

Village Update

SUMMER 2017

www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk

Wimpey Field Nature Park

Good news from the Wimpey Field Group. Following an inspection by Hannah of CSA, the ecological company who designed the management plan that we follow, she was so pleased with our work and future plans that she gave us full marks and said that as of August they will happily leave the future running of the Wimpey Field Nature Park, as it is now called, to us without further supervision. She took lots of photos to put on the company website and is forwarding our review document to Natural England as a good example of community involvement. The two picnic tables are now in place, a gift of Mr Rossi at Pets World, the second clearing cut has been completed and more hogweed treated, and finally at long last the disabled friendly path has been constructed. Occasional benches are being delivered soon courtesy of Jumeira, I Wallond Fencing and Whites Landscaping. The Scouts have nearly finished their enclosure using the dead hedge system.



The outdoor classroom will also be built in this area soon.

Don't forget the Mini Blitz Day on 23rd August. Find out what is on the field from insects and reptiles, to flowers and newts. Go on an insect safari and join in the fun. Everyone welcome from babies to octogenarians. IT'S FREE.

Find Friends of "The Wimpey Fields"
Communal and nature conservation area.
@wimpeyfieldscommunity on Facebook
for more up to date information.



Staplehurst

Parish Council

PLANNING NOTES

An application by Staplehurst Nurseries in Clapper Lane (16/508506) to replace one of their older glasshouses with commercial units was approved by Maidstone Borough Council following support by the Parish Council. This will provide more local employment and is an example of the sustainable development encouraged by the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan.

The appeal against MBC's refusal of permission for a 14MW solar farm at Great Pagehurst was rejected by the planning inspector. The hearing of the appeal over the Pullen Farm, Frittenden, solar farm took place in May, but the decision is still awaited.

The MBC Planning Committee refused an application (16/505966) to remodel the Railway Tavern as a house and to build another house on its car park.

MBC finally granted planning permission to Redrow for the eastern part of the Fishers Farm development (15/510186), which was passed by the MBC Planning Committee in October 2016, but formal permission for the western (Bovis) part of Fishers Farm, which was passed at the same meeting, has not yet materialised.

The applicants for a housing development at The Grange, George Street (16/504201), appealed against the refusal of permission by MBC, but no decision has yet been published.

Finally, details of all planning applications and their related documents can be found on the Maidstone/Swale planning portal at <http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

STAPLEHURST VILLAGE CENTRE

Work continues behind the scenes to develop the centre into a first-class community facility that will mix the existing heritage building with modern extensions, interiors and facilities to make it truly fit for purpose in a growing Wealden settlement.

Thanks go to the Parish Councillors and local residents who have put in much preparation work as part of a Parish Council Redevelopment Working Group, as we now move to the building project phase.

The Trustees, who run the charitable trust that owns the building for the benefit of the Staplehurst community, will now take the redevelopment forward with help from interested volunteers.

If any resident with project, construction or major fund raising expertise would like to get involved please contact the trustee at sec@staplehurstvc.org to express your interest and we will be in touch.

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP – SAT 16TH SEPTEMBER

Staplehurst Parish Council is again organising a clean-up of the built-up area, subject to final confirmation, on Saturday 16th September and we would like to invite YOU to take part. MBC will loan protective equipment and litter pickers, remove the rubbish we collect, provide guidance on safety and give insurance cover. We will be based at the Youth Club (near Sobell Lodge), by kind permission of their committee, and we ask you to arrive at 10 am. When you have cleaned your allotted area sacks need to be brought back to the Youth Club, so don't overfill them! We aim to offer you refreshments after the work is completed. For insurance purposes we have to keep a list of helpers' names. Children and young people who take part must be accompanied by, and under the responsibility of, a parent or adult friend. Organised youth groups who wish to join in should contact the Parish Office in the first instance to discuss their plans. Last year we held two very successful Clean-Ups and there was excellent community spirit generated, even though we would rather not have to pick up other people's rubbish! If you are not able to take part please try to tidy your own boundaries to help make Staplehurst litter free! We look forward to seeing you on 16th September.



STAPLEHURST PRIMARY SCHOOL - PARKING

We are pleased to say a working group has been created by the School Governors, who are engaging with relevant parties to look into possible improvements to address the parking issues in the locality of the school. The School Governors are heavily engaged with their main duty of ensuring rigorous oversight of all aspects of the school's activities – particularly teaching and learning – but they recognise the importance and urgency of ensuring the safety of the children's arrival and departure from the school site and the impact on the local residents; and a significant amount of work and consultation has been undertaken already. This is of course a problem experienced by many schools across the country, and we hope that residents can appreciate the complexity of the problem.

STAPLEHURST ROAD INFORMATION

Please remember we are still collecting information of any road incidents around the Village. Be those actual collisions, near misses, dangerous driving, dangerous parking or even abandoned vehicles. No council or Police department collects this info so we need your support to build a picture, so we can educate the authorities. Please email any info to staplehurstroadinfo@gmail.com or drop the info in writing into the Parish letterbox. Any information you can supply will be welcome. Locations, car types, number of people affected, pictures, anything.

SUMMER PLAY SCHEME

The Parish Council is again organising a summer play scheme for children aged four to eleven years in conjunction with Play Place. The Scheme will use the excellent facilities at the Primary School in Gybbon Rise and welcomes children and their carers to an Open Morning from 11am until Noon on Monday 31st July. The extra sessions last year were well supported and so we are extending the scheme hours again.

