

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for October 2005)

Vandalism - Unfortunately a great deal of vandalism occurred over the summer holidays this year, probably done by a very small minority, but causing upset to a majority. If the miscreants are not identified and a stop put to this bad behaviour, then it is likely to have an adverse effect on our community. The media, newspapers, radio and television have all been reporting the vandalism issues but the miscreants (so far) remain unidentified.

Recent vandalism to two seats at Surrenden Playing field, CCTV cameras, signs removed from the Village Centre and Nicholson Walk will probably cost around £1,000 to put right, not counting the Parish Clerk's extra work involved. This is equivalent to 40 homes Parish Precept contribution for a year!

If a greater number of residents reported all the anti-social behaviour they witnessed, then those desecrating our village could be caught sooner. PC Marc Pennicott has now replaced PC Tim Stanley as our local Community Police Officer and he is making it a priority to get to know the local young people who hang about with nothing particular to do (except cause damage perhaps?). Telephone him direct on his mobile Tel: 07980 770575 if you witness any anti-social behaviour in progress - he may only be just around the corner and could catch them in the act. If he is off duty, or as well as speaking to Marc, telephone the Crime Reporting Unit on 01622 690690 to ensure a computer log of incidents is kept for statistical purposes and insurance claims.

CCTV - A recording system has now been installed at Surrenden Playing Field. Please also report to the Parish Clerk the date and time of any incidents of anti-social behaviour, so that these can be followed up with appropriate action. Did no-one see someone shinnying up the CCTV pole to put the cameras out of line and damaging the infra-red lights on 6th September?

Village Update - The Summer/Autumn issue of the Parish Council's Quarterly Newsletter should have reached every household in the parish. If you have not received your copy (or thrown it away thinking it was junk mail!) please collect another copy from the Parish Office.

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.

Maidstone Borough Highway-related services - MBC remains responsible for highway services such as Street sweeping, street nameplates, street naming and numbering, park and ride facilities, concessionary fares and public transport matters. Department telephone numbers were provided on the back page of the latest issue of the borough update but the MBC main switchboard operators are very helpful on 01622 602000 if you are unsure who to speak to about any query.

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. For non-urgent issues, contact the Parish Warden, Chris Lomax on 07811 271254 or PC Marc Pennicott on 07980 770575. 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

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.

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.

Crime Awareness and Reporting: Rural Warden, Chris Lomax, will be happy to discuss and advise on any community concerns that you have or speak to a group that you belong to. Telephone him on: 07811 271254. Telephone Kent Police on 01622 690055 for suspicious incidents and community issues requiring police attendance or 01622 690690 to report a crime that occurred more than 20 minutes previously. 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.

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 £1.70 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

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 **Saturday, 2nd October, 1400-1500 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 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 3rd October 2005

Amenities Committee - 8 p.m. on Monday 3rd October 2005

Planning Committee - 7 p.m. on Monday 17th October 2005

Full Council Meeting - 8 p.m. on Monday 17th October 2005

Mrs J S Bassett, Parish Clerk
Parish Office, Village Centre, Staplehurst.
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E-mail: staplehurst1@btconnect.com
The Parish Office is open to the public 9-11 a.m.
Mondays to Fridays (except Thursdays).