

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 15th May 2012

Present: Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman) Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
Mrs. Christine Dinnin Mr. Denis Filer
Mr. Iain Harris Mr. Ian Knight
Mr. Nigel Poulton Mr. David Stock
The Clerk (Mrs. Jane Allsop)

Members of the public: Ms. Nicky Hood, 16 Great Innings South (until 1920)

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: Ms. Emma Waltham and Mrs. McCash.

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

Mr. Smith had one additional item for this meeting.

- Richard Wilson, C-Trees - refer to item 7 a, Specific items - Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations - update

4 Declaration of Interests

Mr. Filer declared a personal interest in item 7 b, Specific items - Ferreting Licenses (Mr. Filer's son-in-law is Peter Phillips).

Mr. Filer declared a personal interest in item 7 c, Specific items - License across Cottage site (Mr. Filer is the lessee).

5 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 17th April 2012**
Mr. Filer proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

b) Review of actions

1. Send completed Annual Return and all relevant documentation to BDO LLP

Refer to item 8 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Annual Return of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2012.

2. Draw up a list of actions in the event of an emergency

Mr. Poulton said that the list of actions in the event of an emergency is nearly complete and will be e-mailed to all Parish Councillors and the Clerk when complete. **Action: N. Poulton**

In addition, the stopcock and switches have been labelled in the internal storeroom. cupboard to identify their uses.

3. Instruct Adrian Thompson to remove the bench adjacent to the Oak tree on the sportsfield

Mr. Poulton e-mailed all Parish Councillors on 19th April concerning the bench adjacent to the Oak tree on the sportsfield.

'Some thoughts on this Oak tree

1. Malcolm Amey has NOT seen this tree so might assume that the bench is nearer to the tree than it actually is
2. Why don't we ask C-Trees for their advice when we write to them accepting their quote, after all they are the experts.

Parish Councillors agreed, via e-mail, to ask Richard Wilson (C-Trees) for his advice and the following e-mail response was received on 20th April.

'I'm afraid I don't recollect the exact proximity of the bench to the tree and feel unable to advise you in this respect. However, management of the target area is an intrinsic part of my recommendations and I suggest that visitors to the field should be gently dissuaded from going under the tree by creating a woodchip mulch mat. This wouldn't prevent cricketers from retrieving the ball should it be sent in that direction but it would deter people from walking or sitting under it. If the bench is sited under the tree then it should be relocated permanently as part of the management plan.'

It was agreed to discuss the location of the bench with C-Trees, when they are on-site during the Jubilee picnic celebrations on Sunday 3rd June. **Action: M. Smith/C. Dinnin/N. Poulton**

If the recommendation is that the seat is not in a hazardous position and therefore does not require moving, the Parish Council to review the situation at its June meeting. **Agenda: 06/12**

4. Write to Michelle Hart re location of bench she donated in memory of her husband

This action point will remain outstanding until such time as the bench adjacent to the Oak tree is removed.

5. Talk to Watton Nursery about a replacement plant for the War Memorial Garden

Mrs. Dinnin thanked Mr. Smith for removing the dead bay tree from the War Memorial garden.

She said that she visited Watton Nursery to ask for their advice on replacement planting but they did not come up with any suggestions. She then suggested planting holly, which they thought would be a good option.

Mr. Stock reminded councillors that we had previously agreed to plant some low-growing plants/shrubs along the back hedge of the memorial to maintain the balance of the site as a whole. This was confirmed and it was agreed that we defer the item to our September meeting (i.e. the correct time for planting).

