

# