

## Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2012

**Present:** Mr. Michael Smith (Chairman) Mr. John Meischke (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs. Christine Dinnin (until 2138) Mr. Denis Filer  
Mr. Iain Harris Mr. Ian Knight  
Mrs. Helen McCash Mr. David Stock  
Ms. Emma Waltham The Clerk (Mrs. Jane Allsop)

**Members of public:** Bob Thornton and Dave Stimpson, River Beane Restoration Association (until 1931)

### 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence: Mr. Nigel Poulton.

### 2 Presentation by the River Beane Restoration Association

Mr. Knight introduced Bob Thornton and Dave Stimpson from the River Beane Restoration Association (RBRA) and invited them to give their presentation on the River Beane.

Bob Thornton and Dave Stimpson said that the RBRA first started about 20 years ago because of the over extraction of water from the River Beane at the Whitehall pumping station. This fact has been acknowledged by the Environment Agency over the years; however, nothing has been done to stop the extraction, despite continuous campaigning over the years

A recent activity of the RBRA is the introduction of the River Warden scheme, whereby there are regular reports on the condition of the river. In addition, our local MPs have given their full support to the RBRA activities. Currently a River Beane management plan is being produced and a first draft should be available in January 2013.

The Warden scheme has provided lots of useful information about the ecology of the river and it is good to see the Environment Agency trying to empower people who live along the rivers, as well as involving the local authorities, to drive this forward. Parish Councils, local organisations and riparian owners are encouraged to attend meetings to improve the state of the river.

Although the main drive is to stop or reduce the pumping stations, a lot can still be done to improve the River Beane. A natural chalk stream should have meanders, gravel shallows and deep pools. However, the River Beane has had its natural form altered over the years and has none of these features and is a much poorer environment for wildlife than one that expresses all the variety of a natural river. Because they are such benign, low-energy rivers, chalk streams cannot self-heal from the damage caused without a significant helping hand.

The Rivers Beane Association, in liaison with the Environment Agency, have walked the Watton stretch of the river along the Lammas and agreed that significant improvements could be made to the river flow by the introduction of baffles, which would recreate the meanders, and pools that are currently missing in this stretch of the river. The suggestion is for between three and five baffles along the Lammas stretch of the River Beane.

Another area the River Beane Association would like to improve is the Mill area. A v-notch in the stream would reduce the pooling effect and help establish meanders. In addition, the pond adjacent to the Scout Hut could be cleared and made into a feature that would add to the improvement of the river. RBRA has a good working relationship with Nick Fox from the Abel Smith Estate. Nick Fox was very interested in their ideas for improving the Millpond. All these ideas are endorsed by the Environment Agency.

Funding will almost certainly be available to do some pilot work for the baffles; however, this money needs to be spent in this financial year. When the plans are completed, they will be presented to the Parish Council. If the Parish Council approves them, it will be part of a longer-term effort to improve the flow of the River Beane.

The River Beane is one of only two hundred chalk streams in the world and is currently in a terrible state  
Bob Thornton and Dave Stimpson left the meeting.

Parish Councillors discussed the River Beane Restoration Association's proposals. Mr. Stock thought that the scheme outlined was good and proposed that we should agree in principle at this stage and then review detailed plans when they become available to us. Mr. Smith expressed some concern about the materials that would be used for the baffles and what impact they could have if they became loose and drifted downstream. Other Parish Councillors agreed with Mr. Smith's concerns.

After discussion, it was agreed by all that a letter be sent to Dave Stimpson informing him that the Parish Council supports the proposed scheme in principle but is concerned about the baffle's construction and materials used. Also, that our full approval of the scheme would be subject to us having reviewed detailed plans at some future date.

**Action: M. Smith/J. Allsop**

### 3 Public Participation

None.

### 4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

- **Nigel Poulton**

Mrs. Dinnin reported that Nigel Poulton was flown back to England today and taken directly to Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge. He remains in a critical condition and his recovery is expected to be slow. However the Belgian Hospital where he has spent the past six weeks in, remain positive about his recovery.

