

Village Update

SUMMER 2013

www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk

UPROCKIN RETURNS!

Staplehurst UpRockin 2013 with a Boot Fair & Family Fun Day - Saturday 20th July

Building on the success of previous years, Staplehurst UpRockin Skating & BMX Competitions will include attractions for the whole community. As well as a freestyle competition for Scooters 1200-1330, Skateboarders 1330-1500 and BMX riders 1500-1800 (sign up on the day) with music and judges, there will be a Boot Fair from 1000-1400 with a variety of other side-shows and refreshments from noon. Local group leaders are reminded of the offer of a free boot fair pitch in return for two volunteers to assist with site organisation for two hours each. Please contact the Parish Office on 01580 891761 or email rfo@staplehurstvillage.org.uk for bookings and further details. Local residents will be able to book a boot fair pitch at £10 each – pay on the day. Car parking will be free on the field opposite Jubilee Playing Field. Enjoy a fun and active day with family and friends.



CARNIVAL & FETE

This year's Carnival & Fete will be held on Saturday 29th June on Surrenden Playing Field commencing at noon. In addition to the usual stalls there will be a train ride, fun fair, music, clowns, fancy dress competition, vintage cars and a wide choice of refreshments. There will be a FREE musical evening from the 70s, a tribute to the musical Grease, and back by popular demand a tribute to ABBA. There is a need for volunteers before and on the day. Please contact Graham on 01580 892 270.

PLAYSCHEME

Staplehurst Parish Council is working with Play Place again to organise three weeks of activities this summer. We are pleased to have the use of the Guide Centre as the primary school is undergoing repairs. Please see the details in the accompanying flyer.

HEALTH CENTRE

The PCT put the contract for the Health Centre out to tender from 1st April 2013. They could have renewed it for two years, but chose not to. Sadly the tendering coincided with the greatest NHS upheaval in history. The tendering went smoothly, but caused vast disruption. The procurement people have made recommendations to the PCT successor, (the CCG) who are in negotiations with the preferred bidder, Malling Health. The CCG anticipate signing a contract in the next few weeks and the Council will then hold a public meeting as soon as it can. Patients' forbearance is appreciated.

Staplehurst

Parish Council

JUBILEE FIELD CAMERA

The Parish Council maintain three Stryker CCTV cameras; the latest is now installed at the Jubilee Field to protect the football facilities, Kathie Lamb Guide Centre and the car parking area. These are valuable assets for the village and we hope the extra security offered by this monitoring will keep them safe.



WEBSITE

The Parish Council Website continues to be the main source of parish information. Pages are updated as often as possible. The Forum also continues to be well used. There are periods of apparent inactivity, but you only have to look at the number of times a posting has been read to realise that it is a busy part of the website. After some considerable work undertaken by our host Zulogic, the site has been stable and only a few outages have been reported, mainly due to site maintenance. Work on the site never stops. Additional methods of communication are being investigated including Facebook and Twitter, but the case has yet to be presented.

STAPLEHURST COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP DAY

Following a day of torrential rain, Saturday 9th March was cloudy, but thankfully dry. 29 volunteers helped on the day and about 50 bags of rubbish were removed from our streets, verges and open spaces. The 'bag openers' were a great help and enabled us to work more efficiently. 4 people did the rural area (at their own risk) cleaning Marden Road and Maidstone Road. One gentleman who helped came from Boughton Monchelsea, as he was visiting a friend in Staplehurst! Councillor Eric Hotson also helped and said he will carry on helping us finish this task!! One other volunteer agreed to clean three more roads in the next few days. One youngster helped with his grandfather. Two members of the WI served much needed and welcome refreshments and we give a big thank you to them. We were very grateful for the use of the Youth Club. Well done to all those who braved the weather and helped to make Staplehurst a cleaner place to

LITTER AND THE PARADE

MBC enforcement teams are coming out to Staplehurst on a regular basis and are fining people if they see them drop any litter. The Parade, in private ownership, is still an issue! A private company is employed by the landlord to clean this area three times a week. When a councillor spoke to one of the contractors he said that Staplehurst was the filthiest place he had to clean and he only had a specified time to work here. Surely we can all try harder to keep Staplehurst litter free! If you are caught dropping litter anywhere in a public area you could be subject to a fine!

SPEED WATCH

Speed Watch is county-wide so all recorded speeding vehicle details are fed into one database. This makes our efforts much more effective. On Saturday 20th April five volunteers from Staplehurst attended the first Kent Speed Watch Conference at Police Headquarters. This was an excellent event with very useful presentations and question time, as well as an opportunity to network with other volunteers. Please contact the clerk if you would like to join our team and make Staplehurst roads safer.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

On Monday 29th April the Parish Council hosted the Annual Parish Meeting which was well attended. Sheila Potipher, a Maidstone Street Pastor, gave a very informative talk on the excellent work carried out by volunteers looking out for people, especially youngsters, who visit Maidstone for evening entertainment. Parish Council Chairman, John Perry, then detailed the key activities and issues that had arisen during the year. Among the reports we were pleased to hear a very thorough presentation from Councillor Eric Hotson who represents Staplehurst on both the Borough and County Councils. Residents posed some interesting and stimulating questions. At the end of the meeting the Chairman gave thanks to Councillor Joan Buller for her 30 years' service on the Council and presented her with cards, flowers, a beautiful crystal vase and a 'gold' painted litter picker!