Agenda: 09/12

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

None

d) Action points resolved

1. Write to Oliver Heald re Sustainable Communities Act
2. Hand-deliver letter to Oliver Heald re Sustainable Communities Act
3. Arrange for Jim Morrissey to do the internal audit of the Parish Council accounts
4. Arrange for McCash and Hay to audit the Community Hall accounts
5. E-mail the 2nd revised draft edition of the Standing Orders to Parish Councillors
6. Invite PC Andy Woodward to June Parish Council meeting
7. Write to East Herts Council re leaf collections
8. Amend summarised end of year accounts and e-mail to all Parish Councillors
9. Renew CPRE membership
10. Include the regeneration of the bike ramp area on the New Homes bonus list
11. Accept C-trees quotation
12. Purchase replacement lighting tube for Pavilion
13. Talk to Watton Nursery about planting for the War Memorial garden
14. Ask Adrian Thompson to supply a quotation to paint some of the benches in the village
15. Give Mr. Poulton a copy of the 6-monthly check sheet re benches
16. Write to Brian Ansell re the Bob Ansell memorial seat in Walkern Road
17. Purchase new First Aid box for Community Hall
18. Inspect site where Network Rail have left rubbish in Perrywood Lane to see if has been removed
19. If requested by Mr. Filer, write again to Network Rail
20. Write to Ian Sharratt asking them to purchase and install two gates on the Great Innings play area
21. **Write to the Head Teacher of Watton School requesting news updates**

The Clerk said that she had not written to the Head Teacher of Watton School because Charles Clark (Chairman of the School Governors) had contacted her and agreed to send her a report in time for the May meeting. However, she never received the report.

The Clerk to write to the Head Teacher as previously agreed.

Action: J. Allsop

22. Write Parish News article

6 Planning

a) Applications

None.

b) Decisions

i) 21 Lammas Road (3/12/0153/FP)

Single storey rear extension orangery and rooflights

-East Herts Council permission granted

ii) 49c High Street (3/12/0221/FP)

Two storey rear extension

-East Herts Council permission granted

iii) **49c High Street (3/12/0228/FP)**

Demolition of rear extension

-East Herts Council permission granted

iv) **1-3, Mill Lane (3/12/0297/FN)**

Extension to roof and refurbishment of existing building to provide 3 no. self contained commercial units with associated car parking and landscaping (Renewal of 3/08/2111/FO allowed on appeal)

- East Herts Council permission granted

v) **7 Rivershill (3/12/0323/FP)**

Two storey and single storey front extensions. Rear canopy.

-East Herts Council permission refused

c) Appeals

i) **Land East of Walkern Road and North and, West of High Elms Lane, Benington**

Erection of a single wind turbine of up to 86.5m in height, substation, access tracks and ancillary infrastructure

Mr. Poulton said that the Planning Inspectorate are in the process of checking the paperwork for this appeal. When they have confirmed that everything is in order, East Herts Council will be writing to the Planning Inspectorate requesting a public enquiry into this appeal.

d) Appeal decisions

99 High street (3/11/0350/FP)

New dwelling with part formed of conversion of existing stable with attached existing garage and parking

The Planning Inspectorate – Appeal dismissed

99 High Street (3/11/0351/FP)

New dwelling with part formed of conversion of existing stable with attached existing garage and parking

The Planning Inspectorate –Appeal allowed

Mr. Harris said he struggled with understanding the Planning Inspectorate’s decision notices for these two appeals. He said that the only explanation he could come up with was that the dismissal was in respect of the application for planning permission and the granted appeal was in respect of listed building consent. The reason for the dismissal was because the plans did not tally with the site and therefore the Planning Inspectorate had no option but to dismiss the appeal.

Mr. Harris said he felt that it was only a matter of time before the applicant lodges a fresh application with correct plans which is likely to result in the granting of planning permission.

7 Specific items

a) Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations - update

Mr. Smith said that he has arranged for Richard Wilson of C-Trees to attend the jubilee picnic on 3rd June and provide demonstrations on tree surgery, adjacent to the Sportsfield Oak tree. They will also explain the work that will be carried out on this tree later in the year.

It was agreed to ask C-Trees, whilst they are site, their opinion on the safety issues concerning the bench adjacent to the Oak tree.

Action: M. Smith/C. Dinnin/N. Poulton

Richard Wilson would like to have a ‘plant a tree for the jubilee’ campaign whereby saplings would be given to residents to encourage planting. His wish to fund this with commercial sales was rejected by the Jubilee committee and the Parish Council agreed to fund up to £90 on the understanding that some of the trees would be used on council projects.

b) Ferreting licences

It was agreed that the following ferreting licences be issued for the year 2012/13.

- **Bob Adams (of 4 Glebe Close)** to ferret the Lammas, the paddock at the far end of the Lammas, and the Allotments.
- **Peter Phillips (of 18 Lammas Road)** to ferret Watton Green and the Lammas.

Mr. Smith has signed all the licences, as Chairman of the Parish Council.

Mr. Poulton to arrange for the licences to be signed by Mr. Adams and Mr. Phillips.

Action: N. Poulton

c) License across Cottage site

The license for Temporary Access across the Land known as the "Old Cottage Site", at Watton Green, issued to Mr. Denis E. Filer (of Brambles, Watton Green) has been renewed.

d) Strimming work on Parish Council land at Rivershill

Mr. Meischke said he had spoken to Charles Clark, who has now confirmed that his son Tim is able to do the clearance work at Rivershill again this year.

Mr. Meischke said that he would meet Tim Clark on site to agree what work needs doing. **Action: J. Meischke**

e) Barratt Homes and the closure of Station Road

Mr. Filer read out the following e-mail, dated 14th May, that he sent to Mike Smith re Station Road.

I have had a complaint passed to me regarding the closure of Station Road:-

Although the diversion signs are in position, a large number of vehicles are now cutting through along Church Lane, which is a single width road, past the church and round onto the Datchworth Road. This can be quite dangerous when vehicles meet, as one has to reverse or somehow get off the road. In doing this, there are three areas that have been badly 'cut up'. One of these areas is the nice grassed frontage outside Frank Warren's house, which is now a 'mud bath'. I imagine Frank Warren will be fairly miffed when he returns home and sees the damage.

On contacting the Highways Department and asking why traffic lights could not be used on Station Road, the complainant was told by the Highways Department that this had been the original proposal of Barratt homes (i.e. to install 2 way traffic lights) but this had been rejected as too dangerous. I must confess that I do not understand the danger posed by traffic lights as this is a very conventional way of carrying out road repairs or alterations.

Mr. Poulton said that he had spent approximately 5 hours a day since 7th May, placating upset residents and finding out why no letters had been sent to local residents. Diversion notices in Datchworth had not been put in place, causing confusion. The appropriate signage in Datchworth is now in place. He then read out the following e-mail from Network Management North-East

With respect to the issues raised in Miss Ella Barnes e-mail dated 11th May 2012.

I visited the site on 9th May 12 and found the diversion signage in the wrong place and instructed Mr. Geoff Cole (Barratt Homes Technical Manager) to rectify this, that said I did not see any signage directing traffic down Church Lane.

The approved diversion route is via Datchworth, Bramfield Road, A119 and the High Street.

As is often the case with road closures, vehicles rat - run off of the approved diversion route and there is very little we can do to stop this as Church Lane is public highway.

Whereas the damage was probably caused by diverting vehicles, it is very difficult to prove.

With respect to your email dated 14th May 12.

The road closure was required for the construction of the storm water sewer between the new development and Hazeldell and this closure was granted to meet the requirements set down in the NRSWA 1991, Safety at Street Works and Road Works a Code of Practice. The act left us with no option but to close Station Road for this work.

Temporary traffic signals were not an option because as with my comment above the remaining carriageway width did not meet the requirement set down in the act.

May I point out that the temporary traffic regulation order in place for these works temporally suspends the rights of motorists to pass and repass which effectively means that motorists cannot use the road and I would strongly recommend that people do not move fences and barriers, it could lead to accidents and injuries, these works have deep excavations which may attract playing children hence the safety fences.

Barrett Homes belated letter dated 10th May 12.

Are Barratts passing the blame onto Hertfordshire Highways?

I would like to bring to your attention the second paragraph of their letter.

HCC did not cause the development to be built but fully understand that such a development will require supporting infrastructure that inevitably means excavating the public highway.

It follows that we were put in a position where we could not refuse the closure request.

With respect to other issues that have been raised.

It is the responsibility of the promoting organisation (Barrett Homes) to provide an information letter to residents and advanced warning signs in advance of the closure starting and once the closure starts they should have the correct diversion signage in the correct positions.

Whereas the public notice does act as official notification we do not expect, nor do we accept it to be the only form of notification / advertising, Barrett Homes were expected to provide and deliver letters to the local area with information explaining the reason for the closure along with the dates and times, this is to be backed up by advanced information signs.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.'

Mr. Harris suggests that a short article explaining the reasons for closing Station Road be placed in the June edition of the Parish News.

Mr. Harris to write the article for approval by Parish Councillors.

