

## PARISH COUNCILLOR PADDY RIORDAN

### TRANSCRIPT OF CHAIRMAN'S VIDEO REPORT

Hi everyone I would like to introduce myself. My name is Paddy Riordan. I am the chairman of our parish council.

The Parish Council try to engage with residents in different ways by using the Village Update magazine, the monthly parish surgery at the library, the website and Facebook. At our last full council meeting it was decided that we would like to engage with residents by doing a less formal Chairman's report on Facebook and our website to update residents using a video format with subtitles. We thought it would be a good way of you hearing what we have been up to in a less formal manner and without you having to plough through council meeting minutes.

So we will give this a trial for a few months. I will generally post shortly after each council meeting and if people find it useful, we will continue with it. Unless I'm mistaken, we are the first Parish Council in the country to use this platform in this way to engage with their community so we might be breaking new ground with the idea.

When I'm commenting on the work we have been doing, I will refer to us as "we" rather than picking out individual councillors because we are not looking to self-promote ourselves at all; we just want to let you know some of the work we have been trying to get done on your and our behalf.

All Parish Councillors are volunteers and we all live locally and we are as passionate about our local village as you all are, so we want to work together to make Staplehurst a better place to live.

The last parish council planning meeting was very busy in relation to planning applications. I won't comment on individual applications because I think that would be unfair and might influence people so you will have to revert back to the website to read up on these items.

## Staplehurst Parish Council

The full council meeting was relatively straightforward. We had to discuss finance issues for payment, a WW1 commemorative seat provided by the Staplehurst Community Events Group was on the agenda and we are having further discussions to decide the best position that this can be placed in the village.

We had to decide on five street names for the Bovis Homes new site north of the Headcorn Road. The policy is generally to name two of the roads after individuals commemorated on the World War I Memorial, one of the names was after the original field so that it is not lost to history and two road names were named after what we call local village worthies, who were prominent local people that are now deceased. These road names have still yet to be confirmed by Maidstone Borough Council but generally they go with our recommendations.

Other work your parish councillors have been involved in are meeting the contractors at David Wilson Homes, to address local residents' issues, offsite parking, mud on the road and unsociable working hours. The meeting was very positive and we are hoping for a significant improvement in relation to all these items.

Three councillors also attended the Maidstone Borough Council planning meeting in relation to this site but the item was deferred much to our frustration.

We have had a meeting with MBC parking officers, the police and PCSO to try and deal with some of the parking issues around the village.

We also have regular meetings with Redrow Homes who our building along Headcorn Road. I must say It's been very helpful and positive and supportive in every manner.

We are endeavouring to get a meeting with Bovis which hopefully will be in the near future

These meetings with the contractors are often very helpful and informative and we do make sure they are aware of any residents' issues.

## Staplehurst Parish Council

Much work is going into the Wimpey Field nature area and there is lots going on in relation to the Jubilee Field to improve sporting facilities there.

We are hoping to make several improvements at The Parade starting with painting bollards and benches, tidying up the litter bins and dealing with the large planted areas. This is particularly difficult because much of it is private property, however, we think we are making some good headway and hopefully you will see some positive changes within the next month or two. The Parish Council don't have any jurisdiction in relation to this, so this will be a community effort and already lots of volunteers have said they would like to be involved.

We have contacted Sainsbury's because generally everyone is fed up with the whole situation and many of you will have seen articles in the Kent Messenger and KentOnline. We plan to pursue this matter until we get some form of satisfaction from them.

We had a stall at the village fete which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. It was nice to chat to so many villagers.

The parish office has been very busy and are constantly making improvements to how the office is run.

It would help them immensely if anyone has complaints, they go to the correct organisations', so if it's in relation to bins & litter it's the Borough Council, potholes etc. are Kent Highways. Issues in relation to the new building sites should be directed to the contractors and Maidstone Borough Council; this helps us when we are raising these issues at planning meetings etc.

Various council groups are busy. The neighbourhood plan review group, employment group, communications group, community enhancement group all have regular meetings to try to make positive things happen in the village. These groups bring forward recommendations to full council meetings so matters can be decided.

Many of the Parish Councillors are also involved in various other Council and community groups such as speed watch, Wimpey Field, Jubilee Field, Staplehurst Community Events Group, the Village Centre community trust, the village golf and sports club, the family fireworks group, medical centre Patients Participation group and many others which all contribute an awful lot to the community.

## **Staplehurst Parish Council**

Many of the community groups around the village struggle for volunteers to help, so if any residents would like to show an interest, I'm sure everyone would be very grateful to them!

The next full Council and planning meetings are on the 15th of July at the Village Centre South Hall. Everyone is very welcome to come along.

That's it for now, I'll be more than happy to listen to any feedback on this Chairman's report. Hopefully they will become more and more informative as we get into the swing of things, but be gentle with me and I look forward to catching up again soon!