### 5 Declaration of Interests

None.

### 6 Minutes of the last meeting

#### a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

Parish Councillors approved the minutes.

#### b) Review of actions

1. **Find out who owns the land adjoining the Parish Council land at Rivershill**

This item to be discussed under 8 f, Land adjoining the Parish Council land at Rivershill.

2. **Open new bank account**

Mr. Smith said that the Clerk has obtained the bank application forms, which he would now look at completing.

**Action: M. Smith**

3. **Give budget items for the year 2013/14 to Mr. Filer**

Refer to item 9 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee - Budget items for 2013/14.

4. **Obtain quotation from Adam Welch for clearing invasive weeds on the Lammas riverbank**

Mrs. Dinnin said she met with Adam Welch last week. He has submitted an estimate for clearing the invasive weeds on the Lammas riverbank in 2013/14. However, he said that it was difficult to judge at this time of year just how much work would be required and that this figure could increase.

5. **Write warning notice for Oak tree on sportsfield and pass to Mr. Harris for his comments**

Ms. Waltham said that she drafted the following warning notice to be put under the Oak tree on the sportsfield and passed her wording to Mr. Harris for his comments.

'Please do not sit under this tree as a branch may fall. The Parish Council can bear no liability for any injury or damage caused.

The Parish Council has commissioned and received a report from a tree expert that recommends some work to make the tree safer but this cannot be carried out until the Autumn.'

Parish Councillors to e-mail Ms. Waltham their comments on the wording of this sign so that it can be erected without delay.

**Action: Parish Councillors**

6. **War Memorial garden**

Refer to item 9 a, Environment Sub-Committee - War Memorial garden.

#### c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

None.

#### d) Action points resolved

1. Monitor litter problem by the Beadle family memorial seat
2. Give Mr. Harris e-mail and attachment re signage for the play area
3. Ask Adrian Thompson to plane the internal toilet door down so it fits correctly
4. Sent out allotment rent and water charge invoices
5. Write Parish News article re use of metal detects on the sportsfield

### 7 Planning

#### a) Planning protocol

Mr. Harris said that when planning application e-mails are received from East Herts Council, the Clerk has been downloading the applications and e-mailing them to all Parish Councillors. He said that the point of us having the Planning Protocol (and the Planning Co-ordinators, at present himself as the Principal and Mr. Stock as his Deputy) was to ease the Parish Councillor's workload. To date this has worked well and recently, for example, several Parish Councillors had commented on how useful his summary of the Bull Public House application was, and wished they had not spent a considerable amount of time looking at the plans themselves prior to reading his summary. He proposed that in future the Clerk only e-mails the basic East Herts Council planning notifications to Parish Councillors, whereas the full set of plans will be e-mailed to himself and Mr. Stock.

After much discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that the Clerk should act as per the proposal made by Mr. Harris. However, any Parish Councillor wishing to look at the plans can request a copy from the Clerk or look at them on the East Herts Council website.

During the September meeting of the Parish Council, discussions took place re our policy on the conversion of garages into living space. Because this is a Policy issue and only five Parish Councillors were present at the September meeting, Mr. Stock suggested that this item be discussed again during the October meeting to allow all Parish Councillors to comment.

Mr. Harris raised the issue of the recently granted planning application for a garage conversion at 17 Moorymead Close. The Parish Council had objected to this application on the grounds that it would reduce the available off-street parking and would consequently lead to an increase in on-street parking.

At the request of the Clerk, the planning officer concerned sent her full report on the recommendations to grant this application. Mr. Harris said that, on the grounds raised in this report, their decision to grant the application could not be faulted. Because there is no on-street parking in the cul-de-sac that 17 Moorymead is situated in, and the off-street parking along the main length of Moorymead Close is having double yellow-lines installed, on-street parking is not an issue. Also, 17 Moorymead Close is able to comply with the rule for two parking spaces for a three-bedroom property. All Parish Councillors were sent a copy of the report by e-mail prior to the meeting.