Action: I. Harris

The Clerk to e-mail Ian Wilson (Parish News) asking him to hold a space in the parish news for the Station Road article.

Action: J. Allsop

8 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

Mr. Filer reported on the following items.

- **Monthly accounts**

Mr. Filer said that the Community Hall accounts for this month are not complete because the Clerk did not have access to the paying-in book because it is currently with the auditors, McCash and Hay.

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council		
Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty cash - Payments
None		None
Cheques issued		
CPRE	Annual membership	29.00
Frank Cooper & Son Ltd	grass cutting in April 2012	244.80
Hertfordshire County Council	Stationery	56.38
Michael Smith	Rymans Stationery - 12 binders for Standing orders	26.28
Wages, salaries & allowances	May 2012	1130.89
J. Allsop	Phone charges to 05/05/2011	21.90
Ted Brown	Strimming and mowing	<u>70.00</u>
		<u>1579.25</u>
Cheques received		
None		

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall		
Petty Cash – Receipts		Petty Cash -Payments
Sharon Ling – Pavilion	48.00	None
Floodlighting to 14.05.12	63.00	
Alex Hurt – Pavilion	21.00	
Circle Anglia – Pavilion hire	<u>8.00</u>	
	<u>140.00</u>	
Cheques issued		
Watton Service Station	liquid soap	32.57
Stevenage Glass	replace broken changing room window	126.00
Wages	May 2012	344.25
		<u>502.82</u>

Cheques received

Information not available because Community Hall paying-in book is with the auditors McCash and Hay

Parish Councillors approved the above payments.

- **Internal Audit of Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2012**

Mr. Filer read out Jim Morrissey's internal audit report of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2012.

'As requested I have carried out my review of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2012 and can advise that all transactions have been correctly and accurately recorded. All necessary receipts and authorisations have also been produced.

The overall increase in expenditure of £3258 was compensated by the grant from Barratt Homes of £3000 and a new homes bonus of £799. The above grant from Barratt Homes went towards the expenditure for Jubilee items purchased in the year with the remaining expenditure to be made next year (2012/13).

The budgeted receipt for a Parish path grant of £1000 was not received.

The Parish Council's reserves as at 31/3/2012 were £8562 compared with £8354 as at 31/3/2011 an increase of £208 in the year.

As you are aware, the asset valuation included in the Annual Return is no longer the insured valuations but a valuation 'for audit purposes'. This valuation increased by £778 in the year, represented by the cost of the tree guards £648 plus VAT of £130. I consider the net amount of £648 should have been included on the valuation.

I trust the above is sufficient for your purposes but should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.’

- **Annual Return of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended 31st March 2012**

Jim Morrissey completed and signed sections 1 and 4 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2012 (all Parish Councillors have been e-mailed a copy of the completed Annual Return).

Mr. Filer took the Parish Council through the annual governance statement and the standard questions were answered as follows.

Section 2 – Annual governance statement	
We acknowledge as members of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 st March 2012 that,	
1. We have approved the accounting statements, which have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.	Yes
2. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	Yes
3. We have taken all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice which could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.	Yes
4. We have provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ right in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	Yes
5. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	Yes
6. We have maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems and carried out a review of its effectiveness.	Yes
7. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	Yes
8. We have considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	Yes
9. Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets	N/A

Mr. Filer proposed that the accounts, detailed in section one, and the Annual governance statement detailed in section two (listed above) of the Annual Return, be approved by the Parish Council and that the Chairman and the Clerk sign the Annual Return. Mr. Knight seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mr. Smith and the Clerk duly signed the Annual Return and the Statement of Assurance.

The Clerk to return all relevant documentation to BDO by Friday 1st June 2012. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Asset registers**

All Parish Councillors were copied with the 2011/12 version of the Asset register.

It was agreed to include the floor safe purchased in 2011/12 on the Asset register. The value of the safe to be recorded as £130. The Clerk to amend the 2011/12 Asset register accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Harris said that VAT should not be included in the purchase values on the Asset registers. The Clerk to change the Asset Values for the 2012/13 register accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **Parish Council insurance**

Aon Limited have sent the insurance renewal papers for the Parish Council. Mr. Filer reminded Parish Councillors that a 3-years LTU was taken out last year with AON Limited. The Premium this year therefore remains the same as last year, but with a small tax increase.

