

Minutes of the meeting of the Wotton-at-Stone Parish Council held in the Community Hall on Wednesday 9th March 2005

Present:	Mr. Poulton (Chariman)	Mr. J. Meischke (Vice-Chairman)
	Mrs. C. Dinnin	Mr. D. Filer
	Mr. I. Knight	Mrs. McCash
	Mr. M. Smith	Mr. D. Stock
Police:	Inspector Pat Rawle	PC Andy Woodward
	PCSO Paul Weston	

Mr. Poulton welcomed Mrs. McCash back after her recent illness.

1 Apologies for absence

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

2 Public Participation

None.

3 Declaration of Interests

None.

4 Chairman's/Clerk's Report

The planning application for 31 Station Road (Garage and first floor extensions - amended scheme) was left off the agenda in error. This item will be discussed under 7 a iii, Planning applications (on page 4 of these minutes).

Item 9 a, Recreation and Amenities Sub-Committee - Estimate re work to two Oak trees on the Lammas should read Estimate re work to two Oak trees on the sportsfield.

5 Report from P C Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston re policing matters

Mr. Poulton welcomed Inspector Pat Rawle, PC Andy Woodward and PCSO Paul Weston and then invited them to report on policing matters involving the village.

There have been 45 reported crimes for the period 1st January 2005 to 9th March 2005 (today's date).

PC Woodward said that some of these crimes are in the early stage of investigation. The offences include drink-driving, threat to kill, use of illegal drugs, burglary, harassment and grievous bodily harm.

There have also been several distraction-burglaries targeted at elderly people in the area. The police have launched 'operation man hunt' to try to prevent these burglaries from occurring again and have made a presentation to some of the residents within the village (i.e. during a lunch at Glebe Court).

PC Andy Woodward agreed to supply leaflets about bogus-callers so that they can be given to residents during the issue of bus permits on 19th March.

Action: PC Woodward

Hazeldell has suffered a recent spate of vandalism by youngsters, including damage to fences, litterbins and graffiti. Mrs. McCash thanked PC Woodward, on behalf of the residents of Hazeldell, for his prompt response to these problems. As a result, three youngsters are in the process of having Acceptable Behaviour Contracts agreed between them and the police.

During the Autumn there were numerous incidents of off-road motorcycling. The main areas affected included Mill Lane and Perrywood Farm. Last year, during 'operation arable', police gave offenders a warning. If the offence is repeated again the police have the authority to remove the motorbike- from its owner.

PC Woodward agreed to obtain cones etc. for the Church Fete in May. Last year they had a police car present for the first time and Mr. Knight said they would be welcome to attend again and suggested they had their own stall/mobile police station.

Inspector Rawle said that three suspected car thieves from the Luton area have been arrested for stealing vehicles by breaking into houses and taking the car keys. Recent car thefts/burglaries had taken place in Hazeldell (Wotton-at-Stone) High Cross, Dane End and Walkern. He urged that house owner's -double-lock their doors, especially at night and put their car keys in a safe/inconspicuous place.

Mr. Poulton suggested that Inspector Rawle writes an article for the Parish News about the car theft problem. Inspector Rawle agreed to do so.

Action: Inspector Rawle

PC Woodward said that it would appear that the information that he gave us in the following e-mail was not quite correct.

'I have had a call from the people who run our mobile speed camera van that I mentioned at the meeting the other night. They stated that in order for a stretch of road to be considered for use by the van, there must have either have been 4 serious injuries or deaths along that stretch of road or ten letters of complaint about speeders. If you do get any complaints about speeding either along Station Road or the High Street (or anywhere else in Watton for that matter) please ask the complainant to write to:

Martin Seers, Highways House, 41-45 Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 3FP.

I will urge any speeding complaints to this gentleman as well and hopefully it may lead to the van being used in Watton-at-Stone.

Many thanks.'

He said that the 10 or more letters was an internal trigger and this information was private to the Highways Partnership and should not have been divulged to PC Woodward. However, he did think that the Highways Partnership would act on the letters of complaint they have received.

