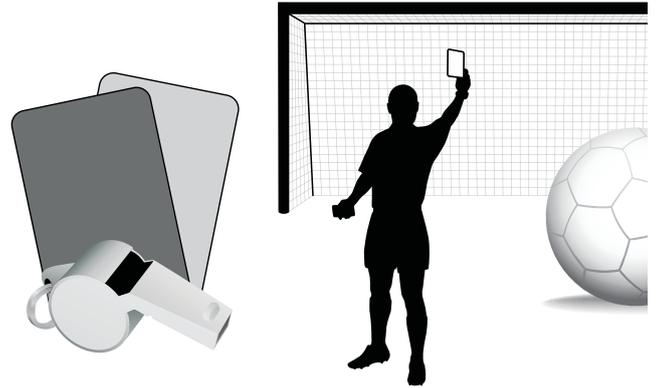


Village Update

WINTER/SPRING 2008

CHARLTON COMMUNITY FOOTBALL SCHEME

The neighbouring parishes of Headcorn, Marden and Staplehurst have worked together with Charlton Football Club to create a community football scheme that will be free for 10-19 year olds. Each parish will have the benefit of 10 weekly sessions on Tuesdays from 5.30-7 p.m. and young people can also attend sessions in other parishes. Although details have yet to be confirmed, it is proposed to begin sessions at the Headcorn Football Club, Grigg Lane on 26th February and run for 5 weeks. From 1st April the sessions will take place in Staplehurst on the primary school playground every Tuesday 5-6.30p.m. throughout April. The sessions then will move to Marden Playing field from 6th May for another five weeks before reverting to Headcorn on 10th June, back to Staplehurst on 15th July then Marden on 19th August for the remaining sessions of 5 weeks each, without any breaks for holidays. Depending upon the numbers attending, it is likely that sessions times will be split according to age



5.30 - 6.15 under 14's, 6.15 - 7.00 over 14's. If you are interested in taking part send an email to assistantclerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk and full details will be sent once these proposals have been confirmed.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROJECT AND PLAYScheme 2008

Staplehurst Parish Council has run a successful Summer Playscheme for many years which has been enjoyed mainly by the primary school age group. In order to provide activities for older children Councillors are also working on a Youth Activities Project in addition to Playscheme. Aimed at the 9-18 age range, various ideas are currently being explored for suitable activities and outings. If young people could let the Council know what activities they would like to occupy them during the summer holidays, then the Parish Council would like to hear from them and will see what it can do.

From 7-11 April inclusive drop in afternoons at the Youth Club offering refreshments and activities are

being planned and a flier should accompany this update with full details. Please check out the website at www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk or contact the Parish Office for details. You can also register your email address with assistantclerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk and further details will be forwarded to you as they are published.

Transport to the SNAP (Say No and Phone) disco at Mote Park for 11-17s on 4th April and ticket sales are currently being organised by the Parish Office. Further details will be available very soon. If you are interested in receiving details about this, please register your email address with the Assistant Clerk.

Staplehurst

Parish Council



PARISH PRECEPT, COUNCIL TAX AND CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS GRANT EXPLAINED

At this time of year all local authorities are preparing their budgets for the next financial year from April and Staplehurst Parish Council is no exception. The Finance Committee has met three times since October when the first draft budget was put forward. Consideration has been given to maintenance expenditure and future projects in order to arrive at a Parish Precept requirement of £69,000. This should equate to around £30 per Band D property in Staplehurst which will be added to the precept requirements of Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, Kent Police and the Fire Authority. All together these sums make up your Council Tax demand which will soon be arriving through the post. We are fortunate living in the Maidstone Borough Council area as it has a Concurrent Functions grant system. This grant is given to parishes to pay for

works that would otherwise be MBC's responsibility in areas where no parish council existed. It is seen as helping to reduce the double-taxation burden that parishes carry and is much valued. This year the preparation of the budget was beset with uncertainty as Maidstone Borough Council proposed a 10% reduction of the Concurrent Functions grant. This would have impacted unfavourably on the parish and caused an increase in parish precept. Fortunately it was agreed by MBC to defer their proposal for a year but the scheme will be reconsidered during the next year. The proposal aimed to create another grant pot from which parishes could apply for assistance to become Quality Parishes. As Staplehurst has been a quality parish for some years (and funded its own application) the proposed changes would have a negative impact on the budget.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Monday 12th May at 8 p.m. in the South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre is the annual meeting of local electors. Whilst this is hosted by the Parish Council, local electors are entitled to have their say about local issues. This year it is expected that the group working on the Staplehurst Partnership Survey will be presenting their work. Local groups have been asked to submit a written report about their group during the past year and such will be available at the meeting and on www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk. The Parish Council also plans to publish its annual accounts at this meeting, although such will be contained in the Annual Report to be distributed shortly thereafter.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2008