After discussion, Parish Councillors agreed that our existing policy should be retained and that all objections shall highlight any related problems already experienced as the result of garage conversions or which are specific to the area involved.

## b) Applications

### i) **The Bull, 113 High Street (3/12/1513/FP)**

Single storey side extension to kitchen area and conversion of existing cellar/store into dining area, erection of 2m fencing, bin store compound, new slabbed area and 2no. new timber sheds

In line with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol, Mr. Harris reviewed this application, together with the application below and e-mailed his findings to all Parish Councillors. Following approval from Parish Councillors, the Clerk was instructed to e-mail East Herts Council as follows.

'The Parish Council has no comment on these applications.

The Parish Council welcome the plans to improve a venue which has already been substantially improved.'

### ii) **The Bull, 113 High Street (3/12/1514/LB)**

**Listed Building Consent for:** Single storey side lean-to tiled roof extension with timber framed double glazed window, existing kitchen extract vent to be ducted out through new gable end and boxed in, conversion of cellar to dining room and existing store to cold room/cellar, addition of new fixed seating and new opening into extended dining room, removal of existing cellar door, cellar flap and toilet corridor access door, demolition of existing garage and replacement with 2 no. new timber sheds, new slabbed patio area and erection of 2m close boarded fencing to patio and with gate around bin store compound

In line with the Parish Council's Planning Protocol, Mr. Harris reviewed this application and e-mailed his findings to all Parish Councillors. Following approval from Parish Councillors, the Clerk was instructed to e-mail East Herts Council as follows.

Refer to the above item, 7bi, Planning Applications - The Bull, 113 High Street (3/12/1513/FP).

### iii) **Roundabout, Ware Road/A602 Watton At Stone Bypass**

4no. freestanding post mounted signs with coloured graphics and text detail to front, powder coated to reverse

Mr. Harris said that he was not aware of this application, nor was Mr. Stock.

The Clerk to download the plans from the East Herts Council website and e-mail them to Mr. Harris.

**Action: J. Allsop**

Mr. Harris to deal with this application in-line with the Parish Council's protocol.

**Action: I. Harris**

## c) Decisions

### i) **Land adjacent to 99 High Street, Watton-at-Stone, Herts SG14 3SZ (3/12/1140/FP)**

New dwelling with part formed of conversion of existing stable with existing attached garage and parking.  
-East Herts Council permission granted

### ii) **89-95, Station Road, Watton At Stone, Herts SG14 3SH (3/12/1244/AD)**

8 no. banner signs, 1 no. flat pole and 1 no.1 stacked sign board -East Herts Council permission granted

### iii) **17 Moorymead Close, Watton At Stone, Herts SG14 3HF (3/12/1377/AD)**

Conversion of integral garage to additional living accommodation -East Herts Council permission granted

Mr. Harris commented that the Parish Council only approved one of the above applications.

## 8 Specific items

### a) Replacement planting for the War Memorial Garden

Refer to item 9 a, Environment Sub-Committee - War Memorial garden.

### b) Request for a litter bin by the Beadle family memorial seat

Mr. Meischke said that he had been monitoring the area of the Beadle family memorial seat for rubbish. He noted that within a week of that meeting, a bin had been strapped to the seat. However, there was no rubbish in the bin and no rubbish in the area. Mrs. Dinnin said that she believed Alan Beadle was emptying the bin himself on a regular basis.

Parish Councillors agreed that no further action is required at this time, because we have only had a verbal request and have inspected this area on a number of occasions.

### c) Litter bin at Walkern Road/entrance of Abel Smith field

Mr. Smith said that the bin he relocated to the entrance of the Abel Smith field on the Walkern Road is being well used. He suggested that we ask East Herts Council if they could empty this bin on a weekly basis.

Mrs. Dinnin said that she believed they had already started doing this, because she had noted that the bin had been emptied and had one of the East Herts Council blue bin liners in it.

Mr. Smith and Mrs. Dinnin agreed to monitor the situation.