Inspector Rawle said that what needs to be done is to use the Partnership speed-camera van in specific problem-areas in Watton-at-Stone. However, the police do not know the criteria required by the Highways Partnership to trigger its use.

Mr. Poulton said that he would speak to Val Weaver about this problem.

Action: N. Poulton

Speed cameras have not been used in the High Street since 2001 and traffic problems had increased since then.

The Parish Council agreed to write to Inspector Rawle highlighting the speeding-related problem areas in the village.

Action: J. Allsop

PC Woodward said that he is going to be trained on how to use the laser speed-gun. He has completed his training to drive a 4 x 4 off-road vehicle, which has been made available to him and PC Paul Scott to allow them to visit the farming community and pursue criminals in off-road situations.

The HCC Education Department is funding schools to encourage pupils that the healthy way to go to school is to walk. However, in Watton-at-Stone the main reason why parents are reluctant to allow their children to walk is the large amount of traffic they have to negotiate.

Inspector Rawle said that thanks to funding from the Hertfordshire Partnership (who pay for four Police Community Support Officers), he has more staff under him than he has ever had before. He said that the good thing about Police Community Support Officers are that they cannot be taken away from the local areas to do other duties, whereas a Police Constable can.

Mr. Poulton thanked Inspector Rawle, PC Woodward and PCSO Weston for attending the meeting.

Inspector Rawle, PC Woodward and PCSO Weston left the meeting.

6 Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th February 2005**

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

Mr. Smith seconded the motion and all present at that meeting were in favour.

b) Review of actions

- **Request signposting for Church Lane from East Herts Council**

Mr. Poulton said that the sign posts for both ends of Church Lane were ordered on 21st February and should be installed within the next six weeks.

- **Install goal post when concrete has set**

This action point has been completed.

- **Repair seat behind Childrens' Play Area**

Mr. Poulton said that he and Mr. Meischke inspected the seat again and agreed that it was not possible to make a short-term repair for less than £30. Mr. Meischke said that the seat is useable although not very comfortable.

It was agreed that the seat should, at some time in the future, be removed and a replacement seat sited so that it would not interfere with the swings. One possibility is to install a double-sided seat sited between the swings and the see-saw.

- **Purchase additional key for external shed**

This action point is outstanding.

Action: J. Allsop

Mr. Knight agreed to find out the number of the key to the external shed so that a copy can be ordered.

