

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for October 2012)

Parish Councillor Vacancy – There is a vacancy for a new councillor to serve on the Parish Council. Could you contribute to the well-being of Staplehurst? Could you help make a difference? Are you a good decision maker? Do you have any ideas to improve local amenities? If 'yes' to any of these, come and join the local decision-making team and make it happen! To put yourself forward for this voluntary position in the community, please contact the Parish Clerk as soon as possible.

Parish Council's Code of Conduct – New government legislation has introduced revised arrangements for regulating the conduct of members of councils in England. As a result, councils have had to adopt their own new code of conduct. The Parish Council has formally adopted its code which is based on the model drawn up by the National Association of Local Councils. The code is based on the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. A copy of the code is available for inspection in the Parish Office, at the Library and on the Parish Council website at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policies_information.aspx .

A PlayScheme 'Thank You' – Although it was some weeks ago, this is the first set of notes penned since the conclusion of this summer's PlayScheme in August. A big 'thank you' goes once again to Play Place for providing weeks of enjoyment and also to Maidstone Borough Council whose financial support, together with Parish Council funds and fees collected, made it financially viable.

Sunday Bus Services Maidstone to Hawkhurst – The trial period for the 2-hourly Sunday bus service between Staplehurst and Hawkhurst is running for the rest of the year – use it or lose it! For up to date service information check <http://www.arrivabus.co.uk/South-East/> .

Bell Lane Toilets – They are opened daily and cleaned from 7.30 a.m. and locked for the night at 7.30 p.m. Staplehurst Parish Council arranged the recent redecoration of the facilities and has put new cleaning arrangements in place – hopefully, users appreciate the difference! The Council wishes to do all it can to keep vandalism repair costs to a minimum and would be grateful if 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.

Council Surgeries at the Library – If residents wish to raise local issues Parish Councillors Tom Burnham and Peter Spearink will be at the Library on Saturday 13th October 2012 between 10:00 and 12.00 noon. Representatives of the local Policing Team will be available on Saturday 27th October between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon. The Surgery by Borough Councillor Richard Lusty

will also be on Saturday 27th October between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon. All are welcome.

Website – As well as minutes and publicity material, reports submitted to the Parish Council are uploaded onto the website. Local businesses and village groups are 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 or go to www.maidstone.gov.uk for information about refuse services provided by Maidstone Borough Council. Use the phone number 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 available to those who are unable to wheel or carry their refuse to the front boundary of their homes.

- **Waste Freighter** – The next visit of the waste freighter to Staplehurst will be on Saturday 8th December 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 while stocks last from Spuds 'n Buds, High Street, Henhurst Farm Shop, Pinnock Lane, TN12 0HD and Paxman Services (UK) Ltd at Unit 3 Larkstore Park, Lodge Road, TN12 0QY at £3.50 per roll of 5. Please note that the Parish Office no longer sells the sacks. 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). After 28th June 2013 sacks will not be collected, save for exceptional cases, and will be replaced by two sizes of wheelie bin (240L and 140L available for an annual hire charge of £30 and £27 respectively). Neighbours may wish to consider sharing a bin. Further information is available at http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_rubbis

[h and waste/household waste - garden waste.aspx](#) or by telephoning 01622 602600.

- **Food waste** – Compostable bags for the kitchen caddies are 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_h_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.

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 with Special Constable Ken Baker remain the local visible policing presence in our Parish, but 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/KCC.KHSFaultsGIS.Web.Sites.Public/> . You do not need to contact the Parish Office to report such defects. Responsibility for motorways and trunk roads lies with 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 Age UK. Please telephone 08450261055 or Email: handyvan@ageuk.co.uk for details. Website: http://kent.gov.uk/community_and_living/community_safety/home_safety.aspx

Citizens Advice Maidstone: Maidstone Citizens Advice Bureau helps people deal with a range of problems by providing free, impartial and confidential advice (telephone 01622 752420). It is seeking to expand its team of volunteer advisers. Interested applicants are invited to contact Maurice Burlem, Guidance Tutor, on 01622 750770 or e-mail training@maidstonecab.org.uk .

Planning Committee and Full Council Meetings in South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre from 7 p.m.

Monday 1st October 2012

Monday 15th October 2012

Please note that the start time of Full Council Meetings is variable and depends on the length of the Planning Committee meeting agenda. Please check with the Parish Office prior to the meeting for an estimated start time.

Mr M J Westwood, Parish Clerk
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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).