

Village Update

WINTER 2012

www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk

A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR STAPLEHURST

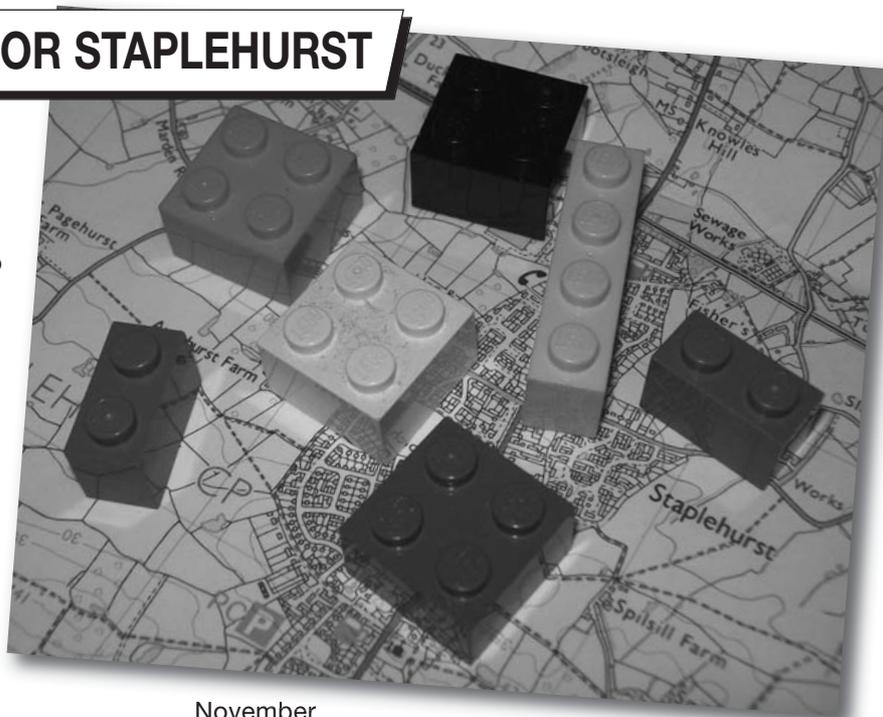
Staplehurst Parish Council has decided to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood plans were introduced by the Localism Act and give communities a chance to plan their local area. Staplehurst Parish Council has applied to Maidstone Borough Council to designate a 'Neighbourhood Area'.

A six-week public consultation, facilitated by Maidstone Borough Council will start on Monday 26th November 2012. For full details please see the letter enclosed with the Update.

If you would like to make any comments on the application to designate the neighbourhood planning area please send them by post to the Spatial Policy Team, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, ME15 6JQ or e-mail LDF@maidstone.gov.uk.

Comments must be received between Monday 26th



November

2012 and 5pm on Tuesday 8th January 2013.

Maidstone Borough Council will publish its decision on the application on its website by 25th January 2013.

STAPLEHURST PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2012

A reminder about the Staplehurst Photographic Competition for 2012, entitled 'Staplehurst Moments', which seeks to capture the best moments and events which have taken place in Staplehurst throughout the year and will be judged on that criterion.

All entries must be submitted by 30th November 2012 and the top 10 images will be displayed in the Village Hall on Monday 17th December 2012. Our thanks go to the companies who have kindly agreed to donate prizes:

- DK Holdings, Staplehurst
- Photomegorgeous, Staplehurst and
- Maidstone Photo Factory, Headcorn.

For further enquiries - please email photocomp@staplehurstvillage.org.uk

For the Rules of the Competition please go to: <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/uploads/staplehurst/documents/10/1062.pdf>

WELCOME TO OUR NEW COUNCILLOR

Neal Kemp was co-opted to Staplehurst Parish Council on 5th November to fill a vacancy. We welcome Neal and thank him for being willing to serve our local community.

Staplehurst

Parish Council

HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF BECOMING A SCHOOL GOVERNOR?

Staplehurst School currently has a vacancy on its Governing Body and would be interested to hear from anybody who thinks they might have the time and commitment.

Together with the Headteacher, the Governing Body has overall responsibility for the running of the school. Governors are involved in deciding school policies, allocating the school's budget and appointing senior staff. No special qualifications are needed and the most

important thing is to have a keen interest in the school and be prepared to play an active part in the Governing Body's work.

Parents/carers of children who currently attend Staplehurst School are not eligible for this particular vacancy.

If you are interested and would like more information about being a governor, please contact the school on 01580 891765.

RAINCOAT VICTIM OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

After the Parish Council meeting on 1st October (including the talk on library services), a black full-length lady's Burberry raincoat was taken by mistake and a black knee-length man's raincoat was left behind. If this is yours, please contact the Parish Office (01580 891761).

SUPERMARKET PLANS

The planning applications for supermarkets in the area of Staplehurst station from Sainsbury's Supermarkets (MA/11/1944) and Tesco Stores (MA/12/0232) are due to be decided by Maidstone Borough Council at the same meeting of the Borough Council's Planning Committee on 22nd November. Many of the issues raised by the Parish Council and local residents are mentioned in the reports on the applications by MBC officers.

