

A meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council was held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 15th November 2000 at 7.15 p.m.

Present: Mr. N. Poulton (Chariman) Mr. D. Stock (Vice-Chairman)
 Mrs. S. Davies (after 7.20pm) Mrs. C. Dinnin
 Mr. V. Dunhill Mr. I. Knight
 Mrs. H. McCash Mr. J. Meischke

Member of Public: Mr. E. Riddle

Police: Inspector Roy Larter (until 7.45pm) PC John Ivens (until 7.45pm)

1 Apologies for absence

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

2 Talk by Inspector Roy Larter and PC John Ivens (Hertford Police) on Policing within the village

Mr. Poulton welcomed Inspector Roy Larter and PC John Ivens to the meeting. PC Ivens last attended a Parish Council meeting on the 10th July 2000.

PC Ivens (our Rural Community Liaison Officer) invited Parish Councillors to come and visit the Crime Room and look around Hertford Police Station on Thursday 7th December at 7pm. Six Parish Councillors expressed an interest in attending.

PC Ivens handed out the crime list for the period April to October 2000. Parish Councillors commented that the statistics did not include the vandalism reported by the Parish Council and asked for these to be included in future crime lists. PC Ivens said that he had kept all the Parish Council letters on file. He also said that a person is currently being detained for the 4 burglaries that took place during this period.

- Mrs. Davies arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Poulton handed over a modified shampoo bottle used for the purpose of drug taking. PC Ivens explained how this is used and said that 6 of these had so far been found in Watton-at-Stone. No class 'A' drugs or needles have been found recently in the village. Mr. Poulton informed PC Ivens that the selling of drugs is known to take place on Thursday evenings at the Community Hall and asked for Police presence.

PC Ivens said that the police have to deal with a few criminals who commit a lot of crimes. For example, there is currently one person being detained for in excess of 200 car offences.

Mr. Stock said that Watton-at-Stone is experiencing a lot of anti-social behaviour and vandalism and that the situation has become worse since the low police-presence in the village. The people involved know that they can get away with their offences undetected. The station in particular is a high-vandalism area. Roy Larter agreed with this and said that Watton-at-Stone and Bayford Stations had a particularly bad vandalism problem.

Roy Larter said that additional money is going to be made available for policing rural areas. Currently, the police are responding to 70% of reported incidents within 15 minutes.

Roy Larter would like a volunteer to come forward in Watton-at-Stone for the position of Special Constable. This would allow the streets of Watton-at-Stone to be patrolled on a regular basis. Roy Larter agreed that the police would produce a newsletter for the village that would also advertise the position (the Parish Council would distribute this for the police in the New Year). Mrs. Davies suggested that an article could also be put in the village section of the Hertfordshire Mercury. Mrs. Davies to ask Mrs. Bambrough (the village correspondent) to write the article.

Action: S. Davies

The Police will be holding a public meeting on 28th November at Datchworth. Mr. Poulton said that he would be attending this meeting.

- Inspector Larter and PC Ivens left the meeting.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18th October**

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

b) Review of actions

- **Arrange for the removal of bench seat on sportsfield**

This action point has been completed.

- **Replacement planting around Village pump**

Mr. Poulton reported that he had contacted Major Shepherd (Watton Nursery) re the plants required. Mr. Shepherd informed him that he was expecting delivery of the plants soon and would arrange for them to be planted around the village pump.

Mr. Poulton to monitor the situation and report back to the Parish Council.

Action: N. Poulton

- **Invoice the Football Club for permanent line-marking on the sportsfield**

The Parish Council has still not been invoiced for the permanent line-markings and therefore cannot invoice the Football Club.

This item to remain an action point.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Write to EHDC re informal liaison meetings**

This action point has been completed.

- **Contact Mr. Filer and Mr. Clark re date for EHDC informal liaison meeting**

This action point has been completed.

- **Chase overall results of the Village of the Year competition and how the competition was judged**

Mr. Poulton reported that the CPRE had written giving a very brief outline of the judging of the Village of the Year competition. This letter is currently on circulation. The letter did not state what the actual marking procedure is or what the Watton-at-Stone result was. It was agreed that their response was very disappointing and next year the Parish Council would need to consider whether or not they wish to enter this competition again.

- **Contact GBS Estates re fir trees at Willowdene overhanging Mill Lane**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Stock said that GBS Estates had not replied to our letter or cut the trees in question.

The Clerk to chase GBS Estates for a response.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Ask EHDC to install two dog-waste bins**

This action point has been completed.

- **Contact Mr. Filer re water problem at barrier in School Lane**

This action point has been completed.

- **Report on Governors' decision re recycling site at school**

This item to be discussed under 7 g, Correspondence received, Jacky Dix, Chairman of Governors – recycling site at Watton Primary School (on page 12 of these minutes).

- **Look for TPO map produced by Tony Bradford**

Mr. Poulton reported that the Clerk had found the TPO map and the list of trees produced by Tony Bradford. He said that he had written to Sian Freer copying her with the list of TPOs and asked her if she wished to pursue the Parish Environmental Action Plan (PEAP) veteran-tree project for the village.

