

VILLAGE GROUPS' REPORTS - STAPLEHURST ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
12th MAY 2014



The previous twelve months have seen a reduction in victim-based crime across the policing area of Staplehurst. There was a reduction of 17 crimes compared to the previous year which included 9 less shed / outbuilding breaks. This is extremely encouraging considering the current economic climate and it is through the support of the community and Parish Council that we have been able to sustain such low levels of crime. We have dealt with a number of issues throughout the year, which have included the following:

- Several arrests and convictions of local youths throughout the year for burglaries and shed breaks.
- Follow-ups on the victims of burglaries/breaks to give crime prevention advice and information booklets.
- Visits/talks and meetings with the staff at Woodlands House to discuss and advise on issues relating to the facility.
- Along with Councillor Eric Hotson and the school we have assisted in getting the bollards placed outside the school, which has reduced calls to us dramatically.
- Speed enforcement checks and speed monitoring checks throughout the village. Several summons and warnings issued. This will be ongoing this year.
- Talks throughout the year to various local groups. Beavers/Playgroups/school etc.
- Patrols of outlying areas to deter and stop vehicles known for scrap metal thefts. This has been backed up with pre-arranged policing operations county-wide involving numerous authorities and scrap yard inspections.
- The parish CCTV cameras have been used to great effect this year in detection and prevention of crime.
- Promotion of the local Neighbourhood Watch to assist the local coordinator in increasing numbers.

We are continuing to work around the issues of young people causing a nuisance around the village. This has not been a major issue this year and any incidents of this type of behaviour have been swiftly dealt with to good effect. We encourage residents to call in any incidents of this type of nuisance behaviour.

We are currently going through a slight restructure which will place me on a new shift pattern. Once this is in place I will be booking and advertising dates for the police surgeries up to the end of the year.

Anyone wishing to contact me about any issues or crime prevention advice can call the non-emergency police number 101.

Thank you for your continued support in making Staplehurst safe.

PCSO Pete Gardner - Maidstone Neighbourhood Team

McCABE DAY CENTRE

We have had a positive year, with good attendances at both the Thursday and Sunday lunches, new members having joined to fill any gaps. We also took members on our regular annual outings: to Eastbourne in July, and to the Pantomime in Maidstone in December. Both outings were enjoyed by all who took part.

We are working very well with the other regular users of the Hall (the Monday Hub, and the Weald Club for the disabled). This can be helpful in resolving issues between us, and we have also cooperated on undertaking first aid training. We are likely to get together again for future training opportunities.

Caroline Highwood - Chairman

POPPY'S DAY NURSERY

Poppy's Day Nursery, established in 2008, continues to provide 'full day' care for 50 weeks of the year; open Monday to Friday from 07:30hrs to 18:30hrs. We currently have 67 children 'on role' caring for 34 children a day most of whom are from Staplehurst.

Our Headcorn Road site holds a 'Good' Ofsted rating for children aged 2yrs to 5yrs. We have just been re-inspected on 11th April 2014 and are awaiting the final report.

Our Baby Care Unit for children aged 3months to 2yrs located in the High Street also holds a 'Good' Ofsted rating in early years provision in all areas and 'Outstanding' in the 'extent to which children make a positive contribution'. For more info see <http://www.Ofsted.gov.uk>.

We have 17 members of staff; most live locally including one volunteer. This year we have two new members of staff employed under the "apprentice scheme in childcare" supported through "Parenta". We continue to provide opportunities for students from Angley school, Mid Kent College and West Kent College who come to us for childcare experience within the nursery setting.

We access KCC courses to develop staff in all areas of nursery care; this has included leadership and management courses.

In April/May we entered the Kent Messenger "Play Fort" competition and thanks to the wonderful support of parents, friends and the local community we came third and won £1000 towards play equipment. We have had two balance boards and an outside seated story-telling area installed in the garden.

Last July eleven of our children left for Primary School. We held a princesses and pirates leavers' party, a very proud day for parents and staff alike.

We hold our annual nursery birthday party in August for families of the children, and will celebrate our sixth birthday this year.

During the last year we held events raising funds for the Wishing Well charity, also for Children in Need and Red Nose Day.

We continue to maintain a partnership with pre-schools, have links with the Library and the Primary school.