The Clerk will arrange to pay AON Limited before the insurance renewal date of 1st June.

Action: J. Allsop

Community Hall Trustees

Mr. Poulton reported on the following items.

- **Hire of the Community Hall for Watton Community Day**
Mr. Poulton said that Tracy Birks, who is a member of the Methodist Church, is running a Community Fun Day for children in the village during the summer holidays on the sportsfield. Toilet access will be needed for the event and the use of the Pavilion should it rain. Mr. Poulton has asked if these facilities could be made available free of charge or for very little cost, because the organisation is a charity.
Mr. Harris said that he and his wife help to run a charity which paid for the use of the Community Hall at the normal rates and no exception should be made here. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.
Mr. Poulton to inform Ms. Birks accordingly. **Action: N. Poulton**
- **New electricity contract with British Gas**
The Clerk has negotiated with British Gas a three-year fixed rate electricity contract commencing on 26th April 2012 (Standing charge 21.5per day, Unit charge 13.02 per kilowatt hour).
The above rates are lower than the previous contract, which commenced on 8th August 2010 (Standing charge 39.030 per day, Unit charge 13.610 per kilowatt hour).
Parish Councillors thanked the Clerk for her efficient response and decision on this issue.
- **Painting of floor in external unisex toilet**
Adrian Thompson suggested that the floor in the unisex toilet would benefit from painting and has quoted £100 for materials and labour to do the work.
Parish Councillors agreed to accept Adrian Thompson's verbal quotation. **Action: N. Poulton**
Adrian Thompson has now removed all the white goods from the former outside Gents toilet.

Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **MPPA – surface**
Halycon Court has quoted £150 to carry-out the repair works required to the MPPA surface. Mr. Knight obtained e-mail consent to accept this quotation from Parish Councillors.
- **Sportsfield maintenance**
Bluebury Contractors have carried out fertilising and seeding works on the sportsfield but have not done any physical work because of the very wet weather. Mr. Smith said that some of the grass seeding would need redoing because the seed has been washed away in the rain. This work will not be done until after the Jubilee weekend.
The Clerk to contact Frank Cooper to ask them to cut the grass prior to the jubilee picnic on 3rd June. **Action: J. Allsop**

Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Groundwork Trust**
Mrs. Dinnin said that she had met Adam Beadle (Groundwork Trust) at the former bike ramp site on the Lammas. He suggested that the area is grass seeded with wild flowers around the perimeter and a picnic table and benches be installed. Groundwork Trust could do the seeding of grass and wild flowers within the next couple of weeks, free of charge.
Mr. Smith said that any seeding work done now is unlikely to germinate unless there is regular rainfall during the summer months. It was agreed that any seeding work should be done in the autumn.
Groundwork Trust also quoted for providing a picnic bench, four benches and some large trees.
Mrs. Dinnin to contact Groundwork Trust thanking them for visiting the site and informing them that the Parish Council does not want to pursue the matter any further. **Action: C. Dinnin**
Mrs. Dinnin to apply for a East Herts Council LEAF grant towards creating the Jubilee garden. **Action: C. Dinnin**
Blue Bury Farm to provide a quotation for the seeding work. **Action: M. Smith**
Mr. Smith said that Watton Ramblers would like to place a memorial bench, in memory of Mr. Everett, in the Jubilee garden on the Lammas. This was agreed by Parish Councillors. The Clerk to notify Maurice Gordon accordingly. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Oak tree on sportsfield**
Refer to item 7 a, Specific items- Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations - update.
- **Bench seat under oak tree on sportsfield**
Refer item 5 b, Review of actions - Instruct Adrian Thompson to remove the bench adjacent to the Oak tree on the sportsfield.

b) Routine reports

i) Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke carried-out the emergency escape lighting tests on Monday and manual alarm call tests prior to this meeting.

ii) Monthly village-report

Mr. Smith completed the report on 14th May.

Only the adverse items highlighted in the monthly village-report are minuted.

- **Children play area** – some weeds and safety surface degradation.

Ted Brown to be asked to weed-kill as necessary.

Action: N. Poulton

- **See-saw** – squeaks.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke agreed to rectify the problem.

Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke

- **MPPA** – surface is looking tired.