With the decorations only recently packed away, Councillors are already planning the display for next Christmas. Whilst it will remain largely the same, improvements are proposed to make some motifs energy efficient (although this is not without additional expense). The three motifs in Station Road will be fitted with LED lamps. More investment will also be made into maintaining the display and outages will hopefully be attended to more quickly than previously. If sufficient funding is found, additional motifs could be added to the existing display.

NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW THAT...

Local trades people and service suppliers are listed on our website. Click on the Local Directory tab (soon to be re-named local traders) to view them. If you know a local tradesperson why not tell them about it or if you are one then get yourself listed by contacting the Parish Clerk with your details. It's free and it works.

THE STAPLEHURST SOCIETY

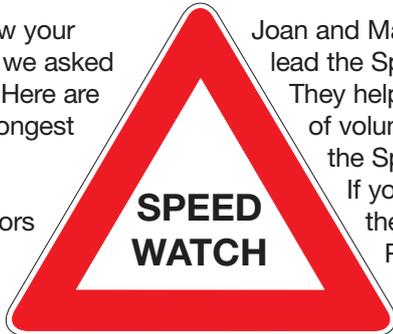
The Staplehurst Society is a local group which contributes to life in this community. We are interested in preserving the character of the village and in the history of Staplehurst. We campaign to conserve the best features of the local environment and we involve ourselves in planning issues. The Staplehurst Society maintains a historic archive of Staplehurst and a photographic record. It organizes or hosts events - house visits, talks, the railway exhibition. It lobbies councils on your behalf. The Society has worked on the Village Appraisal and has sponsored the Village Design Statement.

You too can join the society. In this way you can contribute to the local community. You can have a forum and an outlet for your opinions about the future of the village. You can keep yourself informed about local planning and environmental issues through the newsletter, and you can participate in social events such as the annual wine-tasting and visits. For more information please call 893746 or dreycott@globalnet.co.uk



COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

So that you get to know your councillors a bit better we asked them a few questions. Here are the answers from the longest serving and one of the hardest working of the current Parish Councillors
Joan Buller



Joan and Malcolm Buller also lead the Speedwatch Project. They help co-ordinate teams of volunteers to carry out the Speedwatch checks. If you would like to join them contact the Parish Office



Councillor Joan Buller Questions and Answers

How long have you lived in Staplehurst?	29 years
Where were brought up?	Eltham, SE London
How long have you been a Parish Councillor?	24 years
What do you do in your spare time?	Bird watching, stamp collecting and watching sport
What is the best thing about being a Parish Councillor?	Helping the general public
What is the worst?	When our opinions are ignored by higher authorities
What other organisations in Staplehurst are you a member of?	Staplehurst Interest Group, Horticultural Society Library Book Club, Staplehurst Library Users Group
Who is your hero and why?	Darren Gough for his wonderful dancing
What are you currently reading?	The Lighthouse by PD James
What is the last film you saw?	The Lavender Girls
Who would you least like to be stuck in a lift with?	Jonathan Ross
If you were stranded on a desert island what two luxury items would you take?	Piano and a pair of binoculars
What single piece of music would you take ?	You are so beautiful by Westlife
Which two people would you like as dinner guests?	Tim Henman and Roger Black
Where in the world would you most like to visit?	New Zealand
What exercise do you regularly take?	Walking
What is your greatest achievement as a Parish Councillor?	Leading role in both appraisals, website and Village Update

CONNECTIONS AT HAWKHURST

Arriva had confirmed that the existing bus stops at Victoria Hall would remain unchanged for those wishing to change and travel on to Hastings. However, we now understand that Countryliner buses will have their own new stops in the High Street at Hawkhurst. These will be before the Traffic lights coming from Flimwell and the buses will then turn right to the Moor. This means that passengers from the No 5 will have to alight at the petrol station by Budgens and walk back and cross at the lights to catch the connection.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

VILLAGE CENTER AGM

The AGM of the Staplehurst Village Centre Management Committee will be held at 8pm on Tuesday 26th February in the South Hall.