For more information on Nursery care contact Katherine Tunnicliffe

Poppy's Day Nursery Tel: 01580 892600 Poppy's Baby Care Unit Tel: 01580 890480

Email: info@poppysdaynursery.com Website: <http://www.poppysdaynursery.com>

STAPLEHURST BRIDGE CLUB

We continue to meet on Friday evenings at Staplehurst Manor Nursing Home at 7.15 for a 7.30 start. Sadly, we have to report that Ted Westoby, who served on our committee for several years, passed away a few weeks ago, following a long illness. He is greatly missed.

Unfortunately our numbers are currently declining as retiring older members are not being replaced by new members. We are a very friendly, entry level club where anybody is welcome and can be sure of a game whether or not they come with a partner. We are also able to offer lessons or improver sessions for those who feel they need a little more confidence before coming to the Club.

Please contact for further information lizmitchell987@gmail.com or 01580 713856.

STAPLEHURST CALENDAR

With sales of the 10th anniversary Staplehurst Calendar 2014 completed, I am pleased to report that the proceeds totalled £1,521.90, with Staplehurst Youth Club, Staplehurst Under Five Playgroup and Chapel Lane Pre School each receiving £507.30.

The running total for money raised over the 10 years now stands at £14,457.17. The success of the Calendar has been mainly due to the generosity of Staplehurst Traders whose advertising has helped cover the cost of printing, the local shops who displayed and sold copies and Staplehurst residents who through the years have purchased the Calendars.

Thanks are also due to John and Michelle of Hop Press Printing at Marden for their help with design and production.

Thank you all for your support,

Ken Collins

STAPLEHURST FREE CHURCH

Well, this has been an exciting year in the life of SFC as we have been in our new building for a year now. For me personally it has also been an exciting time as I complete my first year in post as Pastor. So what has the church been up to over the last year? Well here is a snapshot:

Toddlers Group – We have been delighted to see numbers continuing to increase and it is fantastic to see the young ones enjoying themselves while the parents catch up over tea and cake!

Sensational Kids club – This club is for primary aged children with special needs, their siblings and parents/carers. There are a variety of sensor toys, craft activities and space for the young ones to let off steam in the main hall with bikes, scooters and footballs. A great time is had by all!

Sing-a-long Club – We run this for adults with learning difficulties and their carers. After singing our hearts out in between bouts of laughter and banter, we rest up with tea and cakes before ending with an amusing game together that involves more singing. We have made some great friends through this and greatly value the relationships we continue to build with the local homes.

Services at Sobel Lodge & Iden Manor – We run monthly services where we sing some favourite hymns, share a short message and catch up with residents, staff and family members. We very much appreciate the opportunity to be able to visit and spend time together.

Men's groups – Whether local walks, big boys' breakfasts at the King's Head, or a spot of golf, men from across the community come and join in the fun together. The only rule is no girls allowed – sorry, ladies, but there are plenty of other things for you instead.

Cedars (Over 50s Group) – The varied programme includes interesting speakers, activities, afternoon tea, outings and a Christmas lunch. A great opportunity to make new friends.

Badminton Groups – We run several badminton groups of mixed ages and ability so all can join in regardless of experience. We also have spare rackets as well for those that want to give it a go!

Market Church – We continue to run this down at the Sunday market from Easter to October. Providing a chance to hand out free literature, catch up with people and pray with those requesting it. We also enjoy catching up with the local store holders and see the array of things they sell.

Happiness Course – This has been a real success with two courses being run so far. All those who came have reported great value from attending. The course is based on the psychological research into happiness and looks at what we can learn in a challenging, engaging and fun way.

Saturday Café – This has been a real hit in the village with lots of people making the most of the great environment, super food, and low prices. I can recommend the Mac Cheese – Awesome!!!!!!

So a big thank you to the Parish Council for the great work they continue to do and for all those in our community that we have the privilege to know through the various activities. It is a privilege to be an active part of such a vibrant community.

If you fancy popping along to see us on a Sunday morning at 10.30, or Sunday evening at 6.30, I very much look forward to meeting you and can guarantee you a very warm welcome.

