

## **STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for June 2009)**

**COUNCILLOR VACANCY FILLED** – Local resident Matthew Sankey was co-opted and welcomed onto the Parish Council on 20<sup>th</sup> April and is contributing towards the work of the Council. The annual meeting of the Parish Council on 18<sup>th</sup> May is when all Councillors agree where they wish to serve in the coming year. The outcome will be reported next month but details will be available immediately by attending Council meetings or consulting the website Minutes soon after.

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** – This was held on 11<sup>th</sup> May and attended by 19 residents (most also representing some village groups), 12 parish councillors, our 3-strong policing team (PC Marc Pennicott, PCSO Pete Gardner, Rural Warden Chris Lomax) and County and Borough Councillor Hotson and Borough Councillor Richard Lusty. Roy Laming gave a very interesting account of the work achieved to date by the Staplehurst Partnership Group which has completed research and statistical work. This will underpin any future action that this community may wish to take to improve the economic well-being of Staplehurst and attract grant funding here. The strong message that came across was that if this community wants a project to succeed the data is available to support it. The emphasis being that it is now down to individuals and groups from this community to drive a project forward – from the bottom up and not expect top-down direction. In other words we can aspire to achieve what this community will give its support to. The challenge now rests with this community to take action for change or do nothing to keep the status quo. Contact the Parish Clerk if you wish to discuss such issues further.

The remainder of the meeting reported on the activities of the Parish Council, County and Borough Councillors, the Police and several village groups over the past year and was equally interesting. Copies of the reports received this year and Minutes will be posted on the Parish Council website in due course.

**JUBILEE SPORTS CHANGING FACILITY** – May was the month that all footballers (as well as Councillors and Clerk) had been looking forward to for many years. The contractors were due to finish construction works, hand over the new building and leave the site ready for use just prior to the official opening on 17<sup>th</sup> May. However, due to the weather delaying the drying out of the building, the formal handover could not be achieved until after the official opening ceremony. Nonetheless the celebrations went ahead and will be reported on in due course. This project has been made possible through partnership funding of the Football Clubs, Guides contribution towards the car park, Parish Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council grants together with 74% of project costs being provided by the Football Foundation.

**ALLOTMENTS** (or lack of them) have been concerning the Parish Council since those at Bell Lane were closed in October 2007. After having worked through several courses of action and ended up where we began, the Parish Council

called a public meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April. Although there are now 27 people on the waiting list for an allotment, no-one at the meeting felt able to assist the Parish Council in driving the issue forward. The Parish Council will continue to do its best to pursue likely plots of land for purchase or rent and would appreciate receiving any such details to investigate.

**RUBBISH & RECYCLING COLLECTION REORGANISATION** – Full details of the new arrangements should by now have been sent to every household. If you are still unclear or have any complaints or comments, these should be directed to Maidstone Borough Council on 01622 602162.

**REPORT IT!** PC Marc Pennicott with Community Warden, Chris Lomax, PCSO Pete Gardner and Special Constable Ken Baker are the local visible policing presence in our Parish, but have emergency back up from the force as necessary. If you witness anti-social behaviour contact the Parish Warden, Chris Lomax on 07811 271254, PCSO Pete Gardner on 07772 226134 or PC Marc Pennicott on 07980 770575. However, these are not 24/7 contact numbers so do leave a message and they will get back to you when next on duty. All urgent calls for assistance should be directed to 999 with crime-incident reporting to Maidstone Police Station on 01622 690055. 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 01580 893280. The Parish Office does not deal with Village Centre bookings, although we do get many enquiries!

**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 [www.kent.gov.uk/highways](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highways) 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.

**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.

**Dog Mess & disposal** – Thankfully only a small minority allow their dogs to defecate in public areas without clearing up the mess. However, there has been a continuing problem in the High Street where the mess has not been picked up at all. If you witness such anti-social behaviour, telephone 01622 602117 in confidence and give the Dog Warden details of the perpetrators.

