

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for July 2016)

Neighbourhood Plan Examination Update – The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been very busy. Last month's notes reported that the Examiner had issued an interim report which highlighted two areas for attention by the Steering Group and Maidstone Borough Council. The Group and MBC subsequently met and agreed how to deal with this request. However, in an unexpected twist, the Examiner has lost her accreditation and has had to cease work on the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan. At the time of writing these lines (the second week of June) a new examiner has been appointed to start work from mid-June. The delay is unwelcome but please be assured that the Steering Group and our MBC colleagues are working hard to ensure the examination proceeds as quickly as possible. All being well, Staplehurst will before long have its own referendum when all registered electors in the parish will be able to vote on the Neighbourhood Plan. Please check the village website www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk for latest news on progress.

Parish Council Annual Report and Village Update – It had been our intention to deliver the Parish Council's 2015-16 Annual Report in early June, but with the next Village Update due to be published imminently we decided it would be more efficient and cost-effective to deliver the two publications together. At the time of writing it is planned to deliver copies of the Summer Update and the annual report during the week commencing 27th June. If you have not received a copy by the second week of July and would like to receive one please contact the Parish Office. Both the Update and the annual report will also be published on the village website.

Staplehurst Summer Play Scheme – The summer play scheme will take place at Staplehurst Primary School, Gybbon Rise, Staplehurst TN12 0LZ. An open morning will be held on Monday 1st August starting at 11.00am. The play scheme programme will then run for three weeks from Tuesday 2nd August until Friday 19th August. In weeks 1 and 3 the scheme will run between 9.00am and 12.00 noon. In week 2 the scheme will run between 9.00am and 3.00pm, with an option for children to attend in the morning or afternoon or both sessions.

Play Place will be running the scheme again this year, with financial and administrative support from Staplehurst Parish Council and Maidstone Borough Council. The scheme will provide 50 places per weekday morning for rising 5's (those starting school September 2016 provided they have reached 4 years old) to 11 years.

For booking information please visit the village website <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/playscheme.aspx> or contact Toni Chincharo of Play Place on 01689 867358 or e-mail toni.chincharo@playplace.org. Representatives of Play Place will be attending the Carnival & Fete to deal with any booking enquiries and provide information.

Surgeries at the Library – The Parish Council now holds a surgery every Saturday in the library between 10.00am and 11.00am. Do come along to meet a parish councillor and ask questions about local issues. The next Borough Councillor surgery will be on Saturday 30th July between 10.00am and 12.00 noon. The next PCSO surgery will be on Saturday 16th July between 10.00 am and 11.00 am.

Vegetation – Plants, hedges and trees can reduce the width of footpaths and visibility on the highway. Property-owners are responsible for maintaining their hedges; failure to do so may generate anything from a polite neighbourly request to a report to Kent County Council (03000 41 81 81 - option 2 - or <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>). KCC will give owners a deadline to remedy a situation or as a last resort carry out the work itself and send owners the bill. To avoid such difficult situations and out of consideration for others please check your boundaries regularly, not just for vegetation but for any other overflow from your property such as loose gravel from paths and drives and rubbish that may have escaped from bins.

Parish Council on-line – Visit www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk to see Parish Council minutes, reports, a calendar of events, plus local information and comment on the 'Latest News' and Forum pages. Consult the Local Directory and Village Groups pages for information about local businesses and organisations; contact the Parish Office to submit a listing. The Parish Council is also on Facebook.

Parish Information and E-groups – Copy 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. Sign up to an e-group to receive direct e-mails of useful information about local issues e.g. weekly MBC plans list, Parish Council minutes & agendas, press releases. Contact the Parish Office (details at the end of these notes) for any questions.

Bell Lane Toilets – Maintained on behalf of the Parish Council, they are open during the day and locked for the night. For non-urgent issues, call during office hours or leave a message on 01580 891761. For emergencies outside office hours, telephone 07539 692588.

Contact Kent County Council – Some useful Kent County Council numbers are as follows:

Highway Helpline (1)	03000 41 81 81 (office hours - see options below)
Highways Helpline (2)	03000 41 91 91 (out-of-hours emergency)
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

- Option 1 - Driver Education and Speed Awareness
- Option 2 - Vegetation Enquiries
- Option 3 - Potholes
- Option 4 - Street lights enquiries and problems (most village lights are KCC-owned)
- Option 5 - Drainage problems
- Option 6 - Any other items not covered above

You can report a highways problem on-line at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>. You do not need to contact the Parish Office to report such defects and actual eye-witness reports are more valuable to Kent Highways. The on-line reporting site allows you to attach photographs to your report. 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 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.

Maidstone Borough highway-related services - MBC is 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 issues requiring attention or go on-line to <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/parking-and-streets/street-problems>. For other highways and public transport issues contact Kent County Council Highways.

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-for-residents/pre-application-advice> or telephone 01622 602736. To report a planning breach or enforcement issue go to MBC's website at <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-enforcement> and then click on the appropriate icon.

