

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for February 2017)

Christmas Lights – The Parish Council would like to thank the following local businesses for their kind contributions towards the cost of the new Christmas lights: Murcatto Wines; Radfords Estate Agents; Staplehurst Garage; W J Crouch Butchers. Please support our local businesses whenever you can.

Closure of NatWest Staplehurst Branch – Further to confirmation of permanent closure of Staplehurst branch as reported in last month's PC Notes the Parish Council has arranged a meeting with representatives of NatWest for the end of January. By the time you are reading this article it is hoped there will be some clarity about alternative service options. Look out for updates on the village website and in next month's Parish Council Notes. In the meantime customers can continue to use the Post Office to withdraw cash and to make deposits.

Village Caretaker Cover – The Parish Council is looking for someone to cover for the village caretaker between mid-February and mid-April. The duties mainly involve emptying the parish litter bins at Surrenden and Jubilee Fields and undertaking a visual check of the play equipment there. The time commitment would be about two hours a week. If you are interested please contact the Parish Office for more information.

Village Clean-Up Saturday Morning 18th March – Last year we held two clean-ups instead of the usual one to help keep Staplehurst tidy. Healthy exercise (but not too strenuous), fresh air and a feel-good factor perhaps explain why the event has become so popular with residents of all ages. Look out for details in next month's PC Notes, on the village website and on noticeboards nearer the time. In the meantime please keep the date free!

Parish Office Public Opening Hours – From 1st February the Parish Office opening hours will change. The office will still be open to the public four mornings a week, but the new times will be 9.00am – 1.00pm Mondays to Thursdays. It will be closed on Fridays.

Surgeries at the Library – The Parish Council 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. Councillor Perry's borough council surgery is normally on the last Saturday of the month. The next PCSO surgery will be on Saturday 25th February between 10.00am and 11.00am.

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.

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:

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| 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 – Please bag dog waste and use any ordinary litter bin or domestic waste bins. 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

- **Rubbish & Recycling Collections** – Use black bins for rubbish. 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. If your property is assessed as not having room for a wheelie bin you can obtain from MBC black sacks for rubbish and a black box for recycling. Leave bins and sacks at the boundary of your property by 7.00am on the day of collection and no earlier than the evening beforehand. For further information visit <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/binsandrecycling/my-bins>.
- **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.
- **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.

- **Assisted Collections** - 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 – call 01622 602600 or go to <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/binsandrecycling/other-types-of-collections>.
- **Missed Bins** – Report a missed bin collection within 48 hours directly to Maidstone Borough Council at <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/binsandrecycling>.

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**. By the end of winter Kent Police plan to add reporting functionality for non-urgent crimes to its website at www.kent.police.uk.

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).

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. For full details of libraries and library services go to <http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries>.

Power Cuts – For information about preparing for and dealing with power cuts dial 150 to be connected to your local network operator. This number applies wherever you are in the country. Alternatively, in our region 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.

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/>.

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

Monday 6th February 2017

Monday 20th February 2017

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>.

Mick Westwood, Parish Clerk

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Telephone/Fax: (01580) 891761

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 Thursdays (Closed on Fridays - other times by appointment).