

# Village Update

AUTUMN 2010

[www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk)

## STAPLE DRIVE PLAY AREA

Towards the end of last year the Parish Council approached Maidstone Borough Council to question the apparent abandonment of the Staple Drive Play area. Whilst the grass was maintained, the only remaining equipment was one set of four swings. MBC did not have a budget to cover all anticipated refurbishment costs, but it did offer matched funding of up to a maximum amount of £9000 if the Parish Council wanted to plan and manage the upgrade. A small group of councillors got together and through the next few months met representatives from three companies and drew up three options for upgrading the site.

These options were placed on a display board in the Library for a few weeks in February/March. A leaflet explaining the options was delivered to properties nearest to the play area.



A presentation was made to Staplehurst School Council. It was thought that the best opinions to seek were those of children, some of whom are now enjoying the refurbished site. As we have two other play areas in the village, the Parish Council considered it appropriate, given the residential surroundings, to make specific provision for younger children. Everyone had a vote who received a leaflet and saw the display and presentation. The majority of votes were for the scheme designed by Playdale. The Parish Council may be in a position to develop this site further if it is a success. Ideas should be given to the Parish Council office. There is currently no seating in this area, as supported by MBC, to dissuade people gathering there 'after hours'. This can be changed if seats are thought to be required. Our thanks go to MBC for matching funding and to Playdale for completing the work on schedule. The Chairman of SPC, with other councillors, welcomed our Mayor, Borough Councillor Eric Hotson, who with the School Council and other pupils of Staplehurst School and Mrs A. Bolt, Head Teacher, attended and completed the opening ceremony on 21st July. Please enjoy the area!



# Staplehurst

*Parish Council*

## SPEED WATCH ALL-OUT DAY

Speed Watch All-Out day was in July. As in many other parishes throughout Mid-Kent, volunteer teams were out from 7am until 1pm, in Staplehurst in the High Street opposite Cornforth Close. Four different team leaders and many of our volunteers manned our equipment on this day. We recorded 34 speeders in this 30mph zone, one at 46mph - the owner of this vehicle will be getting a letter from the police. The police of rural Maidstone were supporting this day. They issued 14 fixed penalties and 28



warnings. In addition, Police Community Support Officers were also deployed using hand-held devices, recording speeds and passing information back to the police. The day was a great success in reminding motorists of the importance of observing speed limits and reassuring the public that road safety is a prime concern. It is hoped to repeat an all-out day on a regular basis. Thank you to all our volunteers who gave of their time. If you would like to be trained by the police to help in this work, please contact the Parish Clerk.

## WASTE DISPOSAL

The waste put in the Weekend Freighters is sent to landfill. To reduce this amount the freighter will no longer accept garden waste as this can be recycled through the garden waste collection service to your home via a special bin or the official garden sacks. From October the garden waste sacks will be compostable and made from potato starch. Residents can swap the old plastic sacks for the new type between 4th and 31st October. From 10th January 2011 only compostable sacks will be collected. Better still, have a compost heap! Large bulky

items must now be disposed of through the Bulky Waste Collection Service. The freighter next visits Staplehurst on Saturdays

**25th September and 4th December at**

**07:45 – 08:30 Poyntell Pond**

**08:40 – 09:25 Church Green**

**09:35 – 10:15 Northdown**

The cardboard bank in the Bell Lane Car Park has been removed as householders can recycle cardboard in their green bins.

## PROGRESS ON ALLOTMENTS

Staplehurst Parish Council is actively exploring a number of sites and considering the implications of legalities, costs and rules and regulations. It is hoped to have more proposals to report soon. Meanwhile if you are interested in an allotment please contact the Parish Office or Cllr. John Kelly on **07771 545095** or **john.kelly7@live.co.uk**

## DIAGRIT SPORTS FIELD

The Diagrit Golf Club is a privately owned facility with a Par 28 nine hole course. This is a valuable local amenity which we encourage you to support and enjoy. More details at **[www.diagritgolfclub.co.uk](http://www.diagritgolfclub.co.uk)** Application forms for membership can be supplied by Mr. T. Fisher, the Membership Secretary, by contacting him at 1 Fishers Close, Staplehurst, TN12 0DB. When writing, please include a SAE.

## PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

Using the internet to provide information and services is now commonplace. If you haven't visited the Parish Council's website before, you can find it at **[www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk)** or just put Staplehurst Village in your search engine. The website offers lots of information about village life, with news from many local organisations as well as from the Council itself. There is also a place for your own views and opinions on the Forum pages. We have many plans for improving the website to serve our community better, such as a new

home page for posting news and events, an improved calendar of events, a re-styled Forum, a larger local trade directory and a search engine to help users find what they want. As more and more people use the internet, the Council wants to make sure we can use the website to improve communications and provide more information on village life to all in our community. We are also very keen to hear what you would like to see added to the website and there's a link on the home page you can use to give us your suggestions.

## PLAYSCHEME 2010

The annual scheme has been run for a number years by the Parish Council with temporary staff. This year, there was a major change as it was decided to partner with a private organisation. It was hoped to improve the scope of activities available and provide a better and more cost-effective service. The new partner, Play Place, has organised all the events and administered the scheme this year. They have brought new ideas and activities to the scheme, including a new afternoon programme for 8-12 year olds, as well the usual morning programme for 4-8 year olds. Unfortunately, the usual venue, the Primary School, became unexpectedly unavailable due to planned maintenance work inside the school buildings. We were able to secure last minute alternative accommodation thanks to the Staplehurst Guides and Scouts. The scheme

went ahead using the Guides' Centre in Jubilee Field and the Scout Hut in Nicholson Walk. The uncertainty over the venue left a lot of parents unsure about making bookings and consequently the number of participating children has dropped this year. Some reduced capacity was also necessary as the locations were smaller. Nonetheless around 40 children each day did attend the fun and games this year. The very late change of location has made it difficult to judge the success of the new partnering venture trialled this year, but the Parish Council will study all the lessons learnt and the feedback we receive from parents. We would like to thank Jensie Shepherd and her team for their hard work to ensure the children had an excellent time. We very much hope the staff team will return next year, whoever organises Playscheme 2011.