VILLAGE CLEAN-UP 2013

Following the success of the litter collection by volunteers last spring, the operation will be repeated on Saturday 9th March 2013. More details will be available later, but please make a note of the date in your diaries.

WAR MEMORIAL IMPROVED

St. Georges Chapel in All Saints Church holds the First World War Memorial. Prior to the war this area was the Lady Chapel and part of the main church. It has its own door to the south of the church. It is not certain why this chapel was chosen to house the memorial but it could be lack of a suitable exterior space, the Martyrs Memorial being at the cross roads. The old school was asked to host the Memorial in their grounds but declined. There was some opposition to the memorial being placed in the church from other denominations and non-Christians.

The memorial was completed in 1918 and rededicated in 1919. The stone tomb that had formed the altar was moved to the front of the chapel and is just to the right of the entrance; the old door, now blocked by this is no longer in use.

The oak carved screening now enclosing the chapel and the commemorative plaque were paid for by public subscription and as many of



THE VILLAGE WEBSITE

Residents are reminded that the Parish Council maintain a website on behalf of the whole community including an area with free advertising for local groups - http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_life.aspx and for businesses - http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/local_directory.aspx

TENDERING FOR HEALTH CENTRE CONTRACT - PUBLIC MEETING

The process for awarding a new contract for providing medical services at Staplehurst Health Centre is under way. Staplehurst Parish Council has organised a public meeting on Monday 26th November at 7.30 p.m. at the Village Centre (North Hall) when representatives of the Primary Care Trust will explain the process they will follow and answer questions from the floor. The Health Centre is a vital facility for our village, so please take the opportunity to find out about its future and how it will be affected by changes in the National Health Service.

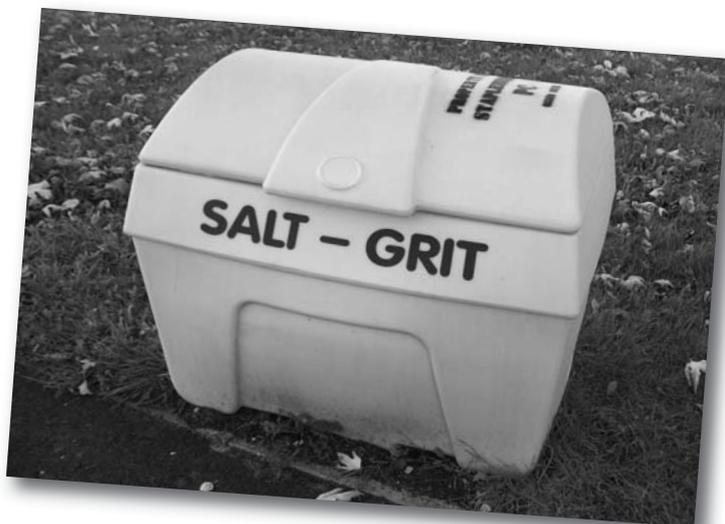
the names listed come from local farm and land owners they would seem to be the most likely source of income. Mr and Mrs Hanmer gave a further £50 at a meeting in February 1921. Bowman & Sons made the panels and George & Sons were responsible for the paving and masonry work. A committee of local councillors, residents and the Rector organised the whole construction which was not complete until 1921. The Bishop of Dover made the final dedication after completion on All Saints day of that year. Collections were also taken in church and in November 1921 the sum of £11. 3s 2d was collected.

More than ninety years later, repairs and corrections have now been made to the memorial plaques for those who died in both the First and Second World Wars, and a new shelf to hold wreaths has been made by local craftsman Martin Franklin. A re-dedication service will be held at 12.00 on Saturday 23rd March 2013. Squadron Leader Rev. Steven Lamond from the RAF will be helping the Rector conduct the service.

NEW SALT BIN LOCATIONS

Staplehurst Parish Council has agreed to provide and maintain three more salt bins in addition to the existing seven. They will be at Bower Walk, Benden Close and Newlyn Drive. The salt is provided for use by residents on pavements at their discretion.

There are also salt bins in Staplehurst maintained by other bodies, particularly Kent Highways.



GETTING THE MOST FROM STAPLEHURST LIBRARY

Kent Libraries want ideas from residents on modernising library services. A presentation at the Parish Council meeting on 1st October explained the search for new and efficient ways to run local library services, meeting financial targets while delivering services that are right for our community.



More information about Future Library Services can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/libraries.

If you have any ideas or comments about library services in this area, write to: The FLS Team, Kent Libraries, Registration and Archives, James Whatman Way, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1LQ, 01622 696504, or email fls@kent.gov.uk.

CHRISTMAS LIGHT DISPLAY

Staplehurst Parish Council has decided to maintain the display of Christmas motifs along the High Street and Station Road at about the same level as last year, and they are to be put up in early December. Trials of low-energy bulbs were not wholly successful – as the bulbs produce

less heat, there were more problems with moisture getting into the bulb holders (particularly in snowy weather) and a higher rate of bulb failures as a result. We will continue to look for ways to improve our energy efficiency without dimming the festive spirit.