Dog Issues – Red dog waste bins are provided by Maidstone Borough Council at strategic points around the parish. If you witness owners failing to clean up 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 by officers to problem areas can be timed to be most effective and a fine imposed when the offender is caught. To report a stray or problem dog, telephone MBC's Dog Warden on 01622 602117.

MBC Cleansing and Collection Services – Call MBC 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 or go on-line to <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/parking-and-streets/street-problems> to report undesirable activities such as fly-tipping, dumped cars, littering etc. 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/>.
- **Garden Waste** – Two sizes of wheelie bin can be hired from Maidstone Borough Council (240L and 140L available for an annual hire charge of £35 and £31.50 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. For further information go to <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/binsandrecycling/other-types-of-collections>. Householders may also use the KCC Household Waste Tip at Burial Ground Lane in Tovil; opening times are Monday to Saturday 8.00am to 4.30pm and on Sundays and most bank holidays from 9.00am to 4.00pm. The site is closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day. For further information go to http://kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_and_rubbish/waste_and_recycling_centres/maidstone.aspx.

REPORTING INCIDENTS TO THE POLICE - All non-emergency crime-incident reports should be telephoned to **101**. This non-emergency 24/7 national police telephone number gives access to the local policing team wherever you happen to be in the UK. Full details are available at <http://www.police.uk/101> If you prefer, you may talk anonymously to Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**. Life-threatening incidents, crimes in

progress or serious injury road traffic accidents that require urgent police attendance should be notified by dialling **999**.

Local contacts are Community Warden Mira Martin (mob: 07969 584179, e-mail: mira.martin@kent.gov.uk) and PCSO Pete Gardner (tel: 101, email: peter.gardner@kent.pnn.police.uk).

The mobile police contact point visits the Parade on selected Mondays between 1.45pm and 2.45pm. At the time of writing July's dates have not been published. For confirmation of all visit dates please see local noticeboards or visit http://www.kent.police.uk/contact_us/pages/Maidstone_meetings.html.

Neighbourhood Watch – For information about the activities of Neighbourhood Watch in our area contact David Ralph on 01580 891656 or Jacqui Blake, NHW liaison officer at Maidstone police station on 01622 604395 or go to <http://www.maidstonenhw.co.uk>.

Hire of North & South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre - Please contact the Village Centre booking secretary on 07864 547453, e-mail book@staplehurstvc.org or visit <http://www.staplehurstvc.org/> for further information. The Parish Office does not deal with bookings.

Staplehurst Library – The library is open between 9.00am and 6.00pm from Tuesday to Friday and between 9.00am and 3.00pm on Saturday.

Concessions to Library Users - For people with disabilities or mental health problems KCC offers an exempt card which allows concessionary use of library facilities. For full details go to <http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries/join-the-library> or ask at the library for further information.

Power Cuts – For information about preparing for and dealing with power cuts go to <http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/> or call 0800 31 63 105 (landline) or 0333 32 32 105 (from a mobile).

Fire Home Safety Services – Kent Fire and Rescue Service offer free home safety advice and services. Contact them by telephoning 0800 923 7000 or e-mailing home@kent.fire-uk.org.

Fire Hydrants – To report any defects of a fire hydrant or its location sign contact the Fire Service on 01622 692121 Ext. 2391 or e-mail water.services@kent.fire-uk.org.

South East Water Metering Programme – For advice on water meters visit South East Water's website www.southeastwater.co.uk or telephone the metering helpline 0333 000 0003.

Help Scheme to Connect to Mains Gas – SGN (formerly operating as Southern Gas Networks) is offering discounts to groups of people who wish to

connect to mains gas and a support scheme known as 'Help to Heat' to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged residents to do so. For further information go to <https://www.sgn.co.uk/Our-Services/SGN-Financial-Help/> or telephone SGN on 0800 912 1700.

Arriva Bus Service: For timetable enquiries phone 0871 200 22 33, for customer services phone 0344 800 44 11 or contact the company via its website at <https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/contact-us/>.

Age UK Maidstone: Maidstone Age UK <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/maidstone/> provides information and advice to support older people, their relatives and carers. Visits can be arranged and telephone advice given. It also provides an advocacy service to become the voice of those unable to handle matters on their own. Telephone 01622 753618 for more information. 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.

Involve Kent - Brighter Futures: Involve Kent's community transport and services for older people (formerly known as Brighter Futures) now operate from a new telephone number 01622 235833. Involve Kent's main office number is still 01622 677337. More information is also available from Involve Kent's website at www.involvekent.org.uk.

Planning Committee and Full Council Meetings in South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre from 7.00 p.m.

Monday 4th July 2016

Monday 18th July 2016

The start time of Full Council meetings 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 or consult the agendas displayed on the Village Centre noticeboard and the village website: <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/agendas.aspx>.

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Parish emergency only out of hours contact: 07539 692588
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).