Submitted by Pastor Ryan Ahern

STAPLEHURST GUIDES

Staplehurst District Guides has again had a very busy year for all the sections of guiding: Rainbows (for girls aged 5-7 year), Brownies (for girls aged 7-10), Guides (for girls aged 10-14), Rangers (for girls aged 14-25). For World Thinking Day a sleepover was held at an indoor activity centre, Adventure Kidz in Aylesford. This was a first for Adventure Kidz and there were 95 members of Staplehurst Girl Guiding present for an evening of fun and a small amount of sleep!! 41 guides, brownies and their leaders also attended a science extravaganza at the Science Museum in London. Over 6000 members of guiding 'took over' the museum for a

weekend of science-based activities and we even had the chance to spend the night sleeping in the museum galleries. Brownies from Marden also went to the weekend Funtastic at Butlins South Coast World, Bognor – one of the events that has been organised to help celebrate the centenary year of Brownies 1914-2014! Plenty more activities are planned for this celebratory year for all units to join in with the celebrations. There are, of course, the annual camps and pack holidays taking place, as well as lots of craft, outdoor activities, visits from outside organisations and much, much more to give the girls a chance to take part in something that they may not have had the opportunity to do before. This encourages the girls to learn about themselves, the community and the world around them, and yet to do this in an enjoyable and fun way.

Interest in all the levels of Guiding is high and there are always girls on unit waiting lists – especially for the younger girls wanting to join Rainbows and Brownies. At present there is only one Rainbow unit in Staplehurst, 4 Brownie Units (one of which is based in Marden but is still part of our District), 2 Guide units and one Ranger/Senior Section unit. None of these units would be able to continue if it wasn't for the hard work of the all the volunteers who are the Leaders for these units. It is to them that thanks must go for keeping the spirit of Guiding alive and active in both Staplehurst and Marden.

Volunteers are always needed and will be welcomed into the guiding family. So whether you are an adult or younger then please have a look at the website for further information (www.girlguiding.org.uk). If you want to join a unit or to volunteer then please register your interest at www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested.

STAPLEHURST HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Society had another successful year with a wide variety of illustrated talks, musical entertainment, summer outing, shows, plant sale and quiz.

We held our Spring, Autumn and members' Summer rose shows. The weather, as usual, does affect what can be shown; nevertheless there were many entries and a high standard was maintained. The members' rose show in June was followed by refreshments and a quiz. The success of the shows owes a great deal to the hard work of Show Secretary Anne Davies and her assistants.

Ken Read took over the organising and running of our plant sale on the first Saturday in May. This was well attended, which is pleasing as we rely on this event for part of our income. This year it will be on 3rd May at the Village Centre Forecourt from 9am to 12 noon so please come along if you can.

In October Margaret Donnelly and other committee members organised our annual quiz in the Primary School Hall. Those who went had a very enjoyable time and all are welcome to this year's quiz on 11th October.

Margaret also arranged our annual outing in August, which was to Halls Court Nursery in Bethersden. After a talk by the owner and refreshments, members walked around the Nursery and a large number of plants were bought.

We are delighted and grateful that our sponsors Rumwood Nurseries of Langley kindly continue to support us.

Our Chairman Roy Jones stood down after nearly five successful years, and has been replaced by Cathie Speakman who is a long standing member of our Society.

Our monthly meetings are held on the third Tuesday in the Village Centre South Hall at 8pm, except for our Annual General Meeting which takes place on the first Friday in December at 7.45pm followed by refreshments and entertainment.

STAPLEHURST INTEREST GROUP

Meeting every Thursday morning our members enjoy each other's company and the opportunities to listen to entertaining speakers, see parts of the world through slide shows and enjoy attempting to make things or play games. Sometimes subjects provoke wide-ranging discussions and trips out widen experiences. Of particular note this year were the talks where members were moved to make generous donations to the work of Dr Roger Eltringham, who from his Marden base supplies his inventions of Safe Anaesthesia machines to conflict zones and poor countries, and to Guide Dogs for the Blind following a visit from a Puppy Walker and a recipient. All are welcome to join us as a speaker or member in the Schoolroom of the United Reformed Church.

Joan and Malcolm Buller

STAPLEHURST VILLAGE CENTRE

It has been another eventful year, some good, some not so good, for all the small group of trustees. Due to retirement, relocations and in some instance falling class numbers, we have lost some of our regular hirers. However, since the end of last year ground is slowly being made up: new dance and exercise classes, private parties and the last addition for 2013 being the siting of a food outlet concession, 'Pizza Cucina'.

There has been a slight loss in revenue, with income at £33k, down around £2,000 on the 2012 figures. Our overall expenditure has increased, but due to good management the increases have been kept to a minimum at 27k, £1,200 above the 2012 figure. This leaves in excess of £6,000 for 2013 to add to our accumulated funds brought forward from 2012.