Tuesday 1st August to Friday 4th from 9am until noon (*one session*)
Monday 7th to Friday 11th from 9am until 3pm (*two sessions*)
Monday 14th to Friday 18th from 9am until 3pm (*two sessions*)

Early booking will save you money so please find the details on our website. The Parish Council subsidises this scheme.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Summer Play Scheme

To begin, I would mention the Summer Play scheme that operated on behalf of the Council in August, at Staplehurst School. Hard-pressed parents may apply for places for rising 5s to 11 year olds with rates subsidised by Staplehurst Parish Council. The play scheme has run for many years and the Council would like to see it run for many more.

Carnival & Fete

The annual Carnival & Fete took place on the last weekend in June and was a great success as usual, notwithstanding the intermittent drizzle. Thanks are due especially to the dedication and huge effort of the Carnival & Fete Committee, and to the many others who helped out, whether manning individual stalls or helping in the general admin with car parking, manning the beer tent or whatever. As always, the Committee could use some extra volunteers, so do chip in what time you can.

Wimpey Field

Now more or less fully operational and full of wildlife. There is plenty more to be done to it over the next few years to bring it up to where the Village would like it to be. However, the layout is now taking shape well with specific areas mapped out for particular activities, such as the Scouts/Guides/School outdoor area. Many people are taking advantage of it but some do not know it is there, so tell your friends. Those with young children and dogs should be aware that adders have been seen, so it would be wise to keep the dogs on leads and children under control (or the other way around). Not that Adders wish to be around people much, and will usually be happy to escape. Lastly, this is my final Village Update. I am stepping down as Chairman at the end of the Full Parish Council meeting of the 17th July. It has been a privilege to Chair the Council and great fun too.

Rory Silkin



PAYBACK



Our payback teams have finished working on the Wimpey Field for the time being. They will return in the winter. The amount of work they have accomplished has put the scheme ahead of schedule. They have just finished two weeks at the churchyard and are now about to start a summer long boundary clearing job on both Surrenden and Jubilee fields. At some stage, they will be clearing all the overgrown shrubbery on the two beds at the parade. Please approach any of the team and thank them for their work in the parish, it goes a long way.

An example of their work in Bathurst Road (before and after) is pictured.

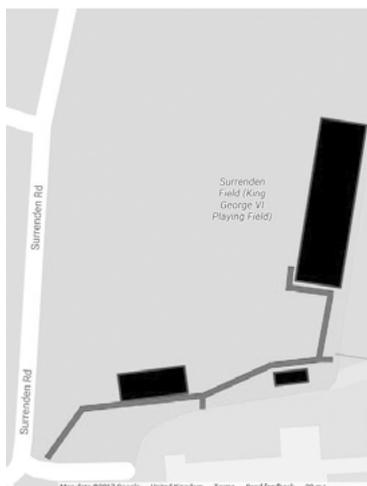


Over the last few weeks the Parish Council, through Cllr Sam Lain-Rose, has been in discussion with the owners of the Parade to obtain permission to complete some tidying of the planted area bordering the A229. As mentioned above, the Community Payback Team will over the next couple of months attend the area on Saturdays to complete this work. We are sure this work will have a great positive impact in the heart of the village.



SURRENDEN FIELD

It has been known for many years that Surrenden Field is difficult to cross in the winter season due to the soil holding so much water. There is a drainage system in place that does function but it's unable to cope. Staplehurst Parish Council has for many years intended to install a path across the southern boundary. After a meeting and further discussions



with Maidstone Borough Council (the Freeholder) the Parish Council has obtained permission to provide a path. We have invited tenders from a number of local contractors and selected one. We hope to start work in the coming weeks. The path will be identical to the path in Nicholson Walk and be in two parts. One, linking Nicholson Walk to the Play Area. The second part will run past the Pavilion, towards the seating area, alongside the Basketball Court to a point where it meets the original rubber matted path, and then to the South-western exit by Bower Walk. We hope this will in some small way help to alleviate parking issues at the school. Indeed it would allow some parents to drop children off at the School, before using the path to the Village Centre and the under-five playgroup.

Funding is from money obtained from developers, such as the developers of the Oliver Road site to improve local open spaces.

If this is a success the Parish Council may look to extend the path from the Play Area towards the Thatcher Road entrance. But one step at a time ;)

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.

Forthcoming Meetings:-

Monday 7th August (Planning Committee only)

Monday 21st August

Monday 4th September

Monday 2nd October

Monday 18th September

Monday 16th October

STOP PRESS

Staplehurst Parish Council on 17th July voted for the position of Chairman, because after a period of three years Councillor Silkin has stood down. We had three very able and popular candidates and the vote ended in a dead heat twice!

The outgoing Chairman had the deciding vote and subsequently Councillor Tom Burnham has been voted in as our new Chairman. We would like to thank Councillor Silkin for his hard work and welcome Cllr Burnham to his new role.



Cllr Tom Burnham Chairman

Parish Council Information

COUNCILLORS

Tom Burnham (Chairman)
 Patrick Riordan (Vice-Chairman)
 Margaret Ashby
 Joan Buller
 Chris Claridge
 Anne Gosling
 Sam Lain-Rose
 Barrett Manning
 John Perry
 John Reardon
 Adele Sharp
 Rory Silkin
 Gillian Smith
 Peter Spearink
 Laurence Whittle

CLERK

Mr Mick Westwood

DEPUTY CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER

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 Thursdays,
 other times by appointment
 (closed Fridays).

SURGERIES AT THE LIBRARY

- Borough Councillor Perry's surgery is on the last Saturday of each month, from 10am until noon.
- The Parish Council holds a surgery every Saturday from 10am until 11am.
- PCSO Pete Gardner Saturdays 12th August, 23rd September and 4th November at the Library 10am to 11am.

You are welcome to talk through any local problems or ask questions about local issues. Annual Parish Meeting article in case of need and assuming the APM takes the same format as in recent years.