**Action: M. Smith/C. Dinnin**

### d) Salt bins

Mr. Stock said that during the September meeting of the Parish Council he raised his concerns with regard to the allocation of the existing salt bins. In some cases, the sizes appeared to be disproportionate to the area/location they served. For example, Hazeldell has a very small bin to serve a large hilly area whereas other smaller and level areas have much larger bins. Once again, he stressed his concerns about the serious lack of salt available to the residents of Hazeldell.

Parish Councillors discussed the salt-bin issue and were reminded that Hertfordshire Highways is unwilling to install any further bins or for the Parish Council to buy additional bins and pay for the salt required.

It was agreed to place the review of all salt bins in the village on the March 2013 Parish Council agenda.

**Agenda: 03/2013**

Mr. Stock also said that it was important that we inspect the salt bins every month (as part of the village report) regardless of the time of year to ensure that any problems are identified as soon as possible, e.g. damaged or missing bins.

### e) Speeding issues in Whempstead Road

Parish Councillors have all read the documentation concerning the speeding issues in Whempstead Road, which were e-mailed to them by Jill Andreanoff. Although they were very sympathetic to Whempstead's speeding problems, the Parish Council has no funding to help toward speed restrictions and road signage at this time.

The Parish Council agreed to review the Whempstead and Watton-at-Stone speeding problems when funds become available.

It was agreed to write to Jill Andreanoff accordingly.

**Action: M. Smith/J. Allsop**

### f) Land adjoining the Parish Council land at Rivershill

Mr. Smith and the Clerk were unsuccessful in obtaining information about the ownership of the land adjacent to the Parish Council land at Rivershill from the Land Registry searches online. However, Mr. Meischke has subsequently found out that Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson (52 Rivershill) own this land. Their plot of land appears to be six or seven times larger than the Parish Council's plot. Mr. Meischke was told that they plan to clear the site and make it into a garden. Mr Meischke has suggested to the Wilkinson's that he and Mr. Smith meet with them to try to form a plan for the future for all of this Area.

Parish Councillors agreed that they need to establish what they should do with the Parish Council land at Rivershill and were reminded that there is no independent access to this site. It was agreed that the first stage is to clearly mark the plot boundaries and give the land a name, e.g. Rivershill Wildlife Reserve. Currently we consider the land to be a wildlife area.

The tree that has fallen from the Wilkinson's land will need to be cleared away.

This item to remain on the agenda.

**Agenda: 11/2012**

### g) Beane valley Children's Centre

Ms. Waltham said that she attended a Beane Valley meeting a couple of weeks ago. Plans have been drawn up for their new building, which will be adjacent to the Barratt Homes development at Station Road. The building will house the Beane Valley Children's Centre and the Watton-at-Stone Playgroup and is a much larger area than they currently have at the school. There will also be outside space. The building is due to be

completed by September 2013 and Beane Valley Children’s Centre will no longer need to hire the Community Hall facilities.

The project has enough funds to construct and kit out the building, but Beane Valley Children’s Centre do not have any funds for extra toys and for the external play area. The Play school will be using their existing equipment. They are very aware that the Parish Council will have funds from the New Homes Bonus, which could provide funding for the extras they require.

Parish Councillors agreed that the loss of Beane Valley Children’s Centre’s hiring and potentially Dots and Tots too, might put the extension of the Community Hall in question and give it a lower priority on the New Homes Bonus funding list. However, an extension to provide additional storage could arguably improve the renting potential of the Community Hall.

## 9 Reports

### a) Sub-Committees

#### Budget & Finance

Mr. Filer reported on the following items.

