

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for July 2007)

SKATEPARK PHASE 2 – Keeping fingers crossed for everything to go according to plan, it is anticipated that the construction and completion of the second phase of the Skatepark at Jubilee Playing Field (with pathways, litter bins and bench seating) will be achieved this month. As soon as the project is completed the Skaters will be setting a date for a Competition Day in celebration of this wonderful parish facility for young people.

CO-OPTIONS – At the first Full Council meeting of the thirteen Councillors appointed following the uncontested election, two people were co-opted to fill the vacancies. Roger Munn was welcomed back onto the Council and Thomas Burnham was also co-opted. They will have equal standing amongst fellow Councillors which is now fifteen strong. Thomas Burnham had been unsuccessful in standing for Borough Council but will hopefully bring new skills and expertise to the Parish Council alongside the other “new boys” John Perry and Peter Spearink.

PARISH COUNCIL – At the Annual Meeting of the Full Council, Councillor Margaret Arger was elected as Chairman and Councillor John Stewart as Vice Chairman. Councillor Wendy Green was later elected as Planning Committee Chairman and Councillor Angela Knowlden as Amenities Committee Chairman. All Councillors have now shared out a number of responsibilities and interests of the Council amongst themselves and many fresh ideas are already being considered for action. I hope to report further on these in due course but suggest you also keep an eye on the Parish Council Website which contains lots of information together with the Minutes so you can see for yourself what is being achieved.

VILLAGE UPDATE & ANNUAL REPORT – The Summer issue of the Village Update and Annual Report 2006/2007 should by now have reached every home in the parish. If, for some reason, yours has not arrived, please call the Parish Office for another copy or pick up one at Staplehurst Library. Sincere thanks and appreciation are given to the volunteers and Councillors who help to keep costs down by delivering these documents in their neighbourhoods. Outlying areas of the Parish are usually delivered by post but if more volunteers came forward, this would be much appreciated too.

PLAYSCHEME 2007 – Preparations are well in hand for another three weeks of Playscheme fun. Sixty places will be available daily for rising 5's-11 year olds from 6th to 24th August (Mon-Fri, 0930-1230). The staff team is in place and will be undertaking some training to ensure Playscheme meets all the required standards set by Ofsted. All Playscheme information, policies and booking forms should be available to download from the Parish Council Website at www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk or by email. In the meantime you can register your interest by email through assistantclerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk . Bookings will open for Playscheme this month either by post with s.a.e. or in

person at the Parish Office during public opening times 0900-1100 Mon-Fri (except Thursdays).

REPORTING ONLINE - The internet is a very useful tool to find 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 local information. On the Maidstone Borough Council Website, planning applications can now 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, remain the local visible policing presence in our Parish, with emergency back up from the force as necessary. If you witness anti-social behaviour contact the Parish Warden, Chris Lomax on 07811 271254 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 it 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 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 - 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.

Dog Mess Disposal - RED DOG WASTE BINS are for the disposal of dog waste only. Emptied by a specialist contractor with protective equipment for this messy job, please consider those who empty ordinary litter bins and remember that LITTER BINS ARE NOT FOR DOG WASTE! **Scoopit Bags** - special red plastic bags are available free from the Parish Office or from the Town Hall in Maidstone.

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 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). Residents may have noticed a change in the green garden refuse sacks. The bags are now made to conform to Health and Safety guidelines for the disposal of garden waste. Therefore they are now smaller in size and transparent (to ensure they have not been contaminated with anything other than garden vegetation). Further information on garden waste is available from Maidstone Borough Councils website. 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 on the website at: www.maidstone.gov.uk You should also be able to order recycling boxes on application to MBC.

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. The next visits of the Waste Freighter will be on **Sunday 8th July 1400-1500 at Northdown, junction with Marden Road and Sunday 22nd July 1630-1715 at Church Green.**

Parish Information – 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 2nd & 16th July 2007

Amenities Committee – 8 p.m. Monday 2nd July 2007

Full Council Meeting - 8 p.m. on Monday 16th July 2007

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).