Mrs. Davies said that she would like a copy of the list of TPOs. It was agreed that all Parish Councillors should be supplied with this information.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Contact contractors re quotations for cutting back the branches overhanging the footpath on the Lammas**

This action point has been completed.

- **Contact EH Highways Partnership re repair of lighting column on footpath between the two sides of Hazeldell**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Poulton reported that the lighting column is now working properly.

- **Contact Major Shepherd re bulbs for southern end of the High Street**

This action point has been completed.

- **Contact Watton Primary School re planting of bulbs at the southern end of the High Street**
 Mrs. McCash reported that class 6 at Watton Primary School went to the site to plant the bulbs on Monday 13th November. However, when they tried to plant the bulbs in the grass verge opposite the War Memorial they found that the soil is only a couple of inches thick on a concrete base. It has now been agreed that bulbs will be planted on the opposite side of the road (i.e. on the grass verge near the War Memorial, between the High Street and Church Lane and the grass verge between Church Lane and the bridge over the River Beane).
 Mrs. McCash said that she hoped the planting would take place later this week.
- **Copy all Parish Councillors with amended list of Parish Councillors**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Check updated list of Parish Councillors for any errors**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Obtain plastic bags from EHDC to fit litterbins**
 This action point has been completed.
 Mr. Poulton said that the plastic bags are being stored in the external cupboard.
- **Chase Cricket Club re sight-screen letter**
 This action point has been completed.
 Refer to item 8, Reports from other organisations – Sports & Social Club
- **Contact Ron Jack (EH Highways Partnership) re Walkern Road bridge**
 This item to be discussed under 4 d, Specific items - Walkern Road bridge (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Give comments on preliminary budget statements to H. McCash before 15.11.00**
 Mrs. McCash said that she had not received any comments from Parish Councillors.
- **Return completed forms for change of bank signatories and opening of new 30-day account to Co-operative bank**
 Mr. Poulton said this action point had not been completed because the Co-operative Bank required a signed copy of the Parish Council minutes of the meeting held on the 18th October (which includes a resolution to change the bank details). Now that these minutes have been accepted and signed by the Chairman, a copy will be sent to the bank with the completed forms for change of bank signatories and opening of new 30-day account. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Return signed appendix 3 form to Pannel Kerr and Forster**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Check amended Parish Map**
 This action point has been completed.
 This item to be discussed under 4 a, Specific Items – Parish Map (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Obtain quotation for printing 500 copies of the Parish Map**
 This item to be discussed under 4 a, Specific Items – Parish Map (on page 5 of these minutes).
- **Write to Cled Fursland (Cricket Club) re building on sportsfield**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Write to Cled Fursland (Cricket Club) re sight-screens**
 This action point has been completed.
 Refer to item 8, Reports from other organisations – Sports & Social Club (on page 13 of these minutes).
- **Check allotments lease re water tanks**
 Mr. Meischke said that he had checked the allotments lease and there is no mention of water tanks.
- **Write to allotment holders**
 This action point has been completed.
- **Sift through artwork information from Sian Freer for information board at Watton Green**
 This action point is ongoing. **Action: D. Stock**

- **Write to Ron Jack (EH Highways Partnership) re footpath over railway bridge at Station Road**
Mr. Stock said that he had cancelled this action point in response to a letter received from Ron Jack.
Refer to item 5 a, Environment Sub-Committee – Footpath over railway bridge at Station Road (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Write to Ron Jack re traffic-calming for Station Road**
Mr. Stock said that he had cancelled this action point in response to a letter received from Ron Jack.
Refer to item 5 a, Environment Sub-Committee – Traffic-calming on Station Road (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Complete and return MAFF annual claim form for the Lammas**
This item to be discussed under 5 a, Environment Sub-Committee – Lammas (on page 8 of these minutes).
- **Contact Tony Bradford re issues concerning the Lammas**
Mr. Dunhill said that he had spoken to Tony Bradford re the poor condition of the grass on the Lammas due to the excessive amount of cleavers. Mr. Bradford is looking into possible ways to eradicate these weeds.
Mr. Dunhill said that he had also spoken to Mr. Bradford re the next phase in the tree-planting scheme.
- **Arrange for a replacement notice board to be made for MPPA**
This action point to be deferred until March 2001. **Agenda 3/2001**
- **Write to Trevor Waldock (EHDC) re fir trees adjacent to the Great Innings Play Area**
This action point has been completed.
Refer to item 7 d, Correspondence received - EHDC – Fir trees adjacent to Great Innings Play Area (on page 12 of these minutes).
- **Ask Mr. Filer if he is able to attend CDA - Parish Information Seminar on the 31st October**
Mr. Poulton reported that Mr. Filer had attended the seminar. Literature obtained at the seminar is currently on circulation.
- **Mr. Filer to report on CDA seminar**
Refer to the above item.
- **Write to Ron Jack requesting new cable ducts to be routed via the Watton by-pass**
This action point has been completed.
Mr. Jack has been told that the new cable ducts can be routed via the Watton by-pass. However, he is not able to guarantee that any future ducting work would not be routed via the High Street.
- **Contact Cled Fursland re condition of road in village**
This action point has been completed.
- **Give Mrs. Davies telephone number of Ron Jack**
Mr. Poulton said that following October's Parish Council meeting, he had spoken to Ron Jack regarding the overgrown condition of the stretch of footpath that runs along the High Street (adjacent to the River Beane) opposite the entrance to Motts Close. This footpath has now had the overhanging branches cleared.
- **Write letter of support to Ian Robey re Meditation and Remembrance Garden, and send donation of £50**
This action point has been completed.
Refer to item 7 b, Correspondence Received – Ian Robey (on page 11 of these minutes).
- **Invite Inspector Larter (Hertford Police) to speak at Parish Council meeting**
This action point has been completed.
- **Ask Jeff Skidmore to cut back any shrubbery to clear footpath at southern end of the village**
This action point has been completed.
Mr. Poulton said that the work had now been completed.
- **Write to Mr. Northcott re clearance of footpath at southern end of the village**
This action point has been completed.