live in. A wonderful sense of community was shown. Our thanks go to MBC for providing the equipment and more importantly removing the sacks of rubbish.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

One of the most moving events that took place during the last quarter was the memorial service for Sergeant Reginald Fitzgerald held at All Saints Church on the 23rd March. Sergeant Fitzgerald died when his plane crashed whilst attempting to drop supplies to Italian Partisans in 1944. Sergeant Fitzgerald resided at Slaney Farm, but his name had been inexplicably left off the war memorial. This has now been corrected and our thanks go to our local historian Ted Sergison for his invaluable research. The service was very well attended and once again this highlighted the strong community spirit that exists in Staplehurst. I should also like to thank all those who were involved in this event; especially the Kings Head for making their premises available to the family of Sergeant Fitzgerald and other invited guests prior to the service. This was extremely generous and greatly contributed to the smooth running of the event.

Turning to other matters; the Parish Services Scheme proposed by MBC has now been implemented. As many may recall the parishes strongly opposed this change

DOG FOULING

MBC are running a 'Dog Watch' campaign to help stamp out the dog fouling problem throughout the borough. Bagged dog mess can be placed in any waste bin, not just the special red bins, and owners are encouraged to take the waste home with them and dispose of it there. Officers can issue a fixed penalty notice to those failing to clean up after their dog with a £75 fine. Repeat offenders could receive fines of up to £1000. If you witness irresponsible owners you can report them on 01622 602 202.

STAPLEHURST EMERGENCY HELP TEAM - SEHT

The SEHT held its annual meeting on 8th April. The chairman described what had been achieved in the past year, including contacting local organisations for help in future emergencies. We held our annual training exercise, Operation Snowplough, in October which was a great success. We rescued dozens of stranded passengers from a snow-bound train. Thanks to all the 'volunteer' passengers. We have updated information and completed some documentation training. Then John Bardell, Kent Fire and Rescue, kindly gave an interesting talk on Great Disasters and fire safety. New volunteers and ideas are welcome!

STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

The Rural Settlement Group continues to support the Parish Council by conducting the early development work for Neighbourhood Planning. The RSG has started compiling a List of Community Assets whilst monitoring developments resulting from the recent Land Call by MBC. Members of the Parish Council and RSG attended the

which has led to very significant falls in the grants received; in Staplehurst's case this has resulted in a reduction of over 65%. The parishes had little alternative but to accept this change for 2013/14, but it has inevitably put strains on the parish precepts. However, the Kent Association of Local Councils is currently reviewing the position and is collecting evidence to ensure that the rural areas are not being unfairly penalised.

We are continuing with our work towards developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Staplehurst and we have now passed the first hurdle which required public notification of our intentions. Developing a Neighbourhood Plan is an important part of the overall localism agenda and we believe this will enable Staplehurst to have a strong say in its future. However, we recognise that this must fit in with MBC's overall plan and we are working closely with MBC to achieve this objective.



Sgt Reginald Fitzgerald



Sgt Fitzgerald's medals presented at the service

Finally, there are a number of planning issues still outstanding. We have had a meeting with MBC regarding the possible development at Oliver Road and have made further representations taking account of residents' views given at our planning meeting. As far as the deferred application in respect of Tesco is concerned, the date for the hearing by MBC is the 16th May.

John Perry

Harrietsham Annual Parish Meeting on the 24th April 2013 where they observed planning consultants presenting on their Neighbourhood Plan to date. Harrietsham PC is seen as the pathfinder for parishes in the borough. For more details see 'Future of Staplehurst' at: www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/future_of_staplehurst.aspx

PLANNING – UPDATE ON MAJOR PROJECTS

There are three major projects at various stages in the planning process. The situation outlined below was correct at the time of writing, but there may have been further developments by the time you read this. Sainsbury's have now been given planning permission from MBC for a new supermarket (primarily a food store) and car park on land currently occupied by GMS and DK Holdings. The Parish Council has not been told a starting date.

As reported in the last Update, Tesco were requested by the MBC Planning Committee to improve the environmental impact of their proposal for a new supermarket, filling station and a new station car park north of the railway. The Parish Council considered the revised plans on 18th March, but decided that the changes were insufficient to alter their previous

recommendation to MBC to refuse the application. This is being considered by MBC on 16th May. Taylor Wimpey revised plans for their housing development at the top of Oliver Road which were considered by the Parish Council on 2nd April. It was decided that the changes did not address issues raised on the previous occasion, particularly the impact on residents in Butcher Close. It is understood that MBC planning officers are discussing possible further changes with the developer. The scheme includes a sizeable area of public access woodland and conservation area on the west of the site, and representatives of the Parish Council have met Taylor Wimpey and the Medway Valley Community Partnership to discuss possible involvement in managing this amenity. No decision has yet been taken.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

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 MBC 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 7.30pm (if planning agenda is short). Contact the Clerk for details or check the website calendar page.

Meetings (all Mondays) in 2013 are:-

June	3rd	17th
July	1st	15th
August	5th	19th
September	2nd	16th
October	7th	21st
November	4th	18th
December	2nd	16th

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.

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 hold Police Surgeries on these Saturdays at the library:-

May 25th	11am to noon
June 29th	10am to 11am
August 3rd	10am to 11am
August 31st	10am to noon
October 12th	10am to 11am
November 23rd	10am to 11am
December 21st	10am to 11am

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