MORE DEVELOPERS PRESENT THEIR IDEAS

At a well-attended public meeting on Monday 12th November arranged by the Parish Council, two further developers presented their preliminary ideas for new housing developments in Staplehurst and responded to questions and comments raised by residents. Neither has yet applied for planning permission, and we hope that they will give careful consideration to the issues raised by residents before doing so.

Bovis Homes have an option on land between Fisher's Farm and Headcorn Road. The illustrations presented showed about 162 homes of various types and sizes, including a proportion of affordable housing. A number of the existing landscape features, such as hedgerows and ponds, would be incorporated into the design of the new development. Road access would be from Headcorn Road and Fishers Road, and there would also be access for pedestrians and cyclists at some other



points. Residents raised a number of points, particularly the impact of traffic from the proposed development on neighbouring roads, which are already severely congested at busy periods. Panels showing how the Bovis plans were developed are available for inspection in the Parish Office.

Iceni Projects and Combe Bank Homes outlined proposals for development of a smaller site on the north side of George Street. The plans showed 20 to 25 homes, at a relatively low density. A higher than average proportion would be affordable housing and it was hoped that this would encourage Maidstone Borough Council to grant planning permission for a development outside the built-up area of Staplehurst. Residents were concerned at the risk presented by more people using the footpath level crossing of the railway, and doubted whether George Street was suitable for extra traffic.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In my previous Chairman's report I highlighted the concerns expressed by Parish Councils, including Staplehurst, regarding the proposal by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) to replace the existing Concurrent Functions Grant with a Parish Services Scheme. I indicated that we were proposing to prepare a petition to be sent to MBC from the Parishes. This petition would require MBC to call the decision in; and if necessary a poll would be taken to obtain support for a differential rating system. I am pleased to state that the petition is now well underway and we already have over 230 signatures. We shall continue to collect signatures; copies of the petition are available at the Parish Office. It is also available on-line at www.tinyurl.com/ParishPetitionToMBC. The complete petition will represent all the Parishes in the Maidstone Borough and is being coordinated through the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC); we have been informed that they have currently collected over 3400 signatures which is significantly higher than collected on previous occasions. This is very important to the future financing of Parishes in the Maidstone Borough; we need your support.

We have now finally received approval from MBC for the installation of a pole and light for the new Stryker PoleCat

security camera at Jubilee Field, which we hope to complete by the end of November. The camera has arrived and we hope that together with the improved lighting it will help to protect all the facilities at Jubilee Field and their users.

The state of the Parade continues to give cause for concern and we are currently pursuing this with MBC. We recognise that, although it is privately owned, it is also a public space that it is an important part of our village; and as such, residents are entitled to a clean environment to go about their business.

The Parish Council is taking steps to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. This is something that is being encouraged by the localism agenda and once established will set out the specific needs of our community within the overall core strategy of MBC. A Rural Settlement Group (RSG) comprising both residents and parish councillors has been set up and is overseeing this work. MBC is currently publishing public notices notifying our intention; the plan will cover the whole parish and not just the village envelope. We believe this is very important since all parts of the parish could be affected by future development.

Finally, I should mention that our Editor, Councillor Joan Buller, is recovering from an operation. Joan is our longest serving parish Councillor and is a major contributor to the well being of the community. I know that Joan is much missed and we all wish her a speedy recovery.

John Perry

PARISH COUNCIL INFORMATION

Local electors and the press have a right to listen to Parish Council Meetings, but not to take part. At the beginning and after the closure of the Parish Council Meeting, the Chairman will invite members of the public to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes each relating to issues on the Agenda or about issues of local concern. You are requested to state your name and address prior to speaking. The Parish Council as a planning consultee makes recommendations to Maidstone Borough Council,

which makes the decision. All meetings are held in the South Hall, Village Centre. Planning Committee meetings begin at 7pm with Full Council following on at 8pm (or earlier if planning agenda is short). Contact the Clerk for details or check the website calendar page.

Meetings in 2012 are:-

November	Monday 19th	
December	Monday 3rd	Monday 17th

Parish Council Information

COUNCILLORS

John Perry

(Chairman)

Tom Burnham

(Joint Vice Chairman)

Paul Kelly

(Joint Vice Chairman)

Paul Butcher

(Chairman of Planning)

Margaret Ashby

Joan Buller

Anne Gosling

Simon Green

Neal Kemp

Sam Lain

Barrett Manning

John Reardon

Adele Sharp

Rory Silkin

Peter Spearink

CLERK

Mr Mick Westwood

RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER

Mrs Sue Bassett

ASSISTANT to CLERK

Mrs Deborah Jenkins

Address:

The Parish Office,
Village Centre, High Street.
Staplehurst TN12 0BJ

Email: clerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk

Tel: 01580 891761

Opening hours:

9am to 1pm Mondays to Fridays,
except on Thursdays when it is by
appointment.

COUNCIL SURGERIES AT THE LIBRARY

Two Parish Councillors will attend a surgery at the Library on the second Saturday of each month from 10am until noon.

Borough Councillor Lusty's surgery will continue on the last Saturday of each month.

PCSO Pete Gardner will be holding a surgery on 1st December 11-12 noon

You are welcome to talk through any local problems or ask questions about local issues.