

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for December 2013)

Winter Village Update – By the time you read these notes the latest Village Update will have been distributed to addresses throughout the parish. Digital copies of all Updates are available at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_update.aspx. Delivery is undertaken by volunteers whose assistance is much appreciated. If you would like to help deliver future Updates, please contact the Clerk with your details.

Neighbourhood Plan – The Village Update contains a report of the Neighbourhood Plan events held in September and October. If you would like to read more about the activities and the ideas that flowed during the events please visit the village website at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_neighbourhood_plan.aspx or the FERIA Urbanism site at <http://www.feria-urbanism.eu/#/staplehurst-downloads/4579485646>. We are also planning to provide further information in the library.

Christmas Lights – The Staplehurst Christmas Lights Display 2013 will be installed in early December. The familiar motifs will be displayed along the High Street and Station Road until 6th January 2014, but this year they will be shining with new LED lights which will use far less energy than the old lamps. The Council is grateful for the kind donations that local businesses always make towards the displays and we shall be acknowledging this year's supporters in next month's 'Notes'.

Vacancy for a Cleaner – The Parish Council is seeking someone who is available for an hour each week to clean the Parish Office rooms at the Village Centre. Rate of pay is £7.70 per hour. For further information please contact the Parish Office (see contact details at the end of these notes).

Bell Lane Toilets – They are opened daily and cleaned from 7.30 a.m. and locked for the night at 7.30 p.m. 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 members of the Parish Council will be at the library on Saturday 14th December between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon. The next Police session at the Library will be on Saturday 21st December between 10.00 am and 11.00 am.

Mobile Police Contact Points – The next visits of the police vans to the Parade will be between noon and 1.00 pm on Friday 6th and Friday 20th December. For further information visit http://www.kent.police.uk/contact_us/pages/Maidstone_meetings.html.

Website – As well as minutes and publicity material, reports submitted to the Parish Council are uploaded onto the website. Local businesses and village groups may have 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 residents have any queries regarding Parish Council or local authority issues, they are encouraged to contact the Parish Clerk for the facts.

KCC Telephone Numbers – Kent County Council now uses a series of 03000 telephone contact numbers. It advises that calls to the new numbers will cost the same as local landline rates, and will be cheaper from mobile phones too. They should also be included as 'free numbers' in most telephone providers' inclusive call packages.

Some commonly used numbers are as follows:

Highway Helpline	03000 41 81 81
Speed Awareness	03000 41 82 82
Concessionary Fares	03000 41 83 83
Kent Freedom Pass	03000 41 84 84
KCC Main Number	03000 41 41 41

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.

- **Rubbish & Recycling Collections** – Use green recycling bins to dispose of paper, cardboard, glass bottles and jars, food and drink cartons, plastic bottles and food trays and containers. Textiles and small electrical items may be left out separately for collection. For further information visit the dedicated website at <http://www.recyclingtogether.co.uk/>.

- **Waste Freighter** – The next visit of the waste freighter to Staplehurst will be on Saturday 18th January 2014; 0745-0830 at Poyntell Pond, 0840-0925 at Church Green and 0935-1015 at Northdown. Full details are at <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/binsandrecycling/other-types-of-collections> for latest information. Please note that garden waste/vegetation is no longer accepted for disposal by the waste freighter.
- **Garden Waste** – Two sizes of wheelie bin can be hired from Maidstone Borough Council (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/residents/binsandrecycling/my-bins> or by telephoning 01622 602600. If your property is assessed as not having room for a bin you may be eligible to obtain white sacks on a subscription basis from MBC; telephone 01622 602600 for details.
- **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 602600 or go online to <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/binsandrecycling> to arrange a collection. Fees start at £23 for 1-6 items; full details are shown at <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/binsandrecycling/other-types-of-collections>. Householders may also use the KCC Householder Waste Tip at Tovil; the site closed on 21st October for five weeks so please check the latest situation at http://kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_and_rubbish/ways_to_recycle/waste_and_recycling_centres/maidstone_tovil.aspx. The nearest alternative sites are at Gas Road, Sittingbourne ME10 2QD and at North Farm Lane, Tunbridge Wells TN2 3EE.

REPORT INCIDENTS TO THE POLICE WITH THE NATIONAL NUMBER

101 All non-emergency crime-incident reports should be telephoned to 101. This 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 that require 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 Village Centre booking clerk on 07864 547453. The Parish Office does not deal with Village Centre bookings.

Dog Mess & Disposal – Red dog waste bins are provided by Maidstone Borough Council at strategic points around the parish. Thankfully only a small minority allow their dogs to defecate in public areas without clearing up the mess. If you witness such anti-social behaviour or wish to report persistent incidents of mess, telephone MBC Environmental Services on 01622 602202 to give details, including information in confidence about perpetrators if known. Visits to problem areas can be timed to be most effective and a fine imposed when the offender is caught. To report a stray dog, telephone MBC's Dog Warden on 01622 602117.

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 – Contact Kent Highways on 03000 41 81 81 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 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 0300 123 5000 or e-mail ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk.

Kent Public Rights of Way – To report any issues with public rights of way call 03000 41 71 71 (lines open 8am - 8pm Monday - Friday). In an emergency outside of these hours telephone 0300 333 55 38. Faults may also be reported via email prow@kent.gov.uk or by visiting the KCC website http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/countryside_access.aspx or by writing to Public Rights of Way and Access Service, 8 Abbeywood Road, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4YT.

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. These zones are clearly indicated by signs.

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.

Age UK Maidstone: Maidstone Age UK provides information and advice to support older people, their relatives and carers. Visits can be arranged and telephone advice given – call Angela on 01622 753618. It also provides an advocacy service to become the voice of those unable to handle matters on their own – call Aileen on 01622 753618. There is a drop-in service on the first Tuesday of every month at the McCabe Centre from 10.00 am until 1.00 pm.

Brighter Futures – Voluntary Action Maidstone's Brighter Futures project is designed specifically for the over 65s and focuses on health and wellbeing. It organises activities such as exercise classes, day trips, shopping trips and a befriending service. To find out more about the project's activities in Staplehurst telephone Amanda Duddle on 01622 762403 or 07723 397214 or e-mail amanda.duddle@vam-online.org.uk.

Maidstone Borough Council Planning Services – MBC offers a pre-application advice service for householders or anyone contemplating residential/commercial development. For further information visit <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning/pre-application-advice>, e-mail customerservices@maidstone.gov.uk or telephone 01622 602736.

Library Service – Staplehurst Library is open between 9.00am and 6.00pm from Tuesday to Friday and between 9.00am and 3.00pm on Saturday. Kent County Council wants to know what residents think about library services in the future. For further information visit the KCC website www.kent.gov.uk/libraries. To have your say write to: The FLS Team, Kent Libraries, Registration and Archives, James Whatman Way, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1LQ; telephone 01622 696504; or e-mail fls@kent.gov.uk.

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

Monday 2nd December 2013 (South Hall)

Monday 16th December 2013 (North Hall)

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; alternatively,

consult the agendas displayed on the village centre noticeboard or the village website: <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/agendas.aspx>.

Mick 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).