- **Monthly accounts**

<b>Watton-at-Stone Parish Council</b>		
<b>Petty Cash – Receipts</b>		<b>Petty cash - Payments</b>
Mr. Benzal	13.25	None
Nina Burgess	19.90	
John Bunyan	<u>13.25</u>	
	<b><u>46.40</u></b>	
<b>Cheques issued</b>		
Adam Welch	cutting back & clearing conifer branches at Allotment entrance	170.00
Frank Cooper & Son Limited	Grass cutting on 7th, 14, 21st and 28th September 2012	244.80
Affinity Water	Allotment water charges from 15th March	85.06
Blue Bury Contractors	Grass seeding - Lammas Millennium garden	150.20
Salary and Wages	October 2012	1082.79
Land Registry	5 Land searches near Parish Council land at Rivershill	36.00
		<b><u>1768.85</u></b>
<b>Cheques received</b>		
Mr. & Mrs. Thurlow	Allotment rent 2012/13	39.75
Michael Inman	Allotment rent 2012/13	79.50
Mr. and Mrs. J Phillips	Allotment rent 2012/13	39.75
Mr. J. Knight	Allotment rent 2012/13	53.00
Alan Cross	Allotment rent 2012/13	13.25
Helen McCash	Allotment rent 2012/13	13.25
Gavin Dixon	Allotment rent 2012/13	13.25
Jackie Roberts	Allotment rent 2012/13	13.25
Phil Moore	Allotment rent 2012/13	26.50
Marion Blacktin/Pam Dean	Allotment rent 2012/13	26.50
Cheryl Gibbings	Allotment rent 2012/13	26.50
Sarah Dance	Allotment rent 2012/13	13.25
Jim Hall	Allotment rent 2012/13	26.50
Linda Aldridge	Allotment rent 2012/13	26.50
Steve Gilbey	Allotment rent 2012/13	26.50
John Love	Allotment rent 2012/13	53.00
Roger Green	Allotment rent 2012/13	26.50
		<b><u>516.75</u></b>

<b>Watton-at-Stone Community Hall</b>		
<b>Petty Cash – Receipts</b>		<b>Petty Cash -Payments</b>
Floodlighting to 18.09.12	140.00	None
Sharon Ling – Pavilion	48.00	
Jim Keen–Main Hall 18 Sept 2, 9 Oct	60.00	
Philippa Probert – Main Hall & Pavilion	64.00	
Jo Bearpark – Main Hall & Pavilion	64.00	
Karen Oxley – Main Hall and Pavilion	<u>39.00</u>	
	<b><u>415.00</u></b>	

**Cheques issued**

James Turner Limited	annual boiler service	272.52
East Herts Council	Rates	119.00
Wages	October 2012	336.60
Adrian Thompson	plane down and re-paint toilet door	30.00
Watton Service Station	liquid hand cleaner	35.92
John Phillips	toilet opening from 01.07.12 to 30.09.12	92.00
Hertfordshire County Council	cleaning materials	8.39
Rosemary Brown	20 hrs cleaning x 7.65p	<u>153.00</u>
		<b><u>1047.43</u></b>

**Cheques received**

Sports and Social Club	donation towards keys	77.15
Badminton Club	Main Hall hire	148.50
Memorial Hall	Main Hall hire	42.00
Berkleys	Pavilion hire	40.00
Shotokan Karate	Main Hall hire	81.00
		<b><u>388.65</u></b>

Parish Councillors approved the above payments.

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

Prior to the meeting, all Parish Councillors were e-mailed a copy of the 6-monthly statement of accounts for the period ending the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

Mr. Filer went through the expenditure and income items for both the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts and explained the variations in both statements.

**Parish Council**

Mr. Filer asked the Clerk to check the following items.

- Why no payment has been made to reimburse the Allotment and Garden Association for their Allotment liability insurance. **Action: J. Allsop**
- Chase Hertfordshire County Council for lighting invoices because the last payments made were for the period ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011. **Action: J. Allsop**

**Community Hall**

- Mr. Filer said that the Main Hall income is at 61% of the annual budget whereas the Pavilion is at 42%. However, the two combined figures are exactly on 50% for this six-month period.
- The floodlighting income is seasonally low.

• **Six-monthly inspection of accounts**

Ms. McCash said that she carried-out the six-month inspection of the Parish Council and Community Hall accounts on the 11<sup>th</sup> October and the accounts were in good order. She complemented the Clerk for the way she keeps the books.