Maxine Stephenson took on the role of Treasurer from April 2013, taking over from

Margaret Arger. With her new invoicing and control structure plus a new system of bookings the committee is analysing income streams in more detail. Relocation of the CAF Bank facilities from Cranbrook to Tonbridge led the committee to open up a NatWest account at the local branch.

We now have in place dedicated email addresses for direct contact for Bookings, the Chairman or Treasurer. This, together with Facebook, Twitter and our website which we are endeavouring to upgrade, makes information and response times smoother.

We are pleased to report our two D of E volunteers both attained the Bronze award and one has returned to us to continue work on his silver award.

There have been numerous repairs, maintenance and improvements made in the year to both inside and outside of the centre.

INTERNAL - Hand dryers in all of the South Hall toilets, internal lighting to both halls, South Hall kitchen roof repaired and insulated and double glazed windows to South Hall entrance lobby and kitchen.

EXTERNAL - Security gate at rear of North Hall, LED security and camera lighting units around the North Hall access areas. Entrance doors to South Hall and North Hall hand rails have been painted, with the addition of Hi-Vis pedestrian guides.

The flower baskets fixed to the front last summer were a nice splash of colour and were joined by two large apple crate planters later in the year. We are all looking forward to the array of tulips rising!!

Paul Kelly Chairman

STAPLEHURST WI

Our many and varied speakers in 2013 included a visit from Alexis Datta, head gardener at Sissinghurst Castle. We enjoyed finding out what she and her assistants have to do all year round to make the gardens so lovely.

A plant lady told us what plant each of our names was attached to – there can be several for each name – but the only one I can remember for my name is the tomato! John Sandon came and appraised china items for those hoping for the discovery of something immensely valuable, but no luck there.

The daughter-in-law of one of our members gave us a talk on 'healthy eating', something we all aspire to; not always successfully. She advised us to stay away from processed foods and that real butter is much better for you than the butter substitutes, which I was glad to hear as this my favourite addition to almost anything.

We heard of pickpockets, poachers and vagabonds on Victorian Kent. As always the Carnival and Fete in the village meant that we were busy collecting items for our stall, and the children never go away empty handed.

Bread baking was one of the highlights of the year with Claire from Frankie's Farm Shop. With her guidance, we managed to bring home some presentable loaves of bread.

The Garden meeting in August was held in the garden of our member, Janet Dowswell, and enjoyed by everyone. The annual Produce Show was, as always, very successful, thanks to the hard work of our member Ann Newport.

We have been to see The Producers, Yes, Prime Minister and had a trip to Eltham Palace. Our member, Paulina Watson, told us with slides and beautiful items, about her trip to the Gujerat, and member Pat Read told us how she got started making beautiful pressed flower cards – they are really gorgeous. At our Christmas meeting we not only exchanged our usual gifts, but everyone provided some non-perishable food items for distribution to those less fortunate than we are.

We had a visit from a representative of 'Starfish Malawi' telling us about their organisation that provides help to the children in Malawi. Our member, Pam Thwaites is planning a visit accompanying a container of items donated by our members and many others.

Refreshments were provided for the annual memorial service at Chickenden and we have worked at the several Village Planning events as well as the village clean-up.

A photograph of the Staplehurst village sign was submitted for possible inclusion in the WI 2015 calendar. The sign was commissioned by Staplehurst WI in 1984 and paid for by donations of local businesses and lots of fundraising by the Staplehurst WI ladies.

Shirley Davies, President

THE FRIENDS OF STAPLEHURST HEALTH CENTRE

Much of the year was dominated by the aftermath of the tendering process to provide a new contract for provision of GP services. Malling Health won the tender and now have a 10 year contract (with a five year optional extension). This has enabled them to reassure staff about the future which in turn has helped with continuity. The Patient Participation Group was asked to help in the tender evaluation process along with a representative of the Parish Council.

We published four newsletters in the past year in which we publicised the National Bowel cancer campaign, the 111 Non-Emergency Health and Out of Hours Helpline, the Flu Vaccination Programme, and we sold our popular Christmas Draw tickets in

the Autumn. We also participated in National No-Smoking Day and to that end we had a stall at the Carnival, where we promoted smoking cessation.

We worked closely with Paddock Wood District Lions, who kindly supplied the bottles for the Message in a Bottle campaign. We presented a position statement on Staplehurst health services to the Neighbourhood Plan three-day design Forum, who commended it. We welcomed Dr Robert Rumfeld and Dr. Lyn Burnett to the GP team and Elaine Handover, the new Practice Manager. They have all settled in well and the practice now has three permanent doctors.