Mr. Knight said that the MPPA surface needs re-painting. It was agreed to discuss this item at the June Parish Council meeting.

Agenda: 06/12/R&A

Ms. Nicky Hood left the meeting at 1920.

iii) Weekly sportsfield-report and action

Mr. Poulton instructed Mr. Brown to weed-kill around the sportsfield and Community Hall areas.

v) Website

The Clerk to upload the Standing Orders (dated May 2012) to the website.

Action: J. Allsop

v) Website diary

None.

9 Correspondence received

a) Oliver Heald re Empowering Town and Parish Councils

Mr. Smith read out the following letter, dated 24th April, from Oliver Heald MP.

‘Many thanks for your letter of 20th April.

I have immediately written to Greg Clark MP about the points you have raised and will be in touch with you again shortly.’

b) Debenhams Ottaway – Allotment lease

Debenhams Ottaway have returned the signed and sealed Allotments lease. It was agreed to store the lease in the Fire safe in the internal storeroom.

Action: J. Allsop

The Clerk to chase Debenhams Ottaway for an electronic version of the Allotment lease.

Action: J. Allsop

c) E-mail re SLAA Round 2 - Forthcoming Stakeholder Engagement

East Herts Council wrote on 3rd May, inviting the Parish Council to comment on sites identified for development within the confines of the village, by 15th June 2012.

The Clerk to download the information from the East Herts Council website and forward it to all Parish Councillors.

Action: J. Allsop

d) East Herts Village Hall Network meeting – 30th May 2012

Mr. Poulton said he did not see the need for the Trustees to attend the Village Network meetings.

It was agreed to forward the details of the Village Network meetings to Mrs. McCash, as Chairman of War Memorial Hall Committee.

Action: J. Allsop

10 Village organisations

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

Only four people attended the War Memorial Management Committee meeting on 18th April.

Mr. Stock said that during the previous meeting of the committee, he had been given an action point to chase Mr. Poulton re emergency access via Glebe Court (this was because of an unresolved action point given to someone else some time ago). When Mr. Stock discussed this subject with him, Mr. Poulton said that it was news to him because nobody had ever contacted him about the access.

Mr. Stock apologised on the behalf of the committee for this error. Further to this, Mr. Stock said that he and the other three people at the meeting on the 18th had inspected the site and agreed that it was no longer a practicable proposition to consider re-establishing any form of access between the War Memorial Hall and Glebe Court. The subject was therefore closed.

- **Watton-at-Stone Scout & Guide Group**
Mr. Poulton attended the Scout and Guide AGM on 25th April and passed the AGM papers to the Clerk for circulation. **Action: J. Allsop**
The Scout and Guide Group currently have in excess of £15,000 of funds.
A new Chairman should be in place by the next Scout and Guide Group meeting.
- **Watton Youth Drop Inn**
Mr. Poulton said that the Youth Drop Inn numbers have dramatically increased with attendance between 30 – 40 young people every week and, for the most part, well behaved. Four new volunteers will be starting in July after their CRB checks have been completed.
- **River Beane Restoration Association in**
Mr. Knight e-mailed all Parish Councillors today with a press release from the River Beane Restoration Association, who are meeting with the Stevenage MP, Stephen McPartland, at the Whitehall pump station situated on the upper River Beane near Aston at 2pm on Friday 25th May.
Mr. Knight said that the main intention is to raise the profile about the problems with the low flow of the River Beane. Ultimately, the only solution is to obtain water for housing from alternative sources, but this costs money and getting the political will to move this forward will be very difficult.
- **Watton-at-Stone School Governors:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup**
Mrs. Dinnin said that she would be taking 31 Jubilee mugs for the pupils at the pre-school playgroup on Monday 28th May.
- **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club:** Nothing to report.
- **Police Authority:** Nothing to report.

11 Items for Parish News

One item was identified for inclusion in the June 2012 issue of the Parish News.

- Closure of Station Road **Action: I. Harris**

Mr. Knight will be submitting an article about the River Beane in the June edition of the Parish News, on behalf of the River Beane Restoration Association.

12 Exclusion of Press and public -Terms of reference for fundraising group in respect of playground equipment

This item was discussed under ‘Exclusion of the Public and Press’ and the meeting was closed to the public.

- **The meeting closed at 2107.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 19th June 2012.**