YOUTH CLUB AGM

The Youth Club AGM will be held on Wednesday 26th March at 7pm at the Youth Club. All are welcome-come and lend your support.

STREET NAME CORNER

Barn Meadow

Barn Meadow is one of the new estate roads built on the Lime Trees Estate. The Lime Trees estate was developed jointly by Wimpey and Gleeson. Lime Trees was a farm which existed on the site and was owned by the Tomlin family who have lived in the village for many years and three of the sisters still live in Staplehurst. The name Barn Meadow was chosen as the estate road was built approximately where the farm barn used to stand.

Bower Walk

Bower Walk is a pedestrian walkway which links Gybbon Rise to Surrenden Road. It was named after The Bower, the substantial house on the High Street. The origins of The Bower began with an amalgamation of old and new. The building lies on the site of a small farm which in 1706 comprised of ten acres of land. The building in 1812 then became an affluent seminary for young ladies, which was run by the Misses Tress. By 1879 the building had become "a pretty cottage residence". The ten acres that went with the building were sold off during the Iden Manor Estate Sale and subsequent owners included a Captain Dickson, a Major Spens and then Captain Hamilton. The decision to make Bower Walk an open ended access was so that children could access the new primary school from both ends of the village.

Chapel Lane

It is believed that Chapel Lane is named after the

original location of the Particular Baptists chapel which was at Spillsill Court, which is easily accessible via the public footpath found at the end of the lane. The Chapel was founded by Mr Osborne and friend who lived at Spillsill Court. The present Chapel was originally the barn of Bly Court. In 1751 it was licensed for religious worship. It became a Baptist Chapel during the 1820's under the leadership of Mr Dobell, a local grocer. Originally the chapel had three galleries which could accommodate 350 seated worshippers. However, during the Second World War extensive bomb damage saw the removal of two of the galleries. The building known as Harris's Wheelwrights was once the home of the village school prior to the construction of Staplehurst Board School (now the village centre) in 1873. Mr John Harris owned the wheelwright and



Undertakers known as 'Victoria Works'. The building remained in the Harris family until John Harris's son Frederick George (Fred) died in 1988. Chapel Lane is fronted by the United Reformed Church.

This building was the Presbyterian Chapel and in around 1662 was part chapel, part house and part shop called Lower Grove. In 1824 a decision was made to build a more substantial building out of brick. The new building was opened on Tuesday 16th August 1825.

STAPLEHURST PARTNERSHIP/ACTION PLAN

We want to know what you think about Staplehurst and its future.

The Partnership group is now concentrating upon collecting opinions. It will update material collected in past years in other surveys such as the Village Appraisals. This is data on which future decision making will be based. It will inform planning by the Parish Council and other authorities, and it may provide evidence in advance by which applications for funding may be identified and formulated.

Please participate. If you leave it to others, your opinions and your creative thoughts may not be heard. As well as making choices, the survey gives you an opportunity to

express new ideas and to tell the community what you think needs to be done.

Initial results of the survey will be made available in May on the partnership web site, in the Village Update and at the Annual Parish Meeting.

This time we are conducting the survey on-line. You can give your opinions now by going to the Partnership website

<http://staplehurst-partnership.com> (there's no www) or by finding the link to it on the Parish website.

If you can't do the survey on line for whatever reason, please contact the Parish Clerk (tel 891761) and she will explain the alternatives for you.

Parish Council Information

The Parish Office is in the Village Centre. It is open on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9 to 11 am. The phone number is 01580 891761. The email address is: staplehurst1@btconnect.com

Borough Councillor Lusty holds a surgery at the

Library on the last Saturday of each month, from 10am to 12pm. A Parish Councillor, PCSO, Community Warden and/or Marc Pennicott (our Community Police Officer) usually also attend. All are willing to talk over any local issues.