- **Report on outcome of OFSTED report at Watton Primary School**

Mrs. McCash said that the OFSTED report has not yet been completed. She will give her full report at the next Parish Council meeting.

Action: H. McCash

- **Write to Watton School re use of pump as logo for the school**

This action point has been completed.

Mrs. McCash said that the school now had written permission from Phil Berry to use the image of the village pump as their new logo.

- **Attend photograph session at Community Hall on 18th November**

Mr. Poulton reminded Parish Councillors about the photograph session. Mr. Filer and the Clerk will be unable to attend the session and will arrange to have their photographs taken on a different date.

Action: D. Filer/J. Allsop

4 Specific items

a) Parish Map

Mrs. McCash said that she had obtained a quotation of £400 plus VAT for the supply of 500 copies of the map in a matt finish (as specified by Jono Meischke). Jono Meischke's quotation is £350.

Mrs. McCash proposed that Jono Meischke's quotation be accepted. Mr. Poulton seconded the motion and all present were in favour. Jono Meischke to be informed accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

A few additional changes to the map were agreed. Mr. Meischke and Mr. Poulton to check these changes so that the printing can take place as soon as possible.

b) Time Capsule

Mr. Poulton read out a list of the items to be placed in the time capsule, and then asked Parish Councillors to inform him if they had any additional ideas before the next Parish Council meeting.

- **Village directory**

Mrs. McCash asked if the village directory could be up-dated to include the new doctor at Watton Place Clinic, Dr. Penny Preston.

It was agreed that all Parish Councillors be given a copy of the current village directory.

Action: J. Allsop

Parish Councillors to amend the village directory where necessary and pass it back to the Clerk as soon as possible so that the new version can be agreed at the next Parish Council meeting.

Action: All Parish Councillors

c) Three Valley Water trenches

Mr. Stock said that Mr. Filer had told him that a meeting had taken place with Three Valleys Water and they had agreed to rectify the problem areas in Hazeldell. Three Valleys Water is still discussing the remaining problem areas with their contractors.

This item to remain on the agenda.

d) Walkern Road bridge

Mr. Poulton said that he and Mrs. McCash had met on-site with Ron Jack (EH Highways Partnership). Mr. Jack had explained that the white-lining work had not been carried-out because of the recent wet weather and flooding in the area. The work will be done as soon as there is a dry spell.

Mr. Knight and Mrs. Dinnin said that they had understood that the signpost on the grass verge next to the Waggon and Horses was to be moved to the other side of the road. Instead, a new signpost has been erected and the original signpost still remains. Mrs. Dinnin said that in her opinion this remaining signpost is causing visibility problems. Mr. Poulton and Mr. Knight agreed to visit the site and act accordingly.

Action: N. Poulton/I. Knight

e) Strim branches along Lammas river bank

Mr. Poulton said that Jeff Skidmore had informed the Clerk that he had cut back some of the branches. He has not yet confirmed that the work has been completed.

The Clerk to find out if the work has been completed.

Action: J. Allsop.

f) EHDC Landscape schemes within East Herts

At October's Parish Council meeting it was agreed that this item should remain on the agenda for further consideration.

After a short discussion it was Parish Councillors agreed not to pursue this matter further.

g) Litterpick

Mr. Meischke reported that there had been problems involving Kevin Jones and his litterpicking duties. Mr. Meischke and Mr. Stock had met with Kevin to discuss all of the problems and possible solutions. For example, members of public are putting dog waste in the litterbins, which Kevin then has to empty and transport to the litterpick bin in his car. The situation is made much worse when there is heavy rain because the litterbins fill up with water. Mr. Meischke said that he was going to spur Kevin on for the next month, whilst monitoring his work.

Mr. Meischke said that he and Mr. Stock would be making some recommendations on the litterpicking situation to the Parish Council at the Parish Council meeting to be held on the 20th December.

This item to remain on the agenda under specific items.

Mrs. Dinnin reported that the road-sweeping vehicle had cleaned the road in Watton-at-Stone today.

h) Royal Mail postal deliveries in the village

Mr. Poulton said that the Royal Mail had written concerning postal deliveries in the village.

It was agreed that this letter should be placed on circulation.

Action: J. Allsop

5 Reports**a) Sub-Committees****Budget & Finance**

Mrs. McCash reported on the following items concerning the Budget & Finance Sub-Committee.

- **Preliminary budget statements for the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council and Watton-at-Stone Community Hall**

Mrs. McCash said that she had not received any comments from Parish Councillors on these statements. She then read out a quotation from Jeff Skidmore (for £997 + vat) for the following works to be carried-out in 2001.

1. Mow plot of land adjacent to Beane Cottage fortnightly or when required.
2. Strim footpath from Walkern Road to Oak tree.
3. Strim footpath alongside River Beane from Walkern Road to Mill Lane.
4. Strim around the two seats on Lammas field.
5. Strim from top of George and Dragon car park to 80 High Street.
6. Cut back hedge running from Bull car park to back of Rivershill 2 – 3 times per year.
7. Strim footpath from Community Hall to Rectory Lane (both sides).
8. Mow land by Community Hall, dig and weed flowerbed when required.
9. Strim hedge, length of the playing area on Sportsfield site and under seats.
10. Strim or mow Church Walk (both sides).
11. Strim footpath behind the Chestnuts both sides of the stile.
12. Strim driveway alongside Glebe Court, both sides.
13. Strim around village pump.

Mr. Poulton proposed that Mr. Skidmore's quotation be accepted. Mr. Meischke seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: J. Allsop

Mrs. McCash to check that sufficient funds are available in next years budget.

Action: H. McCash

Mr. Knight proposed that the preliminary budget statements for the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council and Watton-at-Stone Community Hall for the year 2001/02 be accepted. Mr. Dunhill seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

- **Precept for 2001/2002**

Mrs. McCash said that the precept forms had been received by EHDC who had requested that they be returned as soon as possible.

Mr. Knight proposed that the Parish Council agreed a precept of £18,976 and the forms be duly completed and returned to EHDC. Mr. Dunhill seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Action: H. McCash/J. Allsop

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Minutes and report on meeting held on 1st November 2000**

All Parish Councillors were copied with the minutes prior to today's meeting.

Comment [C1]:

Mr. Poulton went through the recommendations of the meeting.

- **Main Hall Hire Charges**

The hire charges for Friday, Saturday and Sunday to be lowered by £2 per hour as follows.

	Non-resident	Resident
9 am – 6 pm	£8	£6
6 pm – 10.30 pm	£10	£8

These days were selected because they had not attracted many bookings to date.

- **Floodlighting charges**

The floodlighting hire charges remain at the present level of £5 per hour.

- **Storage building on sportsfield**

The Parish Council accepts the plans as submitted by Cled Fursland, on condition that the building is located as close as possible to the boundary fence.

Mrs. McCash proposed that the recommendations of the Community Hall Trustees be accepted. Mr. Dunhill seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

All hire-charge notices to be amended to show the agreed changes.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Fursland to be informed of the Parish Council's decision.

Action: J. Meischke/ J. Allsop

- **Sports & Social Club**

Mr. Meischke proposed that the Sports & Social Club hire charge rises from £1730 to £1800 (a rise of 4%) from 1st April 2001. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

The Sports & Social Club to be notified of this increase.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Heating**

Mr. Meischke said that there had been complaints about the heating system. On investigation, an air-lock was found in one of the radiators situated near the heating thermostat. The air-lock was removed and the heating system is now working correctly.

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **Progress on MPPA**

Mr. Meischke said that the work is progressing slowly. This has been partly due to the bad weather and the contractors starting new jobs elsewhere so that they do not lose a contract.

When the work has been completed, temporary court-markings will be laid. Permanent marking will be carried-out in April next year.

Environment

Mr. Stock reported on the following items concerning the Environment Sub-Committee.

- **Reinstatement of bank in Church Lane (Clappers Lane)**

There has been no further correspondence received concerning the reinstatement of the bank in Church Lane. Mr. Stock has not pursued this matter further due to the current problems that Railtrack has with the rail network.

This item to remain on the agenda.

- **Footpath over railway bridge at Station Road**

Mr. Stock explained that, regardless of previous discussions, agreements and promises, we had received a letter from Ron Jack (EH highways Partnership) stating that work on the footpath over the bridge would not take place at all. Subsequently, Mr. Stock and Mr. Poulton discussed this matter and agreed that they needed to take urgent action, and at the highest level, to ensure that this decision was reversed.