A copy of Mrs. McCash's report to be included in the Community Hall and Parish Council accounts for 2012/13. **Action: J. Allsop**

• **Arrange meeting for Budget and Finance Sub-Committee to discuss budget**

Mr. Filer said he would arrange a date, for the Budget and Finance Sub-Committee to discuss the 2013/14 budget, via email. **Action: D. Filer**

• **Budget items for 2013/14**

Mr. Filer said that to date he had not received any budget items and urged Parish Councillors to do so as soon as possible.

• **Financial Regulations for use by the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council**

The Clerk obtained a copy of the Financial Regulations used by other Parish Councils from the Society of Local Council Clerks. Mr. Filer said that he had adapted these regulations to suit the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council and e-mailed them to all Parish Councillors prior to the meeting.

Mr. Filer proposed that petty cash payments be increased from £50 to £75. This was agreed by Parish Councillors.

Parish Councillors agreed to adopt the Financial Regulations, as adapted by Mr. Filer, including sections 13.3 and 13.4.

The Clerk to distribute hard copies to the Financial Regulations to all Parish Councillors at the November meeting. **Action: J. Allsop**

## Community Hall Trustees

In the absence of Mr. Poulton, Mr. Meischke reported on the following items.

- **Minutes and report on meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012**

- **Community Hall keys**

Mr. Stock explained that Richard Stringer, one of the regular hirers of the Community Hall, has given-up his Sunday booking. Mr. Stringer paid a donation to cover the cost of a set of keys to be held by him for the duration of his regular hiring; although no agreement had been signed by him for these keys. The Clerk has not been able to make contact with Mr. Stringer to recover the keys but would do so as soon as possible. **Action: J. Allsop**

He said that the Trustees had discussed the obvious security problems that could arise if regular hirers, who had made a donation to cover the cost of a set of keys to be held in their possession, did not return them when they stop using the Community Hall facilities. So therefore, the Trustees recommendation is that the Parish Council needs to adopt a policy whereby all such hirers sign an agreement that their donation to cover the cost of the keys is non-returnable and the keys remain the property of the Community Hall Trustees. This agreement would be in addition to the normal Key-Holder Agreement.

Mr. Stock to prepare a new document to be used when a set of keys has to be cut for a regular hirer who wishes to keep them in their possession for the duration of the total hire-period. This document shall cover the policy involved and the agreement to be signed by the hirer. To save time, Mr. Stock will e-mail a copy of his draft document to all Parish Councillors for their comment well in advance of our Parish Council meeting in November. **Action: D. Stock**

(It was noted that the Sports and Social Club, who had signed Key- Holder Agreements, replace keys as and when they go missing and pay for the replacement keys. There would be no need for the Sports and Social Club to sign a copy of the new agreement because they did not pay for the original set of keys. Parish Councillors agreed that for security reasons we need to seriously control the number of keys that are issued to hirers.)

- **Equipment in the Main Hall internal hirers storeroom**

Mr. Stock said that he had received a phone call from Vernon Dunhill informing him that some of the Badminton Club equipment in the Main Hall's internal storeroom has been thrown around and some was missing.

The Clerk said it could possibly be when the Watton Youth Drop Inn leaders leave the storeroom door unlocked during their hiring and youngsters are going in there unnoticed.

Mr. Meischke to talk to the Watton Youth Drop Inn.

**Action: J. Meischke**

- **Cleaning of the Community Hall**

Mr. Meischke said that due to a mix-up in duties, both Rosemary Brown and Brian Thompson have been cleaning the Pavilion, kitchen, main corridor area and toilets each Tuesday. Rosemary cleans this area first thing in the morning and, regardless of whether or not the facilities have been used, Brian then does it again in the afternoon.

Mr. Meischke has now prepared a new cleaning-schedule for both Brian Thompson and Rosemary Brown. Brian will no longer be doing any cleaning work in the Pavilion, kitchen, main corridor and toilets areas. He will continue to clean the charging-room areas and wash the Main Hall once a week.

## Recreation & Amenities

Mr. Knight reported on the following items.

- **Sportsfield**

Mr. Knight said that he is in the process of obtaining quotations for budget purposes relating to the sportsfield pitch maintenance and the MPPA surface

**Action: I. Knight**

- **MPPA**

Refer to the above item.