Action: I. Knight

- **Write to East Herts Council planning department re Land off School Lane**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to East Herts Council planning department re Heath Mount School, Woodhall Park**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to East Herts Council planning department re 51b High Street**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to East Herts Council planning department re 37 Rivershill**
This action point has been completed.
- **Write to East Herts Council planning department re Blue Hill Farm, High Elms Lane**
This action point has been completed.
- **Draft a Parish Council response to the East of England Regional Assembly**
Mr. Poulton read out the Parish Council's response to the East of England Regional Assembly, which was written by Mr. Filer. **See attached**
Mr. Poulton then read out the River Beane Restoration Association's letter to the East of England Regional Assembly. **See attached**
- **Clarify with Mr. Filer access to Alliance and Leicester internet banking**
This action point has been completed.
This item to be discussed under 9 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee – Bank accounts (on pages 5 and 6 of these minutes).
- **Change banking from Co-operative Bank to Alliance and Leicester**
This item to be discussed under 9 a, Budget and Finance Sub-Committee – Bank accounts (on pages 5 and 6 of these minutes).
- **Speak to Mr. Poulton about the broken litterbin on the Lammas**
Mr. Poulton said that he and Mr. Smith inspected the bin and agreed that it was not repairable. Mr. Poulton thanked Mr. Smith for removing the bin.
Mr. Poulton suggested that we monitor the litter situation before replacing the bin.
Mrs. Dinnin suggested that a new bin be sited on Mill Lane. Mr. Poulton said that a litterbin could be attached to the footpath sign post on the edge of the Lammas bank with Mill Lane.
It was agreed that a litterbin should be purchased and installed (see item below).
- **Speak to Mr. Poulton about the excess amount of litter at the Glebe Close end of footpath 17**
Mr. Poulton said that he had inspected the area and done a litterpick. Most of the litter is in the HCC field adjoining the footpath. Mr. Poulton suggested that a litterbin be purchased and sited near the dog-waste bin. This was agreed.
The Clerk to purchase two litterbins from Glasdon UK Limited. **Action: J. Allsop**
- **Inspect and arrange for the repair of the broken cross-rail welds on MPPA fencing**
Mr. Meischke said that he had been unable to do the work because the sportsfield is too soft and heavy machinery would cause damage to its surface.
This item to remain an action point. **Action: J. Meischke**
- **Contact Val Weaver re Whempstead Lane traffic issues**
Mr. Clark sent the following e-mail to Val Weaver on 14th February.
‘Thanks for your letter of the 10th January to Nigel Poulton regarding the re-classification of the A602 bypass/Mill Lane junction issue.
One query though - does that affect the status of the other issues e.g. the introduction of a speed limit through Whempstead and the condition of Mill Lane from Whempstead crossroads to the bypass please?’
The Clerk said that she did not know if Mr. Clark had received a response from Val Weaver.
This item to remain on the agenda. **Agenda: 04/05**
- **Attending 2005 Inter Parish conference and report back to the Parish Council**
Mr. Poulton, Mrs. Dinnin and Mr. Smith attended the Inter Parish conference on 21st February 2005.
Mr. Poulton said that the items discussed were as follows.
 1. RSS14 – Regional Spatial Strategy for West England.
The presentation was similar to that held in Watton-at-Stone on 18th January 2005.
 2. The Liquor Licensing Act 2003.
The presentation identified the changes to the Liquor Licensing Law.
 3. Planning Enforcement re Plotlands.
This item highlighted what Plotlands are. An example given was that of a farmer in Tewin who sold some land to a developer, who in turn divided it up into plots and sold them as potential building sites at some time in the future.

- **Write to East Herts Council re 2005 Summer Playschemes**

This action point has been completed.

- **Liaise with Mr. Poulton re date for meeting with Hertfordshire Association 4 Young People**

Mr. Poulton, Mr. Meischke and Mrs. Dinnin to arrange a mutually-suitable date on which to meet in the Community Hall.

Note: Directly after the meeting, Mr. Poulton, Mr. Meischke and Mrs. Dinnin agreed that Friday 22nd April, at 1400, would be a suitable date to meet with Stuart Pittman (Hertfordshire Association 4 Young People).

The Clerk to notify Stuart Pittman accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Write to HCC re involvement in Hertfordshire Minerals & Waste Framework & Planning applications**

This action point has been completed.

- **Write to the Chartism Housing Association**

This action point has been completed.

- **Speak to the Conservation Society to encourage them to respond to the East of England Plan**

This action point has been completed.

Mr. Stock said that he spoke to the Conservation Society at length on this subject and understood that they are to respond to the East of England Plan.

- **Write article for Parish New**

This action point has been completed.

c) Action points outstanding for more than two months

- **Meet with Mr. Filer to review the budget headings**

This action point is outstanding.

Action: J. Allsop

- **Obtain quotations for the repair of the low brick-wall adjacent to the Community Hall**

This item to be deferred to the Parish Council meeting to be held on 10th May 2005.

Agenda/ 05/05

7 Planning

Mr. Meischke reported on the following planning applications.

Mr. Meischke read out a letter dated 1st March from Jean Petrie (Development Control, East Herts Council) informing us that the period for Town and Parish Council's to comment on applications has been extended to 21 days (previously 16 days).

a) Applications

i) 34 Rivershill

Single storey rear extension

Mr. Meischke said that he visited the neighboring residents and they had no objections to the application. He therefore instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with the decision.

ii) Street Lamp 36, Ware Road, Watton-at-Stone

12.1 meter high street light replacement mast with three integral omni-directional antenna & three equipment cabinets

Mr. Meischke said that prior consent is not required for this application. However, East Herts Council has the right to refuse permission if it is not in keeping with the surrounding area; which they have done on two previous occasions.