During a subsequent meeting with Mrs. McCash and Ron Jack on the 1st November about the traffic-calming scheme in Station Road, Mr. Poulton took the opportunity to discuss the bridge problem. After lengthy debate, Mr. Jack suggested that the Parish Council write to Peter Brook and the letter be hand-delivered by Mr. Poulton. Mr. Poulton and Mr. Stock prepared a letter accordingly (see attached). Mr. Poulton then gave the letter personally to Mr. Brook on the 3rd November.

The following reply was received from Mr. Brook (dated 8th November).

'Re Footway over Station Road Lodge, Watton-at-Stone

Further to your letter of the 2nd November 2000 I have carried out a reappraisal of the situation in conjunction with Ron Jack and Alex Heywood and wish to confirm that the works will now proceed in this financial year.

Ron Jack's decision not to proceed was taken following the six monthly review of spending across the whole Partnership and the instruction to only proceed with urgent works for the remainder of this financial year. Whilst the financial situation has not eased, I have made an exception in this case and instructing Ron to proceed with the works.'

This item to remain on the agenda to monitor progress.

- **Traffic-calming Station Road**

This item will remain on hold until the footpath over the railway bridge has been installed.

This item to be placed on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting to be held on the 21st February 2001.

Agenda: 2/2001

- **Lammas**

- **Willow tree**

Mr. Poulton reported that, during the recent storms, a Willow tree on the Lammas riverbank had fallen into a garden in Lammas Road. He and Mr. Stock had agreed that the tree should be cleared immediately and Mr. Skidmore was asked to carry-out the work accordingly.

The Willow tree has now been removed from the garden, but Mr. Skidmore is waiting for the water levels in the river Beane to recede before he removes the main trunk of the tree, which is lying across the river.

- **MAFF claim form**

Mr. Dunhill reported that he has completed the MAFF claim form for year 1999/2000 year (ending 30th September 2000). The Clerk to return the completed form to MAFF. **Action: J. Allsop**

- **PPP**

Mr. Dunhill said that the PPP grant money should be received soon.

- i) **Report**

Mr. Stock carried-out the sportsfield report on the 13th November, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**

Condition of grass	OK.
Litter	OK.
Dog-waste bin and fouling	OK.
Netball posts	OK and secure.
General	1 broken and 1 missing rail from wood fence at horses field.

- **Children's Playground:**

Condition of surface	OK, apart from see-saw: one edge of safety-surface needs repair.
Litter/Litter bin	OK.
Large swings	As before.
Small swings	OK.
See-Saw	OK.
Slide	OK.
Comments	Good overall.

- **Community Hall:**

General Condition	Graffiti on black brick outside Parish Council meeting room and on one window.
Litter bin	OK.
Car Park	OK.
General	Problems of increasing graffiti.

- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:** No comments due to current work by Doe Sport.

Surface	-
Boundary Fencing	-
Tennis nets	-
Litter	-
General	-

- **Great Innings Play Area:**

Equipment	Good.
Surfaces	OK.
Litter	None.
Dog-waste bin and fouling	None.
Comments	Gaps at ends of boundary fence not dog-proof.

- **Allotments Area:**

Access	Conifers starting to be a problem again.
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Condition of paths between Allotments OK.
 Condition of Allotments Cultivation OK.
 Condition of Allotments not under cultivation OK, apart from many stinging nettles.
 Litter OK.
 Comments About right for time of the year.

• **Culverts on Mill Lane**

Litter and rubbish in and Culverts None.
 Dog-fouling None.
 Comments 2 litter bins full.

• **Salt bins**

Perrywood Lane 1/2 full, some litter.
 Great Innings 1/2 full
 Station Road 1/2 full
 Moorymead Close 1/2 full
 Hazeldell 1/2 full

• **Dog-waste bins**

Footpath 17 In use.
 Sportsfield In use.
 Church Walk In use.
 Walkern Road In use.
 Station Road In use.
 High Street (by Memorial) In use.

General Comments:

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• **Damage to horses field fence**

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke to inspect the fence and arrange for any repair works.

Action: N. Poulton/M. Meischke

• **Damage to safety-surface under seesaw**

It was agreed that this item should be placed on the agenda for 21st March 2001 so that an inspection and report can be made.

Agenda: 3/2001

• **Graffiti around Community Hall**

Mr. Poulton said that he had tried to remove the graffiti from the black bricks around the Community Hall but had been unable to do so.

Mr. Meischke said that he would see if he was able to remove the graffiti using different materials.

Action: J. Meischke

• **Fencing at Great Innings Play Area**

Mr. Stock said that there are gaps at the two ends of the Great Innings play area boundary fence, which would allow dogs to enter the area.

It was agreed to write to Trevor Waldock (Playground Inspector at EHDC) asking him to have the gaps closed so as to make the area dog-proof.

Action: D. Stock/J. Allsop

• **Barrier on Church Walk**

Mr. Poulton reported that this barrier had been ripped out of the ground and subsequently repaired by Jeff Skidmore. However, the day after the repair was carried-out the barrier was ripped out of the ground again. Mr. Dunhill agreed to ask the HCC Rights of Way Department to reinstate the barrier when the hedge cutting on Church Walk has been carried out.