Visits to problem area can be timed to be most effective and fines imposed when the offender is caught.

RED DOG WASTE BINS are for the disposal of dog waste only and emptied by a specialist contractor with protective equipment for this messy job. The red Scoopit Bags are no longer provided by Maidstone Borough Council but it is hoped that dog owners will continue to pick up their dog's mess and dispose of it properly. Many people use nappy sacks which can be purchased cheaply or recycle old supermarket carrier bags. If there is no red dog waste bin available within your walking route, kindly take your dog's waste home with you.

**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.

**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 690055.

**Handyvan & Homesafe Services:** These services are financially supported by KCC and provide security services to households across Kent. Services are generally provided free of charge, although in some cases a small charge will be made. The Handyvan Service is delivered in partnership with Help the Aged and is primarily aimed at the over 60's, on low incomes and where no charges are made for labour or materials. The Homesafe service offer free security fitting for victims of burglary or household crime. The range of products include: Security Locks; Carbon Monoxide Detectors and Smoke Alarms. To arrange an appointment with our local fitter or for more information, please telephone 01255 473999 or email [handvan@hta.org.uk](mailto:handvan@hta.org.uk). Web [www.helptheaged.org.uk](http://www.helptheaged.org.uk).

**Rubbish Dumping Tip-Off Line - 01622 602162** - Use this number to report any undesirable activities such as fly-tipping, dumped cars, littering etc. and help to keep this borough and parish as clean and tidy as possible. The same number can also be used to request a "pull-out" (or rear of property) collection service for those who are unable to wheel or carry their refuse to the front boundary of their homes. Further information is available from MBC website [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk) .

**Garden waste & Newspaper recycling** - MBC Green Garden Sacks are available from Spuds 'n Buds, Henhurst Farm Shop or the Parish Office at £2.50

per roll of 5. Garden waste will only be collected if in the MBC printed green sacks and left beside your wheeled bin (or put in a blue-lidded wheelie bin hired from MBC specifically for garden waste). Further information on garden waste disposal and recycling is available on [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk) .

**MBC Bulky Collection Service** - Residents with large items of household waste to dispose of, should telephone the MBC Cleansing Hotline 01622 602162 to arrange a collection. A small charge is now made for this service. Alternatively the Tovil tip and waste freighter are available for householder's use. Please note that due to new legislation TVs and monitors will now be collected separately from any other items of waste. You will be required to provide your name and address at disposal.

**MBC Waste Freighter** – The revised schedule of visits by the Waste Freighter to collect non-recyclable waste is available from [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk) Kindly check MBC website at Staplehurst Library if you do not have your own computer access. The next visits of the freighter will be on the same day for all areas; Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May and Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July – 1000-1100 at Poyntell Pond, 1115-1200 at Church Green, 1215-1315 at Northdown.

**Parish Information and E-groups** – Copies of the Minutes of Parish Council Meetings are available at Full Council Meetings, at the Library and on [www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk) . The Clerk maintains a number of e-groups for those who wish to register their internet address to receive useful information about local issues e.g., Weekly MBC Plans List, Parish Council Minutes & Agendas, Press Releases, Playscheme Information, etc. If local residents have any queries regarding Parish Council or local authority issues, they are encouraged to write to or contact the Parish Clerk for the facts.

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

**Planning Committee** - 7 p.m. Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2009

**Amenities Committee** – 8 p.m. Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2009

**Planning Committee** – 7 p.m. Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009

**Full Council Meeting** - 8 p.m. Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009

Mrs J S Bassett, Parish Clerk  
Parish Office, Village Centre, Staplehurst.  
Telephone/Fax: (01580) 891761.  
Website: [www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk) and  
E-mail: [staplehurst1@btconnect.com](mailto:staplehurst1@btconnect.com)  
The Parish Office is open to the public 9-11 a.m.  
Mondays to Fridays (except Thursdays).