

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for March 2012)

Staplehurst Community Clean Up – In partnership with Maidstone Borough Council, the Parish Council is supporting a voluntary clean-up of built-up areas of the parish on **Saturday 24th March 2012**. The clean-up will start from Staplehurst Youth Club (adjacent to the Village Centre) High Street with registration from 10:00 a.m. Collection sacks, litter pickers and refreshments will be available. Contact the Parish Office if you wish to take part or speak with MBC Waste Officer on 01622 602281 or Email: AlisonSollis@maidstone.gov.uk

Council Surgeries at the Library – If local residents wish to raise local issues with a Parish Councillor, then a new surgery at the Library will be available on second Saturdays monthly from 10th March 2012. Two Parish Councillors will be in attendance between 10:00 and Noon. For issues relating to Borough Council responsibilities, the Surgery by Borough Councillor Richard Lusty will continue on the last Saturday of each month. Representatives of the local Policing Team will also be available at various times according to their own shift patterns, but are expected next to be at the Library on 31st March between 10:00 and Noon.

Parish Councillor Vacancy – Anne Gosling has now been co-opted to fill the vacancy on the Parish Council. She will serve alongside existing Councillors until the next Full Council election in 2015. Details of all Parish Councillors can be found at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/parish_council.aspx

Annual Parish Meeting 23rd April 2012 – You are encouraged to attend this annual meeting for Parish electors, hosted by the Parish Council. Activity reports by the Council and local groups will be published then filed with the minutes for historical interest. **Local group Secretaries are reminded to submit their reports by the end of this month at the very latest please.** Verbal reports and questions can be taken at the meeting if time permits. Contact the Clerk with reports and/or specific issues for debate by 30/03/12. For added interest, Charlotte Osborne CEO of Voluntary Action Maidstone will speak about the work of this active charity. County & Borough Councillor Eric Hotson and Borough Councillor Richard Lusty will also speak on their work for this parish during the past year. Overall an interesting evening with refreshments included. All welcome.

Spring Village Update – Thanks to a number of willing volunteers, the Village Update was produced, hand-delivered or posted to every home in the parish week-commencing 20th February. A digital copy is also available by email or at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_update.aspx If you would like to help deliver future Village Updates, please contact the Clerk with your details. The Summer Update will be due out w/c 14th May and will also include details of the Staplehurst Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations planned for 3-5th June as well as the Council's Annual Report for 2011-2012.

Uprockin 2012 – If you know of any skateboarders, BMX or random wheel fanatics, tell them to get practising for the competition in Staplehurst on 23rd June. Hopefully the weather will be kinder to us this year as the event is being combined with the much larger Maidstone Borough Council event. Full details from MBC Officer SarahShearsmith@maidstone.gov.uk Tel: 01622 602157.

New Sunday Bus Services Maidstone to Hawkhurst – Thanks to grant funding awarded by Kent County Council, a 2-hourly Sunday bus service will run between Staplehurst and Hawkhurst on a six month trial until the end of July 2012. If it proves popular it could become viable as a commercial service, so “use it or lose it!”

Salt Bins – Eight new salt bins were sited around the parish for use at residents’ discretion. These were quickly emptied during the snow in February and then refilled. Please keep the Parish Council informed if any need refilling at any time. The locations for these bins were requested by local residents and a second list is being compiled, if you wish to add your suggestion.

Bell Lane Toilets –They are being cleaned and opened daily from 7 a.m. until early evening, then locked at night. Staplehurst Parish Council wishes to do all it can to keep vandalism repair costs to a minimum and would appreciate it if all residents could report any damage, misuse or potential vandalism problems. For non-urgent reports, please call during office hours or leave a message on 01580 891761. If an issue requires immediate attention outside office hours, please telephone 07539 692588.

Website – As well as Minutes and publicity material, reports submitted to the Parish Council are also uploaded onto the website. Local businesses and village groups are also welcome to manage their own website entries linked from the Trade Directory and Village Life pages of this website free of charge. Kindly contact the Parish Clerk for details. The Website Forum continues to be a useful source of local information and interesting comment.

Parish Information and E-groups – Copies of the Minutes of Parish Council Meetings are available at Full Council Meetings and on the Parish Council Website at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx . A number of e-groups are available for anyone wishing to receive direct emails of useful information about local issues e.g., Weekly MBC Plans List, Parish Council Minutes & Agendas, Press Releases, etc. If local residents have any queries regarding Parish Council or local authority issues, they are encouraged to contact the Parish Clerk for the facts.

MBC Cleansing and Collection Services – Call Maidstone Borough Contact Centre on 01622 602162 for information about refuse services provided by Maidstone Borough Council. Alternatively much information is available on www.maidstone.gov.uk Use this number also to report any undesirable

activities such as fly-tipping, dumped cars, littering etc. and help to keep the environment clean and tidy. A "pull-out" (or rear of property) collection service is also available to those who are unable to wheel or carry their refuse to the front boundary of their homes.