Action: V. Dunhill

ii) **MPPA & sports equipment in Main Hall - six-monthly check**

MPPA & Community Hall equipment - six monthly check

Mr. Poulton and Mr. Meischke carried-out the six-monthly check on the 1st November, the result of which is as follows.

Note that:

- **U** indicates that urgent (i.e. immediate) action is required
- **S** indicates that action is required soon
- **W** indicates that action can wait

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. 			No action taken MPPA being resurfaced.
	Court marking			
Kicker boards	Are they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graffiti-free • 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	4		Moved into storage shed during re surfacing.
Tennis nets	Condition	4		
Flood lights	Are the lamps in contact with the trees	4		
	Are the lamp posts in good order and free of graffiti	4		
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			No action taken MPPA being resurfaced.
	Are the gates in good condition Do the gates open, close and lock			
Notice board	Is it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legible • Free of graffiti 	4		Cracked - needs repairing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure • Free of damage 	4		
		4		
Boundary	Is it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free of litter • In need of a cut 	4		Hedge needs cutting soon. In hand with Nick Whitehead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free of problem 	4		
Play Area				
Slide	Condition of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand rail 	4		
General/additional comments (if any):		None		

Community Hall

Area	Check	OK	Needs Attention	Comments (if any)
2 Benches	Condition			
Badminton/ short tennis posts *	Condition	4		
Badminton posts *	Condition	4		
Badminton net	Condition	4		
Short-tennis net	Condition	4		
Netball posts	Condition	4		
Netball nets	Condition	4		
Sports floor	Condition	4		Tear in floor.
Floor markings	Condition	4		
External toilets	Condition	4		
Internal toilets	Condition	4		
Showers	Condition	4	W	
Kitchen	Condition	4		Away team referee showerhead needs cleaning.
General/additional comments (if any): Chewing gum on Pavilion floor. Please include first aid box on all future check lists. First aid box requires: Emergency eye wash, surgical latex gloves, antiseptic first aid cream				

• **First aid**

Mr. Poulton reported that the first aid items are being ordered from County Supplies.

• **Pavilion floor**

Mr. Poulton said that he had removed the chewing gum from the pavilion floor.

6 Planning

a) Applications

None.

b) Decisions

i) **Amon Luin, Walkern Road**

Special needs adaptation to form bedroom, wet room, all with conservatory link to main building.

-EHDC permission refused.

7 Correspondence received

a) Waggon and Horses – Application for the transfer of licence

Mr. Poulton said that this application has now been withdrawn.

b) Ian Robey

Mr. Poulton read the following letter (dated 20th October) from Ian Robey.

‘Thank you so much for your letter of to-day’s date and for the enclosed cheque for £50.

It is so good to have this practical encouragement from our local Council and, hopefully, it will be a stepping stone to other organisations giving grants to enable our dream of a Remembrance Garden come true.

Again, many thanks.’

c) EHDC – Trees for people

EHDC has written (letter dated 20th October) advising us that they are running a scheme whereby members of the public or representatives from an organisation can participate in planting a commemorative tree in a public park (to mark a special event). In the past the scheme has been extended so as to supply trees to Town and Parish Councils. Mr. Poulton said that he had put up a poster in the village advertising the scheme. Parish Councillors agreed that at present they could see no benefit in obtaining a supply to trees for the village.

d) EHDC – Fir trees adjacent to Great Innings Play Area

Mr. Poulton read out a letter (dated 30th October) from Andrew Mills, Grounds Manager at EHDC, in response to our letter asking for the lower branches of the fir trees (adjacent to the Great Innings Play Area) to be cut back to a height of 1 metre above ground level. Mr. Mills has copied our letter to EHDC's Technical Inspector, Mr. Paul Davies, who will undertake a site inspection in the near future and advise us of his findings, including what works they are able to undertake and the time scale involved.

This item to remain on the agenda (under specific items) until it is resolved.

e) Jeannette Williams – Youth Club funds

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 3rd November) from Jeanette Williams.

I felt that I should bring to your notice that Watton Youth Club accounts are still operating but dormant. The following accounts are in existence and would normally have been audited by Helen McCash at this time of the year.

Current Account	£350.94
Business Deposit Account	£550.90

Sarah Davies and myself are signatories on the accounts.

I hold all the records at the above address but due to the amount involved feel it appropriate to bring this to the attention of the Parish Council.'

It was agreed to write and acknowledge receipt of this letter and wishes the Youth Club every success for the future.

Action: J. Allsop

f) EHDC – Refuse and recycling service

EHDC has written (letter dated 1st November) advising us that they now have 'Shoe Recycling Banks' in Bishop's Stortford, Sawbridgeworth and at the library car park in Ware. Also enclosed with their letter were the refuse collection dates for the Christmas and New Year holidays and the opening times of the household waste sites; plus posters concerning holiday season bottleneck and the recycling of Christmas trees.