We are working with the PPG and Practice Manager to encourage patients to register for online ordering of repeat prescriptions and doctors' appointments. The scheme is up and running and all patients are welcome to participate by filling in a form obtainable from reception which starts the process of giving access to the on-line website. It's not compulsory and those who want to carry on booking appointments in person or by phone, are welcome to do so.

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

This year has been another busy year for Staplehurst United Reformed Church, and its members and friends. So what have we been doing this year?

This year we have completed the Stewardship review, an opportunity for us to get together as a group and discuss important topics, worship, people and money, following on from the session last year on the gospel. We also completed the Christianity Explored Course for the first time this year, a great opportunity for people to ask questions about Christianity and share food together.

As a small congregation we continue to do a vast amount with many members involved in numerous activities. One of which, Messy Church, has continued to thrive this year with similar numbers to previous years and a continually varied range of activities to bring in members of the community. We are also for the first time planning a weekend away at a festival as a group in May.

We've run three film evenings this year; the third, Nativity 2, was a full house beyond all expectations with vast quantities of popcorn for the large numbers of children - a case of perfect timing at the end of term and a good choice of film from the previous year.

We have focused our giving this year on three charities, two of which were Tearfund and Homeless Care (formerly Maidstone Christian Care). We made a decision to further develop links with these charities this year by identifying representatives to keep in contact and ensure a closer link, meaning we now have three charities with close links as we already support Toybox. This led to not only giving money to Homeless Care at Christmas but Junior Church made boxes of food for families less fortunate than us, including the children in the support for this worthwhile charity and giving them an understanding of those less fortunate.

We were also lucky enough to have URC Moderator John Ellis come to preach this year, although after hitting a spot of black ice he almost didn't make it! So we give thanks for the continued blessing on our Church for the year past and as we look forward to the coming year pray that we may continue to be blessed.

WEALD disABILITY CLUB

Are you looking for help to get out from your home and meet other people? The Weald disABILITY Club is looking for new members. We are a bright cheerful group and welcome people with a physical disability ranging from wheelchair users to a mild disability.

The club meets weekly on Fridays at the McCabe Centre Staplehurst between 10am and 2pm. A home-made cooked lunch is provided which is included with the subscription.

Activities include Bingo and Boccia (a type of bowls played sitting down), entertainment from outside groups and trips throughout the year. There is a Christmas lunch and party. We also celebrate birthdays and special events.

A free pick-up in our adapted minibus is available. All our volunteer helpers are willing and helpful and our escort staff are CRB checked.

If you are interested or would like further information please contact Sue on 01580 892460.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, STAPLEHURST

It was on the evening when the Revd Steve Bennett led Evensong and as part of his sermon he asked the congregation to join in with the refrain '*Joshua fought the Battle of Jericho and the walls come tumbling down*'. Indeed the wall did come tumbling down that evening, but not for the same effect as Jericho's walls. It was the beginning of the wall saga. The falling of the churchyard wall has highlighted the importance of the church with its churchyard to the Staplehurst community as many generations of parishioners have been buried here. The damage to the wall affected many graves and wall plaques. Many family members come to the graves to lay down flowers for their loved ones and also light candles in the church and use the church for moments of quiet. The maintenance of the Churchyard is an extension of our care to all who walk through, tend to graves or are buried in it.

As Christians we are a particular group of people in the village with particular values, concerns and contributions to make. If you think of the village as a pie, the church is one slice of the pie. Our time and our efforts are a contribution to the welfare of the whole community. As Christians we believe in God and to love our

neighbour as ourselves. Our Christian values influence our actions in every aspect of our lives.

What does it mean to be a Christian and what is the church? Is the church a building? Is it the place where believers gather to worship? Or is the church the people — the believers who follow Christ? How we understand and perceive the church is quite important in determining how we live out our faith.

Five pointers shall help us to evaluate our effectiveness. Please have a look at the pie chart beneath.



Have we sustained the sacred centre?

As Christians our thrust, motivation and values of thought and actions come from God = "Making a difference in our society/village". Therefore to sustain our relationship with God is the highest priority. God is the sacred centre. God fuels, guides and sustains all the others. *God at the centre means inspiration and energy for goodness, truth and beauty in all our lives.* In looking back on the last year, as individuals and as community we reflect and question to what extent have we tried to be in touch with the source of inspiration, love and transformation on a daily basis and have we

- found ourselves guided through life by a profound wisdom that has stood the test of time?

