Wire fence**
Mr. Meischke to arrange for the wire fence to be repaired. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Employers Liability Certificate**
Mr. Poulton said that the Parish Council's Employers Liability Certificate in the Pavilion expired in June 2004 and needs replacing with an up-to-date one.
The Clerk to act accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

9 Correspondence received

a) EHDC – RSS14 (Regional Spatial Strategy for East of England)

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter from Councillor Mike Carver (Leader, EHDC).

‘As you are probably aware the East of England Regional Assembly will be deciding the Spatial Strategy for the period 2021. This document effectively replaces the previous Structure Plans of all six Counties in the Region and is the framework within which all District Councils’ Local Plans will be required to constructed and comply with, in the future. The current suggestions within the Strategy, particularly with regard to Housing numbers will have a very significant impact on Hertfordshire and, in particular, East Herts Council’s district.

I and my colleagues fell that it may be of assistance, in that once the Strategy is launched for Public Consultation in December of this year, that by invitation we can either attend a Parish Council meeting or a special meeting to explain the significance and the consequences for our Area.

It would be of assistance in our planning if you could advise, as soon as possible, which of your Council’s meeting in the New Year would be most for us to attend – to provide both an opportunity for explanations, as well a question and answer session for your Parish Council and/or for your local constituents.

The Consultation Period starts on 8th December and will run for fourteen weeks, to 16th March 2005. To be accepted, your submission to the Regional Assembly must be submitted before 16th March 2005.

Please advice as soon as possible the most convenient time.’

Mr. Poulton said that Central Government are proposing that a village the size of Watton be built every year for the next 20 year.

It was agreed to write to Councillor Carver to suggest that he meet with several Parish Councils at a time to discuss issues concerning RSS14 and that he attends the Inter Parish Conference in February 2005.

Action: J. Allsop

b) Bryan Hammond re The Highways Partnership

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter from County Councillor Bryan Hammond (Hertfordshire Highways) addressed to Mr. Clark.

‘Thank you for your letter and sorry for the delayed response due to holidays.

I am very sorry to learn of the manner in which the problems mentioned have been dealt with which leaves a lot to be desired. I have recently been perusing these and other ‘Watton’ difficulties having being prompted by Nigel Poulton.

The Highways reorganisation did take time to settle down but there were signs of worthwhile improvements for a while but this has not been maintained and reasons are being chased.

Whilst I can anticipate at least part of the response I will get an official reaction from the local Highways Manager and get back to you as soon as possible.’

c) EHDC – Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document - Consultation

This item is currently on circulation and will require a response from the Parish Council. Mr. Poulton asked Parish Councillors if they could contribute to the response.

He said that often he writes on the top of the circulation forms ‘do we want to respond’ and Parish Councillors put ‘yes’, but do not actually state how, which leaves Mr. Poulton to respond with his views.

10 Reports from other Organisations

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

Mr. Stock said that the Conservation Society met yesterday and is discussing ways of increasing its membership.

When questioned on the subject, Mr. Stock told Mrs. McCash that the Conservation Society is currently trying to get the trees that have died/been vandalised in Hazeldell replaced.

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

Mrs. McCash said that she was unable to attend the next meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall Management Committee. Mrs. Dinnin agreed to attend in her place.

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

Mr. Knight said that Watton-at-Stone now has a Women’s Football team. They have joined the Sports and Social Club as affiliate members, but hope to become associate members next year.

- **Watton-at-Stone Scout and Guide Group**

Mr. Dunhill said that he had been unable to attend recent meetings.

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

Mr. Poulton said that he and Mr. Meischke attended the Allotment and Garden Association meeting held on 1st November. It was a very constructive meeting during which the following items were discussed.

- **Allotment entrance**

The brick rubble used to fill in the hollows at the entrance to the allotments had now been flattened.

- **Public Liability**

Mr. Meischke said that the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association discussed the issue of Public Liability cover.

Both the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association and the Parish Council have public liability insurance cover for the allotments and there could be a possible conflict if anyone were to claim on either of these policies.

The Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association has agreed to write to their insurers informing them of the situation and copying the Parish Council with their letter.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should do likewise.

Action: J. Meischke

11 Items for Parish News

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

- Grant application for the Lammas
- RoSPA play equipment inspection
- Traffic problems in High Street

Mr. Filer to write the article accordingly.

Action: D. Filer

12 Accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

Donation towards photocopying

0.50

0.50

Payments

None

Cheques required

Inland Revenue	Tax and NI	159.03
M. Stanley	Grass cutting on Watton Green and the Lammas	700.00
St. Albans Diocesan Board	Glebe rent – MPPA land	90.00
M. Saunders Construction	Repair of car park brick wall	100.00
A. Welch	Strimming & mowing on 25/08/04, 15/09/04, 07/10/04	450.00
CPRE	Planning meeting	20.00
Ted Brown	32 hours	208.00
Earl Haig	Poppy donation	65.00
J. Allsop	November salary	519.27
Sodexho Land Technology	50% of annual grass cutting charge for 2004	382.46
HCC	Lighting energy charge	88.89
Community Hall	½ year grant to Community Hall	2745.00
J. Allsop	Phone calls to 3 rd November	<u>25.00</u>
		<u>5552.65</u>

Cheques received

Sports and Social Club	¼ rent of sportsfield facilities	250.00
Mr. Howell	Allotment rent 2004/05	5.00
Pat Hawkins	Allotment rent 2004/05	10.00
Diane Whittaker	Allotment rent 2004/05	5.00
Mr. Stuart	Allotment rent 2004/05	7.00
Mrs. Hardcastle	Allotment rent 2004/05	<u>5.00</u>
		<u>282.00</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall hire 100.00
 N. Stichbury – Main Hall hire 20.00
 Barry Moor – Main Hall hire 20.00
 Floodlighting to 03.1104 120.00
260.00

Payments

J. Phillips – opening toilets 32.00
32.00

Cheques required

The Lamp Company	2 Floodlighting lamps	129.25
Sunstopper Blinds	Repair to blinds	49.35
K. S. Burgess	Electrical survey of floodlighting system	50.00
Rose Brown	25 hours cleaning	<u>137.50</u>
		<u>366.10</u>

Cheques received

Allotment and Garden Assoc.	Pavilion hire	10.50
Mrs. Childs	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	48.00
Mrs. Ellis	Pavilion hire	21.00
Dave Boddy	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	297.00
Sports and Social Club	¼ rent of Community Hall facilities	250.00
Tennis Club	Donation to cover electrical survey of floodlighting system	50.00
Allotment and Garden Assoc.	Pavilion hire	<u>7.00</u>
		<u>683.50</u>

Mrs. McCash proposed that the Parish Council approve the above payments, Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **December Parish Council meeting**

Mr. Poulton said that PC Andy Woodwood will give a ten-minute presentation during our Parish Council meeting to be held on 8th December 2004.

- **The meeting closed at 2115.**

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