The Clerk to ask EHDC to produce a poster to advertise the 'Shoe Recycling Banks'

Action: J. Allsop

g) Jacky Dix, Chairman of Governors – recycling site at Watton Primary School

Mrs. McCash read out a letter from Jacky Dix, dated 6th November 2000. The letter advises the Parish Council that the Health and Safety Sub-Committee (which comprises of 4 out of the 12 School Governors) had voted to have the recycling site at the school removed. As a sub-committee, they were given delegated powers to make a decision separate from the full governing body. Mrs. Dix writes that it seemed inappropriate for the whole governing body to vote on this issue, which has no other impact on any other sub-committee, except for the small financial implication.

It was agreed to write to Mrs. Dix stating that we are extremely disappointed to learn of the decision to remove the re-cycling facility from the school grounds. The current facility has been very successful, mainly due to its location. A move to another, and less convenient, site will discourage many people from continuing to re-cycle.

In addition, we shall also state that we are very concerned to hear that a sub-committee comprising 4 of the 12 School Governors appears to be able to make such a vital decision that affects the whole community. And, in our case, we have a more democratic process in which sub-committees make recommendations, which are subsequently approved, modified or rejected by the whole Council.

It was agreed that the letter be signed by the eight Parish Councillors present at this meeting.

Action: J. Allsop/8 Parish Councillors

h) EHDC – Summer Play Schemes 2001

Mr. Poulton reported that EHDC had written (letter dated 7th November 2000) requesting a financial contribution, of between £100 and £150, towards the running costs of the summer play scheme 2001 (which will run for a four-week period from Monday 30th July – Friday 24th August 2001).

After discussion by Parish Councillors, it was agreed to inform EHDC that the free use of the Community Hall facilities represents the Parish Council's donation towards the 2001 Summer Play Scheme. However, a deposit of £100 will again be required (to cover any possible damage to the building) before any booking is confirmed. EHDC also to be informed that the Parish Council were very pleased with the clean and tidy condition that the Community Hall building was left in after the 2000 Summer Playscheme.**Action: J. Allsop**

i) HCC – Rural rides, evening services in Hertfordshire

Mr. Poulton read out a letter (dated 8th November) from the Passenger Transport Unit at HCC informing us that, because of lack of use, the Rural Rides evening services in Hertfordshire will be withdrawn from 28th November 2000. HCC examines passenger loading using established cost-benefit criteria and, at the level of use experienced on Rural Rides, the service did not meet the criteria for continuing support.

j) RoSPA – Children’s playgrounds annual inspection

Mr. Poulton reported that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) had written inviting us to have our annual playground inspections carried-out by them. The Parish Council requires no action because they already have an arrangement with EHDC to have their annual inspection carried-out by RoSPA.

8 Reports from other Organisations

- **Wotton-at-Stone Conservation Society**

Mr. Stock said that the last meeting of the Conservation Society was cancelled and therefore he had nothing to report. He did however inform the secretary (Mrs. G. Gilbey) that the Parish Council was pursuing the problem of litterpicking within the village and the reinstatement of the bank in Church Lane (otherwise known as Clappers Lane).

- **Wotton-at-Stone Primary School**

Mrs. McCash said that she would inform the Parish Council about the OFSTED report and any other related matters at the Parish Council meeting to be held on the 20th December.

- **Wotton-at-Stone 2000**

Mr. Dunhill reported that the next meeting of Watton 2000 will be held on Wednesday 6th December at 8.00 pm in the Community Hall.

Mr. Poulton said that the Parish Map and the Peep in the Past videos would be on sale to the public during the exhibition to be held on the 30th December (in the Community Hall).

- **Wotton-at-Stone Memorial Hall.**

Mrs. Dinnin reported that the whole committee was re-elected during the Watton-at-Stone Memorial Hall’s recent AGM. One additional member was also elected.

The new kitchen has been completed and the committee are now looking for funding to refurbish the ladies toilets and the shed.

- **Wotton-at-Stone Youth Club**

Mrs. Dinnin invited Mrs. Davies to report on this item.

Mrs. Davies said that although they had successfully persuaded HCC to agree to the funding for a paid Youth Club leader for one evening a week, they were having difficulty in getting applications for the position. She said that it might be possible for one of the paid workers at another Youth Club in East Hertfordshire to be transferred to Watton-at-Stone (this will not be easy).

- **Wotton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club**

Mr. Meischke read out the following letter, dated 2nd November, from Wilf Emsley (Watton-at-Stone Cricket Club Committee) to Ian Knight (Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club).

‘Thank you for your letter of 20th September which has been passed to me for reply.

The Sight Screen on the meadow is the property of the Cricket Club and naturally, we are responsible for its day to day maintenance. Thank you for confirming that any damage caused by the Parish Council or its contractors will be remedied by the Parish Council.

You should be aware, however, that public liability for the Sight Screen in respect of third party damage or injury is already covered by your existing insurance. I attach a copy of a fax from the broker confirming this.

