

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for April 2007)

PARISH ELECTION OR NOT? – By the time this is published there will be only a couple of days left for local electors to lodge completed Nomination Papers if they wish to stand for election. If 16 or more nominees register with Maidstone Borough Council by NOON on WEDNESDAY 4TH APRIL then there will be an election (15 or less then there will not). Contact the Electoral Registration Office on 01622 602023 for details.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 30th April South Hall Village Centre 8 p.m. This meeting is for local residents to raise local issues and report on local events. Short reports about the activities of village groups over the past year have been invited and will be included within the Annual Parish Minutes for posterity, but please send them in now! It is intended that the Parish Council Annual Report for 2006/2007 will also be available for distribution at the Annual Parish Meeting on 30th April. In addition, if a Parish Election is to be held on 3rd May the prospective candidates will each be invited to speak at the Annual Parish Meeting. Use this opportunity to learn something about each candidate and consider who you will vote for on 3rd May. Refreshments will then be served so there will be time to socialise and discuss issues with candidates after the meeting.

STAPLEHURST PARTNERSHIP – The publishing and distribution of the questionnaire will not now take place until June this year. Due to the delays the originally hoped-for sources of funding have now time-expired. Nonetheless, the Parish Council has agreed in principle to financially support the questionnaire, which should provide useful statistics to attract other sources of funding to this village.

SPEEDWATCH TRAINING – More Speedwatch Training events will be arranged soon, so please contact the Parish Office to put your name down if you would like to join the Speedwatch initiative and receive training in the use of the equipment. Any drivers who choose to ignore the lawful speed limit will have their car registration numbers recorded. Details of persistent offenders will be passed to the Police for action in due course. You have been warned! Watch Your Speed as Speedwatch Volunteers are too!

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 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 1st April 1400-1500 at Northdown, Sunday 15th April 1630-1715 at Church Green and Saturday 5th May 1200-1315 at Poyntell Road pond.**

Parish Information – Copies of the Minutes of Parish Council Meetings are available at Full Council Meetings, at the Library and on the staplehurstvillage.org.uk Website. 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 and 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 April 2007

Amenities Committee - 8 p.m. on Monday 2nd April 2007

Planning Committee - 7 p.m. on Monday 16th April 2007

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

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 8 p.m. on Monday 30th April 2007

South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre followed by refreshments.

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).