Mr. Meischke said that this resubmitted application includes three equipment cabinets and appropriate landscaping to hide them.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed to write to East Herts Council informing them that the Parish Council has no comment on this application.

Action: J. Allsop

iii) 31 Station Road

Garage and first floor extensions - amended scheme

Mr. Stock said that he had visited one of the neighbours and no objections were raised. He was unable to make contact with the other neighbour.

He felt that this application was an improvement on the original one and therefore suggested to Mr. Meischke that we had not comment. Mr. Meischke agreed and therefore Mr. Stock instructed the Clerk to write to the Planning Department stating that the Parish Council had no comment on this application.

Parish Councillors looked at the plans and agreed with the decision.

b) Decisions

i) 6 Beane Road

Single storey front, two storey side, and single storey rear extension

-East Herts Council – Permission granted

ii) Bulls Green Water Tower, Bulls Green

Replacement of 6 no. antenna together with associated feeders and cables

-East Herts Council – Permission granted

8 Specific items

a) Purchase of new Notice Board to replace damaged one at the junction of High Street/Great Innings

Mr. Poulton said that the new notice board had been delivered. However, when he and Mr. Meischke removed the old notice board, they found that the existing support-posts are rotten.

Mr. Meischke to have steel posts made.

Action: J. Meischke

b) Public liability insurance cover on the allotments

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 18th February) from Allianz Cornhill.

‘We refer to your letter dated 31st January 2005 and have noted the contents contained therein.

We are aware of the CGU Insurance Policy for all allotment holders which is required to cover their legal liabilities.

In respect of the Parish Council’s Public Liability cover under the above policy number, please ensure that when a member of the Parish Council completes their weekly inspection of the allotment site, that they are aware of any maintenance to this land by the allotment holders and all appears to be in a good state of repair.

We trust the above is found to be in order and if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.’

Mr. Poulton said that the Watton-at-Stone Allotment and Garden Association are happy with this letter.

c) Response to East of England Regional Assembly on the proposed increase in houses in East Herts in light of the seminar held 18th January 2005

This item was discussed under 6 b, Review of actions - Draft a response to the East of England Regional Assembly on the Parish Councillors objections (on page 2 of these minutes).

d) High Street leaf-clearance

Mr. Poulton said that East Herts Council had asked for our High Street leaf-clearance schedule so that they can determine when to collect the bags of leaves. This has now been sent to them.

e) Ornate village sign – review colour of the stained post

Mr. Poulton said that he had inspected the post and there are no problems with its colour or condition. It was agreed that the post be inspected again in April 2006.

Agenda: 04/06

f) Alteration to July meeting date

Mr. Poulton said that the Clerk had spoken to all Parish Councillors, with the exception of Mr. Clark who is away on holiday, asking them if they had any objections to the July Parish Council meeting being changed from 13th July to 20th July. The Clerk would like to book her holiday from 9th July to 16th July.

No objections were received from Parish Councillors, however Mr. Filer said that he would almost certainly not be able to attend on 20th July.

It was agreed to change the July Parish Council meeting to the 20th and put a notice to this effect in the next issue of the Parish News. Refer to item 12, Items for Parish News (on page 10 of these minutes).

9 Reports

a) Sub-Committees

Budget & Finance

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

• **Bank accounts**

Mr. Filer said that further to the resolution that the Parish Council made during its meeting on 9th February 2005 to change its banking from the Co-operative Bank to the Alliance and Leicester, five signatories need to be agreed. He suggested they should be Mr. Poulton, Mr. Meischke, himself, the Clerk and either Mrs. Dinnin or Mr. Knight.

After discussion, the Parish Council resolved that the new Alliance and Leicester accounts have the following signatories.

