

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for May 2011)

Election on Thursday 5th May 2011 – All fifteen seats of Staplehurst Parish Council were due to be up for election on 5th May, but only the Borough seat and AV Referendum will now take place. Only fourteen candidates completed nomination forms for the Parish Council, so they are all deemed elected uncontested. Their first job on taking office on 16th May will be to co-opt one more elector to fill the vacant seat on the Council.

It is not too late to find out about what being a Parish Councillor might entail. Just ask the Clerk, an existing Councillor or see the information on the website at www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk and use the Elections 2011 tab. Local electors or members of the public are encouraged to attend and listen to the last meeting of the previous Parish Council on Tuesday 3rd May. Opportunities to speak with Councillors are routinely given before and after all meetings. Existing Councillors and Clerk would be happy to answer any questions you may have about being a Parish Councillor.

New Council from 16th May 2011 + one vacancy – The fourteen new Councillors taking office on Monday 16th will be; Margaret Ashby, Joan Buller, Tom Burnham, Paul Butcher, Jack Davidson, Simon Green, John Kelly, Paul Kelly, Barrett Manning, John Perry, John Reardon, Rory Silkin, Rosemary Smith (who likes to be known as Steve) and Peter Spearink. If you wish to fill the remaining seat on the Council, contact the Parish Clerk now for details!

Summer Update & Annual Report – Distribution of the next Village Update, together with the Annual Report, is due to take place at the end of this month. If you wish to volunteer for the delivery of some of these, the Parish Office would very much like to hear from you. Houses in outlying areas receive their Updates & Annual Report by post or email, so volunteers are only given delivery areas where there is a safe footpath to use.

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 – The Parish Council website continues to improve with additional pages of information and new layout should have been completed by now. Many of the Reports submitted to the Parish Council are now uploaded onto the website together with the Minutes. 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 visit of the waste freighter to Staplehurst has not yet been advised. Please check for the new details at http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_rubbish_and_waste/saturday_freighter_service_-_d.aspx Please note that garden waste/vegetation is no longer accepted for disposal by the Waste Freighter.
- **Garden waste** – The new compostable WHITE MBC Garden Sacks are available from Henhurst Farm Shop, Pinnock Lane, TN12 0HD, Paxman Services (UK) Ltd at Unit 3 Larkstore Park, Lodge Road, TN12 0QY or the Parish Office at £3.25 per roll of 5. 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 IT! PC Marc Pennicott on 07980 770575 with Community Warden, Chris Lomax on 07811 271254, PCSO Pete Gardner on 07772 226134 and Special Constable Ken Baker are the local visible policing presence in our Parish, but have emergency back up from the force as necessary. Telephone any of these officers if you witness anti-social behaviour that is not life-threatening. These are not 24/7 contact numbers so do leave a message and they will get back to you when next on duty. All crime-incident reports should be given to Maidstone Police Station on 01622 690690. If you prefer, calls to Crimestoppers are free and anonymous: 0800 555 111 but these may not be referred back directly to this parish. 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.

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, concessionary fares and public transport matters. MBC Contact Centre to report most issues requiring attention is 01622 602162. For all other Highways 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, call Mid Kent Police on 01622 690690.

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

Parish Council Meetings held in South Hall at Staplehurst Village Centre:-

Planning Committee - 7 p.m. Tuesday 3rd May 2011

Full Council Meeting – 8 p.m. Tuesday 3rd May 2011

FIRST Meeting of the newly-elected Full Council to include Planning - 7 p.m. Monday 16th May 2011

Please note that the start time of Full Council Meetings could be earlier, if the Planning Committee meeting Agenda is short. Please check with the Parish Office prior to the meeting you wish to attend.

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).