Please accept my apologies for the delay in repaying to your letter.’

Note: Because the letter was written to Mr. Knight via the Sports & Social Club and not as a Parish Councillor, in the penultimate sentence of the penultimate paragraph the wording ‘your existing insurance’ refers to the Watton-at-Stone Sports & Social Club insurance.

Mr. Meischke said that the Sports & Social Club had now held a meeting, which was attended by various groups (with the exception of the Cricket Club and Saturday footballers). There are now two separate Football clubs. One uses the sportsfield on Saturday and the other on Sunday. The Sunday footballers have requested a set of keys to the Community Hall changing room facilities. It was agreed that keys be cut for the external door, changing rooms and outside storeroom.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Knight said that the Sports & Social Club is now represented by a small group of members. They have agreed to carry-out a village-wide mail drop to inform people of what is happening at present, what could be done in the future and asking for interested parties to put themselves forward. Hopefully, by March 2001, the Sports & Social Club will be able to move forward again. If the worst comes to the

worst, the Sports & social Club could exist as a small liaison group acting on behalf of the other sporting clubs in the village.

9 Accounts/Correspondence

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

None

Payments

Stamps 50 x 27p

13.50

13.50

Cheques required

Methodist Church	Donation from Millennium fund for meditation and remembrance garden	50.00
Don Chandler	8 hours litterpick	33.92
M & F Decorations	Installation of 2 dog waste bins	20.00
Community Hall *	Reimbursement of Don Chandler's litterpicking wages paid out of Community Hall account in error	186.56
Plastic Omnium	2 dog waste bins	464.13
Glasdon UK	Litterbin to replace vandalised bin at Station	43.87
J. Allsop	November salary	<u>447.80</u>
DR Monk	Leaf clearance from 6.11.00 – 8.11.00	100.00
Kevin Jones	48 hours litterpicking from 04.09.00 – 1.10.00	203.52
K. Jones	48 hours litterpicking from 02.10.00 – 29.10.00	203.52
Jeff Skidmore	To carry-out grass cutting and other works as instructed	1279.57
J. Meischke	To design and supply artwork for Watton-at-Stone Parish Map	<u>500.00</u>
J. Allsop	Phone charges to 4.11.00	30.06
		<u>3562.95</u>

Cheques received

Mr. Hall	Allotment rent 2000/01	<u>7.00</u>
		<u>7.00</u>

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Floodlighting to 18/10/00	63.00	VAT return 9/00	24.75
Floodlighting to 01/11/00	15.00	Eastern Electricity	69.02
C. Straker – Main Hall to 18/10/00	<u>56.00</u>	NSPCC Diary 2001	<u>2.00</u>
	<u>134.00</u>		<u>95.77</u>

Cheques required

Mrs. C. Bewley	37.5 hours cleaning	187.50
Watton-at-Stone PCC	Parish Magazine advertisement	80.00
Don Chandler	5 hours work	21.20
EHDC	November rates	<u>83.00</u>
		<u>371.70</u>

Cheques received

Conservative Association	Hire of Pavilion	16.00
Buntingford & District Mechanical Restoration Association	Hire of Parish Council room	37.80
Mrs. Neal	Hire of Pavilion	28.00
Parish Council *	Reimbursement of Don Chandler's litterpicking wages paid out of Community Hall account in error	186.56
Cricket Club	Water usage July 1998 to May 2000	31.08
Football Club	Main Hall hire	<u>40.00</u>
		<u>339.44</u>

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

10 Chairman's / Clerk's Report

Mr. Poulton reported on the following items.

- **Nationwide Rural Survey**

The Countryside Agency has asked the Parish Council to complete a rural services survey for 2000. Mr. Poulton said that he had completed the forms. It was agreed that the completed forms be returned and a copy be kept on file.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Train service to/from Watton-at-Stone station**

Mr. Poulton said that he had been contacted by John Bromley of 5 Moorymead Close because although the train services are running again following the Hatfield crash, trains are still not calling at Watton station. An emergency service is still in existence to ferry passengers (by bus) to Hertford and Stevenage Stations.

It was agreed that a letter be sent to Alan Neville (of WAGN) expressing great concern about the lack of a train service and requesting an up-date with regard to when we can expect the situation to improve.

Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop

- **Hertfordshire's Rail Prospectus – 2001-2005**

This item has been on circulation. Mr. Poulton said that Parish Councillors had made the following comments.

- There are lack of announcements for changes in timetables at the station.
- The unmanned 'permit to travel' machine is frequently inoperative. An anti-vandal machine is required.
- There is a lack of prioritisation for improvement of the station facilities.
- There is a lack of consultation with local users and the Parish Council. What form could such consultations take and how frequently would they occur?
- There is an increase in vandalism and graffiti at the station.
- There is a lack of policing at the station.

It was agreed that a letter be sent to HCC making the above comments.

Action: J. Allsop

- **The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.**

- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 20th December 2000.**