- Mr. N. C. Poulton
- Mr. J. Meischke
- Mr. D. E. Filer
- Mr. I. E. Knight
- The Clerk – Mrs. M. J. Allsop

The agreed signatories all signed the relevant Alliance and Leicester account application forms.

Mr. Filer said that he will need all signatories to provide him or the Clerk with proof of identity and a service bill with their name and address on to take to the Alliance and Leicester.

Mr. Filer and the Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: D. Filer/J. Allsop

- **Quotation from D. E. Monk for work in the High Street**

Mr. Filer read out Mr. Monk's quotation (dated 15th February) for work in the High Street from April 2005 to March 2006.

1. Maintenance of shrub beds in High Street	£320
2. Maintenance of War Memorial site	£50 quarterly
3. Leaf clearance – Autumn	£200
4. Leaf clearance – Spring	£100

With the exception of item 2, which has risen from £125 to £200 per year, the above amounts remain unchanged from last year. Mr. Monk last increased his charge for the War Memorial maintenance in September 1997.

Mr. Filer proposed that Mr. Monk's quotation be accepted. Mrs. McCash seconded the motion and all present were in favour. The Clerk to act accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

Community Hall Trustees

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

- **Heating system**

Mr. Meischke said that one of the fans in the heating system is not working properly. The fan is located in the cupboard where the sports-mats are kept and may have been knocked by Community Hall hirers.

Mr. Meischke to ask Turner's (who installed the heating system) to investigate.

Action: J. Meischke

- **External lights**

Mr. Poulton said that one of the external lights on the sportsfield-side of the Community Hall is not working.

The Clerk to ask Mr. Burgess to repair it.

Action: J. Allsop

- **New Seat on Sportsfield**

Mr. Poulton said Mr. and Mrs. Hart had now installed the seat, that they donated in memory of their son Paul, overlooking the MPPA on the sportsfield.

It was agreed to write to Mr. and Mrs. Hart to thank them for their generous donation.

Action: J. Allsop

Recreation & Amenities

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

- **MPPA – general**

Mr. Knight said that three of the eight floodlights are not working. Two of these are on one column. He said that we were reliant on Harknett Street Lighting fitting the bulbs. They have not been able to do so because the ground has been too soft to take heavy machinery on to it. One of the faulty bulbs was only replaced last year.

Mr. Poulton asked Mr. Knight to extend the Parish Council's apologies to the Tennis Club for the situation.

Mr. Knight said that Keith Burgess informed him that it would be possible to replace the lighting units in the future with sets that can be lowered to the ground. Bulbs could then be changed without the use of a cherry-picker.

Mr. Meischke agreed to give Mr. Knight the contact details of someone with a cherry-picker who may be able to fit the floodlighting bulbs sooner than Harknett Street Lighting can.

Action: J. Meischke

- **Additional tennis court**

Mr. Knight said that he is getting close to submitting a planning application for the additional tennis court.

He is obtaining LTA specifications to make sure that the court construction and lighting conforms to current regulations. All contractors will be given the same specifications to base their quotation on.

Mr. Smith said that lighting had improved over recent years and the new floodlighting columns will probably be lower than our existing ones.

- **Goal Post**

The goal post has been installed.

- **Estimate re work to two Oak trees on the sportsfield**

Mr. Poulton said that David D'Arcy informed him that the two large Oak trees on the sportsfield were in need of attention and has submitted a quotation of £450 (dated 23rd February) for the following work.

'To dead wood two large Oak trees by tennis courts.

All brush and wood removed leaving raked and tidy.'

Adam Welch was asked to look at the trees. Mrs. Dinnin said that he had given a verbal quotation of £175 for work to the smaller of the two Oak trees which is situated near the tennis courts. In his opinion the larger tree had no problems. The work is as follows.

Two remove 2 large pieces of dead wood from smaller tree and clean trunk

All debris to be removed from site

Mr. Knight said that when he met with an Arboculturalist on 14th January to determine the exact position of the additional tennis court, he also inspected the two Oak trees. The Arboculturalist informed him that there were no problems with the two trees.

After discussion, Mr. Poulton proposed that we accept Adam Welch's verbal quotation. Mrs. Dinnin seconded the motion and all present were in favour.

Mrs. Dinnin to inform Adam Welch accordingly and request a written quotation.

Action: C. Dinnin

The Clerk to write to David D'Arcy accordingly.

Action: J. Allsop

Environment

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

- **Lammas Land Management**

Mrs. Dinnin said that Sue Clarkson of the Countryside Management Services (CMS) wrote on 9th February informing us that they had agreed to grant us £1,000 towards the Lammas Management Project. Mrs. Dinnin said that she needs to sign some forms relating to the grant and asked Mr. Stock if he would check the details before she did so. Mr. Stock agreed.

Action: C. Dinnin/D. Stock

The CMS work-party held on the 23rd February was a success. Ten CMS volunteers and four Parish Councillors braved the cold and had a very constructive day clearing the wooded area behind the seat and making repairs to the steps on the bank. Chippings deposited on site will be distributed along the paths etc at a later date.

Mrs. Dinnin thanked Mr. Poulton, Mr. Smith and Mr. Dunhill for their help, in particular Mr. Smith who fetched his tractor and trailer to speed-up the wood-chipping process.

A letter has been sent to Sue Clarkson to thank her and her volunteers for all their help and for the £1,000 grant.

Mrs. Dinnin said that she and Mr. Poulton met with Adam Welch on 3rd March to discuss the work outlined in his quotation of £3860 (dated 24th October) for work along the Lammas bank. He agreed to trim around both seats and along the river bank near Mill Lane for an additional £50.

Mrs. Dinnin proposed that Mr. Welch quotation be accepted, Mr. Poulton seconded the motion, and all present were in favour.

Mrs. Dinnin to inform Mr. Welch accordingly.

Action: C. Dinnin

DEFRA have sent us the Derogation permission agreement which allows us to do the weed-wipe on the Lammas.

Mrs. Dinnin said that she wrote and then subsequently spoke to the Environment Agency about the weed-wipe work. Because the work is more than 5 metres away from the River Beane, no permission is required from the Environment Agency.

Mrs. Dinnin to contact Ben Cannon asking him to do the weed-wipe in mid-late April. **Action: C. Dinnin**

- **Awards for All grant**

Awards for All have granted us £5,000 towards the Lammas Land Management Project. The payment will be made directly into our bank account. Because we are not in possession of the latest Parish Council bank statement the Clerk said that she could not confirm that this amount had been received.

(**Note:** The £5,000 grant was paid into the Parish Council account on 25th February 2005).

- **Installation of kissing gate on footpath 17**

The Clerk said that Mr. Dunhill had confirmed that the kissing gate on footpath 17 had been installed. Kirkham Contracting, who did the work, have been paid in full.

Note: This item was funded from the P3 (Parish Paths Partnership) grant.

b) Sportsfield

i) Report

Mrs. Dinnin did the sportsfield report on the 9th March 2005, the result of which is as follows.

- **Sportsfield:**
 - Condition of grass OK. Goal area showing wear.
 - Litter Good.
 - Dog fouling OK, no fouling.
 - Netball posts Only one chained to post.
 - General OK.
- **Children’s Play Area:**
 - Condition of surface OK.
 - Litter/Litterbin OK.
 - Large swings OK.
 - Small swings OK.
 - See-Saw OK.
 - Rainbow multi-play and slide Muddy but OK.
 - Two spring sit-on OK.
 - Teen shelter OK.
 - General Condition good – but muddy.
- **Bike ramps area:**
 - Junior Jump Bit muddy.
 - Double Ramp Bit muddy.
 - Fun Box Bit muddy.
- **Community Hall:**
 - General Condition (Exterior) Brick broken in wall near Parish Council room.
 - Litterbin OK.
 - Car Park OK.
 - General Good.
- **Multi-Purpose Play Area:**
 - Surface OK.
 - Boundary Fencing OK.
 - Tennis nets OK.
 - Litter OK.
 - General Good.
- **Great Innings Play Area:**
 - Equipment Good.
 - Surfaces Good.
 - Litter Good.
 - Dog fouling Good.
 - Comments Overall very good state.
- **Allotments Area:**
 - Access Gate broken.
 - Condition of paths between Allotments OK.
 - Condition of Allotments under cultivation OK.
 - Condition of Allotments not under cultivation Much improved.
 - Litter OK.
 - Comments New fencing High Street house.
- **Culverts on Mill Lane**
 - Litter and rubbish in and around Culverts Needs new bin and perhaps one on Mill Lane.
 - Dog-fouling Clear – OK.
 - Comments Good.
- **Salt bins**
 - Perrywood Lane OK - full.
 - Entrance to Great Innings ½ full.
 - Great Innings South – outside number 93 -
 - Station Road ½ full.
 - Moorymead Close (2) Full/½ Full.
 - Hazeldell Full.
 - Footpath 17 Full – lots of litter.

- **Dog-waste bins**
 - Footpath 17 In use.
 - Sportsfield OK.
 - Church Walk OK.
 - Walkern Road OK.
 - Station Road Full.
 - High Street (by Memorial) In use.
 - Great Innings OK.
 - Mill Lane In use.
- **War Memorial**
 - General Comments Looks excellent.
- **Ornate Village Sign**
 - General Comments OK.

ii) **Weekly report and action**

Mr. Poulton said there was nothing to report from Ted Brown’s weekly inspections; apart from the damage to the brick wall, which we are aware of.

10 Correspondence received

a) East Herts Council – Bus Permit issue

Mr. Poulton said that Mr. Knight and the Clerk will be issuing bus permits to the elderly and disabled on Saturday 19th March between 1000 and 1200 at Glebe Court. **Action: I. Knight/J. Allsop**

b) Frank Warren re Perrywood Lane

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 11th February) from Frank Warren.

‘I refer to correspondence received by myself from Denis Filer dated 30th January.

I do not intend to respond to Mr. Filer’s letter because I have received correspondence from you on behalf of the Parish Council regarding this issue and, the letter to which Mr. Filer refers, was in fact the letter to yourself in response.

I believe I have made my position clear in this matter in my letter of 25th January 2005. Mr. Filer’s letter persuades me to add to those comments as he states my letter to you was “aggressive”, which it certainly was not. The issue is the actual condition of the lane in question and the source of those conditions. I have made it clear in my letter of 25th January 2005 that I do not consider the cause of those conditions to be any vehicle travelling to or from my premises.

What I am surprised about is that my “neighbour” chose to complain to the council rather than contact me directly as any reasonable minded neighbour would have done.

In short, I don not believe there is a problem and if there is, it is not one of my making. I do not wish to enter into correspondence with Mr. Filer and, therefore, if he wishes to pursue this matter he should do so through the Parish Council without abusing his office by using Parish Council time to debate matters that happen to be on his own personal agenda.’

After discussion, it was agreed that the following letter be sent to Mr. Warren.

‘I thank you for your letter of 11th February and I note your comments.

I would like to assure you that Mr. Filer did not abuse his powers as a Parish Councilor to pursue matters which were on his personal agenda.

Local residents brought to Mr. Filer’s attention the condition of the road and he took these matters up on their behalf.

As far as the Parish Council is concerned this matter has been fully debated and the Council will not be pursuing the matter further.’ **Action: N. Poulton**

c) Standards Board - A code for the future

Mr. Poulton said that the Standards Board had written regarding proposed changes in the Code of Conduct. Additional copies of their booklet 'A Code for the future - an introduction to the review of the Code of Conduct for members' had been requested and will be given to Parish Councillors when they have been received. The consultation deadline for this document is 17th June 2005.

d) Mr. Leslie Dawes re motor bike riding on the fields

Mr. Poulton read out a letter (dated 16th February) from Mr. Dawes.

Last Monday, a small group of lads with two motorcycles were using the field beyond the Lammas for racing their machines. On advice from John Meischke, I phoned the police and within ten minutes, a police car arrived and the young men were escorted off the field.

John suggested that I should let you know about this in case the Council wished to take any other action. I was sorry to spoil the young men's fun but with a view to approaching spring and summer, I thought it advisable to try to stop what could be a greater nuisance when windows were open and the garden in greater use.'

It was agreed to write to Mr. Dawes thanking him for bringing the matter to our attention and for the action that he took. Also, informing him that the police are monitoring the situation and do have the authority to confiscate motorcycles if the owner is a previous offender.

Action: J. Allsop

e) Hertfordshire Highways – High Street, Watton-at-Stone – Traffic and Environmental Candidate

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter, dated 15th February, from Val Weaver (Hertfordshire Highways).

'Further to our meeting on 8th September 2004, I am pleased to inform you that at the Joint Member Panel held on the 7th February 2005, it was agreed that this candidate would be included for preliminary investigation during the 2005/2006 Integrated Works Programme.

The design team will be working on completing the outstanding schemes being rolled over from the 2004/05 Integrated Works Programme (IWP) and will then start the preliminary investigations for this candidate during 2005/06.

With regards to Whempstead village candidate, the ranking score was not high enough to be considered in the 2005/06 IWP.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.'

f) Ian Bishop - Hertfordshire Highways

Mr. Poulton read out the following letter (dated 2nd March) from Ian Bishop, Area Engineer, Hertfordshire Highways.

'Just a quick line to ask if it would be possible to arrange a meeting sometime this month to air out any problems there may be in the Parish. I look forward to hearing from you.'

It was agreed to invite Ian Bishop to meet with Parish Councillors on Friday 1st April at 1400 in the Community Hall.

Action: J. Allsop

11 Reports from other Organisations

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

Refer to item 6 b, Review of Actions - Speak to the Conservation Society to encourage them to respond to the East of England Plan (on page 4 of these minutes).

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

Mr. Filer said that the Memorial Hall Management Committee is keen to tarmac the un-surfaced area of the car park. He asked Parish Councillors to give him the names of any reliable local contractors who could do the work.

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

Mr. Poulton said that he attended the Allotment and Garden Association meeting held on 2nd March, which was very positive. They will be holding their AGM on 4th of May at 1900 hours in the Community Hall.

12 Items for Parish News

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

- Meeting with Police
- Change of meeting date in July
- Grants awarded for work on Lammas

Mr. Filer to write the article accordingly.

Action: D. Filer

13 Accounts

Watton-at-Stone Parish Council

Petty Cash

Receipts

None

Cheques required

Ted Brown	34½ hours work	224.25
D. R. Monk	Leaf clearance work	100.00
Kirkham Contracting	Install Kissing gate	323.13
Arro-Signs	Final payment of notice board (total cost £343.10 incl. VAT)	171.10
EHDC	Maintenance of 2 dog-waste bins from 1/3/04-31/3/05	159.03
Watton PCC	Photocopying and delivery charges for Village Directory	37.12
J. Allsop	February salary	519.27
J. Allsop	Telephone charges to 3/03/05 plus receipt book	<u>26.20</u>
		<u>1560.10</u>

Cheques received

None

Watton-at-Stone Community Hall

Petty Cash

Receipts

Mr. Keen – Main Hall hire	140.00	Payments	Rose Brown	154.00
Barry Moor – Main Hall hire	31.00	J. Phillips	43.00	
C. Straker – Main Hall hire	12.00	VAT return 01/05	<u>89.90</u>	
Maurice Gordon – Pavilion hire	<u>14.00</u>		<u>286.90</u>	
	<u>197.00</u>			

Cheques required

None

Cheques received

Mrs Medhurst	Pavilion hire	28.00
Badminton Club	Main Hall hire	198.00
Mrs. Neal	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	39.00
Mrs. McQuay	Main Hall and Pavilion hire	<u>45.00</u>
		<u>310.00</u>

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

- **The meeting closed at 2110.**
- **The date for the next Parish Council meeting is Wednesday 13th April 2005.**