

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for April 2008)

YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROJECT 2008 – YAP08 The first event under this Parish Council project will be to provide free transport for up to 15 young people (11-16s) to the SNAP Disco at Mote Park on Friday 4th April. Places need to be booked and tickets purchased in advance through the Parish Office Tel: 891761.

The second event will take place at the Youth Club 1-5 p.m. from Monday 7th to Friday 11th April inclusive. Activities will be organised for young people to enjoy and refreshments will be available for purchase. Feedback from young people will be encouraged as regards future such events. Further details are available from the Parish Office. If the above events are well-supported then similar projects may be repeated during the summer school holidays.

PLAYSCHEME 2008 – Although many of the existing staff will be returning to run Playscheme this year, the Parish Council will be looking for additional staff. Playscheme will be open Monday-Fridays 9.30-12.30 from 4th-22nd August inclusive. Eighteen+ students with an interest in child care, experienced parents or people with child-care qualifications will be particularly welcome to apply. Please contact the Parish Office now for a job description and application form.

PARISH CARETAKER VACANCY – After twelve years loyal service to this parish, Charlie Samuell has decided to retire as Parish Caretaker. His work will be acknowledged by the Parish Council. The vacancy is now being advertised for a caretaker with the same qualities that Charlie brought to the job; self-motivated, possessing good DIY skills, trustworthy, reliable and flexible. Full details are available on application to the Parish Office or from the parish website at www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk .

CHARLTON COMMUNITY FOOTBALL SCHEME – The three parishes of Marden, Headcorn and Staplehurst have each contributed towards a community football scheme to be run by Charlton Athletic Football Club during this year. Weekly sessions will be held in each of the three parishes on a rotating basis and are open to all young people between the ages of 10 – 19 years (split into two age groups). The scheme at Headcorn kicked off in February for 10-14s 5.30- 6.15pm and Over 14s at 6.15 pm until 7 pm. On 1st April the sessions will move to Staplehurst for five weeks at the primary school off Gybbon Rise at the same times. From 6th May these sessions will continue at Marden If you have any queries, telephone Alex Mckay – 07984 732506 or just turn up to any session.

JUBILEE PLAYING FIELD PROJECT – MAKE OR BREAK TIME! Footballers, in partnership with the Parish Council are keeping all fingers crossed for a favourable grant funding decision by the Football Foundation around the middle of this month. A very positive meeting was held with the Football Foundation representatives early March and final tidying-up work on

the application ensued. Due to the relatively good condition of the pitches this winter after the autumn verti-drainage work, together with the extremely high cost of a "Rolls Royce" drainage scheme, it was agreed to remove the drainage element from the funding bid to the Football Foundation. It is anticipated that improved future maintenance of the football pitches would be sufficient to ensure playability. The Football Foundation also confirmed that if the maintenance route proved unsuccessful, a bid for a drainage scheme could be submitted at a later date. The revised project to build a new football changing facility and upgraded car park will be able to proceed as soon as the right decision is made by the Football Foundation.

ANNUAL PARISH REPORTS – A short summary of the activities over the past year from all Village Groups has been requested for presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting on 12th May and on the Parish Council website in due course. To date about 7 reports have been received from the 40+ groups that are active in this parish. The deadline for reports is 18th April so please respond. A short paragraph is all that is needed and will be of interest now and in the future, as the reports will be archived with the Annual Parish Minutes. Email or post your report to the Parish Office; staplehurst1@btconnect.com

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!

REPORTING ONLINE - The internet is a very useful tool to find out local information and also to feedback faults for repair. The Parish Council has had a website for many years as well as a Village Forum for anyone to contribute their views or find local information. On the Maidstone Borough Council Website, planning applications can be viewed online and any problems or defects in the parish can be reported at www.maidstone.gov.uk. Kent County Council website also encourages the reporting of highway items requiring attention or repair on www.kent.gov.uk/highways. You can even comment on services or answer surveys via these websites too.

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 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

Report it! PC Marc Pennicott with Community Warden, Chris Lomax and Special Constable Ken Baker have now been joined by PCSO Pete Gardner. These officers 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.

Unless reports of anti-social incidents with descriptions of the offenders are made, then the desecration of our public areas or property will continue with impunity. Report incident details on 01622 690055 and provide the PACT panel with the opportunity to think up ways of dealing with it! 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.

Dog Mess & disposal - Thankfully only a small minority allow their dogs to defecate in public areas without clearing up the mess. If you witness such anti-social behaviour, telephone 01622 602117 in confidence and give the Dog Wardens details of the perpetrators. Visits to problem areas can be timed to be most effective and fines imposed when the offenders are 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. **Scoopit Bags** - special red plastic bags are available free from the Parish Office or from the Town Hall in Maidstone. Please consider those who empty ordinary litter bins and remember that LITTER BINS ARE NOT FOR DOG WASTE!

Bogus Caller Initiative: Unless vigilant, elderly residents can easily become victims of doorstep traders. Bogus Caller Initiative information packs, with stickers to remind residents of good practice when dealing with doorstep callers, are available from the Parish Office or Rural Warden, Chris Lomax at Staplehurst Library. If you are unsure about anybody - don't let them in! If they are legitimate they will write you a letter or show you some identification to check out. If you think a bogus caller has called at your door, report such incidents to the police immediately on 01622 690055 and give a good description of the person and/or vehicle.

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 .

Garden waste, Newspaper & Glass recycling - MBC Green Garden Sacks are available from Spuds 'n Buds, Henhurst Farm Shop or the Parish Office at £1.95 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.digitalmaidstone.co.uk

For residents who have coloured boxes, NEWSPAPERS in the BLACK BOX & GLASS in the YELLOW BOX for collection as advised by Maidstone Borough Council. Please check with MBC the collection dates for your road by telephoning: 01622 602162 or look on the MBC website.

Bulky Collection Service and Waste Freighter - 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. To date we are aware of only one MBC Freighter to visit Staplehurst during April on Saturday 5th - 1245-1345 at Church Green.

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 . 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, 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 7th April 2008

Amenities Committee – 8 p.m. Monday 7th April 2008

Full Council Meeting - 8 p.m. Monday 21st April 2008

Finance Committee – 7 p.m. Monday 21st April 2008

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