## WEIGHT FOR IT

Coming soon to Staplehurst... a brand new weight management group. This free programme will be running for 10 weeks, for an hour per session, led by a nutritionist. The programme is for people who want to make a lifestyle change by altering the way they think about food & exercise. Each week will have a themed session covering different topics ranging from portion control, dealing with eating out, emotional eating,

physical activity, eating on a budget, to meal planning. There will be no calorie counting. The aim of this programme is to identify areas for change. The skills from the programme will introduce a healthy diet & exercise routine that will sustain you for long term change. Interested? Call the Community Development Team at Maidstone Borough Council to book your place for September on **01622 602512**

## STAPLEHURST HOUSING SURVEY

With the support of Maidstone Borough Council, Staplehurst Parish Council has asked Tessa O'Sullivan of Action with Communities in Rural Kent to undertake a housing survey. It will be posted to all households in the parish on 20th September 2010. We want to represent your opinions when we respond to any proposals for new

housing development in the Staplehurst area. We also want to find out what may be needed in the way of affordable housing for local people, so appropriate provision can be planned in the future. Please complete the survey and return it in the SAE provided. A report will be made available and published on the Parish Website.

## STAPLEHURST FIRE – PARISH EMERGENCY PLAN

The recent major incident on the High Street shows the importance of the emergency services and of having procedures in place. At a public Parish meeting on 10 August in the South Hall of the Village Centre, there were presentations by Kent Fire and Rescue Services, Kent Police and the British Red Cross. Teresa Young, of KCC's Emergency Planning Department, who happens to be a Staplehurst resident, spoke about how she organised and ran the rest centre from 6am to 6pm. She outlined the new Parish Plan initiative through which this community can help itself and the emergency services in times of difficulty. A full report of this meeting is on the Parish

Council website [www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc\\_emergency\\_planning\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx) Volunteers will be needed – please contact Cllr. Peter Spearink at [peter.spearink@btinternet.com](mailto:peter.spearink@btinternet.com) or the Parish Clerk for more information. We are very grateful to all those who helped, particularly to the staff of the Spar supermarket and Sobell Lodge. Framed certificates of our thanks were presented to them on 20th August. Our good wishes go to all those who were directly affected. If you would like a free home safety visit to advise you about reducing fire risk in your own home, contact Kent Fire & Rescue Service on **0800 923 7000**.

# CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Much has happened since the last Village Update. The fire in the village touched every resident; however, our thoughts must first go out to those who have been directly affected. Considerable help was given by many parish residents and organisations and this highlighted the very strong community spirit in our parish. As there is always something that can be learnt, we set up the public meeting on 10th August to discuss planning for possible future emergencies. Other current matters include the re-establishment of allotments and the possibility of introducing an alcohol control order to assist the police in dealing with anti-social behaviour in the parish. We recognise that rural housing remains a key issue; the Council is working with local residents to ensure that Staplehurst's views are recognised. At its

meeting on 19th July three parishioners were co-opted by vote onto the Parish Council. We welcome Jenny Fairfax, Jim Frodsham and Rory Silkin as new Councillors and thank them for volunteering their services to the community. Finally, it is with sadness that we bid farewell to Angela Knowlden and Helen Warmington. Angela has been a Councillor for a number of years and was until recently Chairman of our Amenities Committee; her experience will be very much missed. We wish her all the very best for the future. Helen was Assistant to the Parish Clerk and is leaving to take up full time study. Helen has been invaluable in her support to the Council. We wish her well with her studies.

*John Perry*

## REMAINING STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS IN 2010

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 – 19.00 (7pm)**  
**Full Council (Amenities) – 20.00 (8pm)**

Monday 06 September  
Monday 04 October  
Monday 01 November  
Monday 06 December

**Planning Committee – 19.00 (7pm)**  
**Full Council – 20.00 (8pm)**

Monday 20 September  
Monday 18 October  
Monday 15 November  
Monday 20 December

## Parish Council Information

### COUNCILLORS

John Perry (Chairman)  
Tom Burnham (Vice Chairman)  
Margaret Arger (Chairman of Planning)  
Bill Best  
Joan Buller  
Paul Butcher  
Jenny Fairfax  
Jim Frodsham  
John Kelly  
Paul Kelly  
Roger Munn  
John Reardon  
Matt Sankey  
Rory Silkin  
Peter Spearink

### CLERK

Mrs Sue Bassett

### ASSISTANT to CLERK

Mrs Helen Warmington

### Address:

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

Email: [staplehurst1@btconnect.com](mailto:staplehurst1@btconnect.com)

Tel: 01580 891761

**Opening hours:** 9am to 1pm Mondays to Fridays, except on Thursdays when it is by appointment. Borough Councillor Lusty holds a Council Surgery at the Library on the last Saturday of each month from 10am to 12pm. This is supported by a Parish Councillor and one of the community policing team; Community Warden Chris Lomax, PC Marc Pennicott or PCSO Pete Gardner.

You are welcome to talk through any local problems or ask questions about local issues with any or all of these Councillors and officers.