

## **STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for September 2006)**

**PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY** - After having given the requisite public notice, the Parish Council is now able to co-opt someone to fill the vacancy. Local electors are encouraged to put themselves forward for co-option by contacting the Parish Clerk in the first instance. Plenty of information is available if you are unsure what you might be letting yourself in for! However, if anyone were unsuccessful on this occasion, don't forget there is the Full Council election due in May 2007 when 16+ local electors will be needed to offer themselves for election. If your name is not on the electoral role, however, then you won't have a vote or be able to stand for election (something to think about when the Electoral Registration form arrives this autumn).

**REPORTING ONLINE** - The internet is becoming an increasingly useful tool to find out about local information and also to feedback information to "the authorities". The Parish Council has had a website for many years that is regularly updated and has the Village Forum where anyone can contribute their views or information. Maidstone Borough Council has recently added an extremely useful innovation to its website whereby everyone with internet access (or use Kent Libraries' computers) can view any planning application in the Borough Area as well as report any problems or defects in the locality. Access [www.digitalmaidstone.gov.uk](http://www.digitalmaidstone.gov.uk) click on "Planning Online" or "Report a Problem" and follow instructions until you reach the desired address or application that you wish to view. You can even send in your comments via the website if you wish.

**PLAYSCHEME 2006** - At the time of writing Playscheme is heading for its final week, having already been Ofsted inspected (on day 2!) and two weeks of fun have been enjoyed by up to 70 children a day. A big THANK YOU to the staff is required as they have been working so hard to ensure all children have a great time in a safe and interesting environment with plenty to do and enjoy.

**SKATERS PROJECT** - Planning permission has at last been granted for the equipment to be installed at Jubilee Playing Field. It is hoped that by the time you read this installation work will have begun and an opening ceremony will be possible very soon. The young people of the skaters group have worked so hard with fund-raising over the past 3 years and it will be good to see them enjoy the fruits of their labours.

**VILLAGE UPDATE** - The next issue of the Village Update will be ready for distribution towards the end of September. If you have an hour or so to spare and like to take a walk with a purpose, then please register your name as a volunteer Village Update distributor with the Parish Office. The outlying areas of the parish are usually posted to, but there are plenty of estate roads that need to be covered, so volunteers are always welcome, please.

**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. Responsibility for the motorways and trunk roads are managed by the Highways Agency on 08457 50 40 30. Defects can also be reported for action via

the KCC and MBC websites (there is no need to channel these reports through the Parish Office!). Even if you don't have internet at home, you can use the one at the Library - it really is very easy to do!

**MBC Graffiti Removal Service** - Private landowners, residents and businesses can now apply to MBC for a graffiti removal service. Subject to assessment for suitability and the work taking up to ½ a day the cost would be £26. Enquiries should be made to MBC Cleansing Call Centre on 01622 602162.

**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

**Neighbourhood Policing Unit** - PC Marc Pennicott with Community Warden, Chris Lomax and Special Constable Ken Baker, are the local visible policing presence in our Parish, with emergency back up from the force as necessary. If you witness any anti-social behaviour contact the Parish Warden, Chris Lomax on 07811 271254 or PC Marc Pennicott on 07980 770575. These are not 24/7 contact numbers so do leave a message and they will get back to you when next on duty. The Neighbourhood Policing Unit is able to assist with basic quality of life issues and nuisance behaviour, however, all urgent calls for assistance should be directed to 999 with all incident reporting to 01622 690690 or to Maidstone Police Station on 01622 690055. If criminal damage has occurred as a result of anti-social behaviour, please ensure you also report this to the Central Crime Recording Unit on 01622 650065.

**Report it!** Unless reports of anti-social incidents with descriptions of the offenders are made, then the police might be forgiven for thinking that no problems occur here. Do not condone the behaviour of a small number of bullies who desecrate our public areas or property with impunity. Report it on 01622 690690! If a greater number of good parishioners made reports of any anti-social incidents they witness then such annoying incidents could be dealt with quickly and positively. If you prefer, calls to Crimestoppers are free and anonymous: 0800 555 111. 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](http://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). For residents who have been issued with coloured boxes, NEWSPAPERS in the BLACK BOX & GLASS in the YELLOW BOX is collected on a regular basis. Please check with Maidstone Borough Council for collection dates in your road by telephoning: 01622 602162 or website at: [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk)

**Garden Waste** - When using the garden waste sacks, please do not put the following items in the sacks:- turf, soil, stones, animal waste or bedding, large branches, logs, tree stumps or kitchen scraps. The bags should not be unreasonably heavy or overloaded as collection crews have to lift them to shoulder height for emptying.

**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. The next visit of the Waste Freighter will be on **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> August 1630-1715 at Church Green; Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September 1200-1315 at Poyntell Road and Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September 1300-1515 at Northdown.**

**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](http://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. 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 4<sup>th</sup> September 2006  
**Amenities Committee** - 8 p.m. on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**Planning Committee** - 7 p.m. on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2006  
**Full Council Meeting** - 8 p.m. on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2006

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).