- **Waste Freighter** – The next visits of the waste freighter to Staplehurst will be on 3rd March 2012; 0745-0830 at Poyntell Pond, 0840-0925 at Church Green and 0935-1015 at Northdown. Full details at http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_rubbish_and_waste/saturday_freighter_service.aspx Please note that garden waste/vegetation is no longer accepted for disposal by the Waste Freighter.
- **Garden waste** – The compostable MBC Garden Sacks are available from Spuds 'n Buds & Chasing Rainbows, High Street, Henhurst Farm Shop, Pinnock Lane, TN12 0HD and Paxman Services (UK) Ltd at Unit 3 Larkstore Park, Lodge Road, TN12 0QY at £3.25 per roll of 5. The Parish Council has decided not to sell Garden Sacks in future, so once the existing stock is sold, this service will no longer be available from the Parish Office. If you use more than 10 rolls of garden sacks per year and you have room for an additional bin, it may be more cost-effective to hire a bin from MBC. Leave the white sacks beside your household waste bin on your collection day (or put vegetation in a blue-lidded wheelie bin hired from MBC specifically for garden waste).
- **Food waste** – Compostable bags for the kitchen caddies are now available from the Henhurst Farm Shop, Pinnock Lane, TN12 0HD and Paxman Services (UK) Ltd at Unit 3 Larkstore Park, Lodge Road, TN12 0QY
- **MBC Bulky Collection Service** – Phone MBC on 01622 602162 to arrange a collection. Details of fees are shown on http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_rubbish_and_waste/household_waste_-_special_col.aspx Alternatively the KCC Householder Waste Tip at Tovil is available for householders to use free of charge. Full details at http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_and_rubbish/ways_to_recycle/waste_and_recycling_centres/maidstone_tovil.aspx

REPORT INCIDENTS TO THE POLICE WITH THE NEW NATIONAL NUMBER 101 All crime-incident reports should now be telephoned to 101. This new non-emergency 24/7 national police telephone number will enable you access to the local policing team – wherever you happen to be in the UK. Use 101 to report any non-life threatening incident that you witness for automatic referral to the correct local policing team. Full details are available at <http://www.police.uk/101> If you prefer, calls to Crimestoppers will remain anonymous: 0800 555 111 but these may not be referred back directly to this parish or logged into the Police systems. Life-threatening incidents, crimes in progress or serious injury Road Traffic Accident requiring urgent police attendance should be notified by dialling 999 in the usual way.

Local Community Warden Mira Martin: mob: 07811 271254 e-mail: mira.martin@kent.gov.uk and PCSO Pete Gardner Tel: 101 email: peter.gardner@kent.pnn.police.uk have emergency back up from the force as necessary.

Hire of North & South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre - To enquire about the availability of either hall, please contact the booking clerk on 07864 547453. The Parish Office does not deal with Village Centre bookings, although we do get many enquiries!

Dog Mess & disposal – Red dog waste bins are provided at strategic points around the parish. Thankfully only a small minority allow their dogs to defecate in public areas without clearing up the mess. However, if you witness such anti-social behaviour, telephone the Dog Warden on 01622 602117 in confidence and give details of the perpetrators. Visits to problem areas can be timed to be most effective and a fine imposed when the offender is caught.

Maidstone Borough Highway-related services - MBC remains responsible for some highway services such as Street sweeping, street nameplates, street naming and numbering, park and ride facilities. Telephone MBC Contact Centre on 01622 602162 to report most highway-related issues requiring attention. For all other Highways and Public Transport issues contact Kent Highways.

Kent Highways - Call 08458 247 800 any time 24 hours a day 7 days a week to report any local highways issues, such as defects to the roads, footways, signs, drainage and street furniture, etc. You can also report defects online too at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/KHSFaults/> You do not need to contact the Parish Office to report such defects. Responsibility for the motorways and trunk roads are managed by the Highways Agency on 08457 504030.

Bogus Caller Advice: If any caller does not have an appointment, then ask them to wait while you check their identity. Do not be afraid to close the door and make them wait. Checking identity can sometimes be difficult and confusing to do. If so, ask them to come back at another time when you can have someone with you. If the caller is genuine they will understand and not mind returning. The local policing team in partnership with Trading Standards has introduced a **Cold Calling Control Zone** for Staplehurst. Information has been circulated and signs put up to educate residents and cold-callers about this initiative.

Neighbourhood Watch operates a scheme called Nominated Neighbour, which asks the caller to go to a neighbour who will return with them, so you do not have to deal with this alone. If you wish to learn any more about this, contact the Neighbourhood Watch Office on 01622 604395. Never give any personal details to a stranger. Remember it is your home and you should not be afraid to ask them to leave. If you are at all concerned about a caller, telephone 101.

KCC Handyvan Services: The fitting of various security devices for householders is available through KCC in partnership with Help the Aged and Age concern. Please telephone 0845 026 1055 or Email: handyvan@helptheaged.org.uk for details. Website: www.helptheaged.org.uk

Planning Committee & Full Council Meetings from 7 p.m. South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre on Monday 5th and 19th March 2012. Please note that the start time of Full Council Meetings will be adjusted depending upon the length of the Planning Committee Agenda. Please check on the website at <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/agendas.aspx> or contact the Parish Office for details prior to the Full Council meeting you wish to attend. There is a Public Forum at the beginning and end of each Planning Committee and Full Council meeting for members of the public to address the Council about any Parish issue.

Mrs J S Bassett, Parish Clerk
Parish Office, Village Centre, Staplehurst, TN12 0BJ
Telephone/Fax: (01580) 891761
Website: www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk
E-mail: clerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk
The Parish Office is open to the public 0900-1300 hrs.
Mondays to Fridays (except Thursdays by appointment).