## Environment Sub-Committee

Mrs. Dinnin reported on the following items.

- **Oak Tree on Sportsfield**

- **Oak tree bracing**

C-Trees are due to install the bracing of the Oak tree on the sportsfield in November/December.

- **Notice under the Oak tree**

Refer to item 6 b, Review of Actions - Write warning notice for Oak tree on sportsfield and pass to Mr. Harris for his comments.

- **Fencing around the Oak tree**

At the Trustees meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> October, fencing around the oak tree was discussed. The Trustees recommendation to the Parish Council is to install a low-level fence around the Oak tree. This is also the recommendation of C-trees.

After discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Smith obtain quotations for the supply of low-level fencing and a quotation for its installation.

- **War Memorial garden**

Mrs. Dinnin, Mr. Stock, and Adam Welch had an early morning meeting at the War Memorial site to discuss the planting of additional low-growing evergreen shrubs. Adam Welch has obtained a quotation of £60 from Watton Nursery for two holly bushes and two Ceanothus and two Sundance shrubs. There will be an additional cost for the planting and subsequent watering of these shrubs (until they become established).

Mrs. Dinnin will make sure that Adam Welch completes the work before 11<sup>th</sup> November, Remembrance Sunday.

- **Jubilee garden**

Mrs. Smith said that he had sown the Lammas Jubilee garden with a wild flower and grass mix. He envisions putting three silver birches at the back of the jubilee garden. These trees would be a minimum of 4-foot standards and would need installing soon because this is the optimum time of year to plant trees. Parish Councillors asked Mr. Smith to purchase and install the three silver birches.

The Watton Ramblers have informed Mr. Smith that they will have to install a wooden or recycled plastic memorial seat, because a stone bench is too expensive. They wish to install this seat somewhere on the Lammas but not in the Jubilee garden.

- **Abel Smith Jubilee woodland**

Mrs. Dinnin said that Mr. Ralph Abel Smith has phoned her to inform her that the planting of the Jubilee woodland will commence on 25<sup>th</sup> November. Prior to this time, all the planting areas will have section fencing installed. A meeting to update volunteers is being held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> November at 1100 in the Scout Hut.

- **Installation of replacement seat on Parish Council land adjacent to the Walkern Road bridge**

Mr. Smith said that he had installed a replacement seat on the Parish Council land in Walkern Road. The new seat is made of recycled plastic, so will require minimal maintenance. The Bob Ansell memorial plaque has been secured to the new seat.

- **Allotment hedge**

The problem hedge at the boundary of the allotments has now been cut back. Mrs. Dinnin said that an excellent job had been done.

- **Allotment sign and plot markers**

The Allotment plan sign has fallen down or been removed from its post. Mr. Smith and Mr. Meischke to inspect and take action as required. **Action: M. Smith/J. Meischke**

Mrs. Dinnin said that some of the plot numbering stakes have gone missing and need replacing.

Mrs. Dinnin to purchase replacement wooden stakes.

**Action: C. Dinnin**

## b) Routine reports

### i) Emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests

Mr. Meischke and Mr. Smith carried-out the emergency escape lighting tests and manual alarm call tests prior to the meeting.

### ii) Monthly village-report

Ms. Waltham completed the report on 10<sup>th</sup> October.

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

- **Graffiti** – on Cricket shed.

- **Rainbow multi-play and slide** - the wood is rotting under the monkey-bar platform.

Mr. Meischke to inspect and take action as required.

**Action: J. Meischke**

- **Mill lane fence** - the top bar of the fence adjacent to the Millpond is missing.

The Clerk to ask Hertfordshire Highways to inspect and repair as required.

**Action: J. Allsop**

- **Salt bins** - some of the salt bins need filling. Mr. Stock said that he had seen the Hazeldell salt bin being filled today.

- **Allotments** – the allotment plan sign has fallen over.

Refer to item 9a, Environment Sub-Committee - Allotment sign.