- found ourselves energised and motivated to live life to the full and for the sake of others?
- found a strength and stillness in the midst of the deepest sorrow in life?
- found a way of coping even when all of the above are absent?

I am not talking about success or failure, or beating ourselves up or chores or one extra thing to cram in an already busy year, but I am talking about finding ways of touching the wonder and beauty that is at the heart of everything. This recognises that we are all very different and there is going to be no one way of praying to God which works for us all. Therefore we have explored different ways and types of worship that speak to different people and civic celebrations, like for example Remembrance Sunday or the annual Airfield Service.

Have we made Disciples?

This is NOT about getting people in!!!! We are not about converting people. These, getting people in and conversion, are an often misunderstood action when we talk about making Disciples of Christ. It is church language and not always helpful when we try to reflect this core task left to us by Jesus. It usually takes the form of accompanying people on a journey by the intentional use of nurture, mentoring, or simple friendship. It is about going the extra mile and going out of our ways and ignoring OUR LIKES for the sake of others. Nowhere in the Gospels does Jesus ask anyone to worship him. He only asks that people follow him, that we walk the way of unconditional love with him, that we become in this sense his disciple. Being a disciple can take us where we don't really want to go, because Jesus went to difficult places of suffering, ridicule, betrayal and death. It is not an easy path. But then life isn't easy either. Walking away and choosing the easy option was not a choice for Jesus, but facing conflict and working through it was his duty. Christians follow this calling for the sake of others without expecting any return. In a true Christ-like manner the care they give has to be unconditional, i.e. with no strings attached.

Have we made a difference in the world?

Mission, social justice and prophetic witness are at the heart of our calling as Christians; to reflect on God's call to respond to the needs of our community, influence and reform unjust social structures and play a part in the guardianship of creation. A wisdom saying sums it up beautifully: *"In 100 years time nobody will care how much money you earned, but the world may be different because you were important in the life of a child."*

I suppose that the urge to make a difference is one of the most profound desires in life. It is about purpose and meaning in our lives, about us knowing that to someone, somewhere, it has mattered that we have been who we are and have done and said what we did. And, if we are honest, most of us don't spend much time reflecting on the difference we have made in our lives, until, that is, certain crisis points in our lives make us face up to it. The death of someone is often one of these crisis points, but other intensely emotional experiences can be these catalysts for reflection - perhaps

the birth of a child, a big birthday, the loss of security, like a job or a home, or a marriage. These sorts of events can bring us up short and start us thinking about what life is all about, and about whether we've made good use of our lives thus far—whether we've made a difference. And when we reflect on whether our own lives have made a difference, we are often far too ready to compare ourselves, unfavourably, with famous names and maybe forget that making a difference is not about doing something great and wonderful and noteworthy, but about the everyday activities of life and our neighbours. No-one is ever too small, too young, too old, too unintelligent, too clumsy, too poor to make a difference. What is the most important way to make a difference in individual lives, this community, the world and our church? How do you think did our church community work together to make a difference in the community?

Have we created a vibrant Christian Community?

This is about the shape of our church community into a 'community of grace' which exhibits the character of Jesus. Such attractive communities are genuinely hospitable, deeply engaged with their wider communities and passionate about God.

The PCC has worked extremely hard for the well-being of the church, in answer to the question 'What is All Saints Church called to become, and how can it do so?' We have looked for opportunities to partner with the wider community in celebration of aspects of village life. The PCC is planning for a further flexible use of the church for worship and hospitality to the wider community.

Shaping confident, collaborative leadership

This is about developing a collaborative leadership style within the church and with other village organisations such as the Parish Council. We are very grateful to the Parish Council for their continued support of the church and particularly in cooperating with the care for the war memorial in St. Georges Chapel and upkeep of the churchyard. A new Churchyard agreement has been signed this year and we would like to thank the Parish Council and particularly the churchyard liaison committee for their commitment.

All our subcommittees consist of people that are regular church-goers and on the Church Council and also non church-goers, but who appreciate the contribution our work does to the Staplehurst Community as a whole.

A lot of the work is done behind the scenes. All who are involved in committee work appreciate the cost of many evening meetings, the time and energy to get things organised. The purpose of it all is to create a caring, sustainable and happy community, who live supportive of one another and share in God's unconditional love.

With many thanks for all your support, Yours Silke (Rector of All Saints Church)