- **War Memorial** – the War Memorial garden needs weeding and some additional planting.

Refer to item 9a, Environment Sub-Committee -War Memorial garden.



**iii) Weekly sportsfield**

• **Litter bin on sportsfield**

Mr. Meischke said that the litterbin adjacent to the play area went missing on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October, which is the day that East Herts Council contractors empty the litterbins in the village.

East Herts Council to be contacted to find out if one of their litterpickers removed the bin.

**Action: J. Allsop**

v) **Website**

None.

v) **Website diary**

None.

**10 Correspondence received**

**a) Letter from Sarah Denison re Wind turbine appeal**

Mr. Meischke said that Mr. Poulton was due to represent the ‘Stop Benington Wind Turbine Action Group’ group at the appeal in November. Following receipt of an e-mail from Sarah Denison, Mr. Meischke contacted District Councillor Tony Jackson who is happy to stand in for Mr. Poulton.

Tony Jackson has spoken to the person presiding over the appeal enquiry and has been authorised to speak.

The Parish Council did not contribute any funds towards the previous appeal and agreed it was still not appropriate to do so on this occasion. However, individual Parish Councillors were free to send donations.

**b) Copy of e-mail to East Herts Council from David and Frances Taylor re development at 1 High Street**

Mr. and Mrs. Taylor’s have forwarded the Parish Council their e-mail to East Herts Council planning department concerning the uprooting of vegetation in the 3-meter exclusion area adjacent to the River Beane.

The Parish Council noted the contents of the e-mail and were reassured that East Herts Council planning department are dealing with this problem.

**c) Hertfordshire Highways – District Service Agent contact**

All Parish Councillors have been forwarded a copy of Damian Higgins (Hertfordshire Highways) e-mail dated 4<sup>th</sup> October regarding future Parish liaison with the highway authority and nominated points of contact.

Parish Councillors noted the contents of the e-mail.

• **E-mail from Chris Fowler, Vice-Chair of the Governing Body at Watton at Stone Primary School**

Mr. Meischke read out the following e-mail from Chris Fowler.

‘I would also like to ask you for your help on behalf of the Board of Governors of Watton School of which I am the Vice Chair.

Barratt homes have provided East Herts council with a sum of money that is known as a “Primary Education Contribution” and is to be used towards the cost of primary educational facilities serving the local residential development i.e. Gatekeeper Meadow.

Ordinarily we would contact Councillor Poulton for his support but I have been informed that he is sadly very unwell at the moment. In his absence, do you know who else we could contact either at East Herts Council or locally who may be able to help the school utilise some of this funding for the local area and children?’

The Clerk has forwarded Mr. Fowler’s e-mail to Claire Pullen (East Herts Council) and she has agreed to find out who is administrating this S106 funding.

**11 Village organisations**

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

Mr. Stock said that 9 windows in the War Memorial Hall are to be replaced by new double-glazed units in the very near future.

It is likely that the War Memorial Management Committee will apply to the Parish Council for funds from the New Homes bonus to replace the remaining windows in the hall.

Mrs. Dinnin left the meeting.

- **Watton-at-Stone Scout & Guide Group:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton Youth Drop Inn**  
Mr. Meischke said that during Mr. Poulton's absence, he would be supporting the Watton Youth Drop Inn and would act as the Parish Council representative for this organisation.
- **River Beane Restoration Association**  
Mr. Knight said that he would be attending the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust meeting for statutory stakeholders in the River Beane and River Mimram catchment areas on the 24<sup>th</sup> October.
- **Watton-at-Stone School Governors**  
A letter to be sent to the new Head Teacher at Watton Primary School to ask her if she is willing to give the Parish Council updates on school matters. **Action: M. Smith/J. Allsop**
- **Watton-at-Stone Neighbourhood Watch:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Pre-School Playgroup:** Nothing to report.
- **Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club:** Nothing to report.
- **Police Authority:** Nothing to report.

## 12 Items for Parish News

No items were identified for inclusion in the November 2012 issue of the Parish News.

- **The meeting closed at 2143.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2012.**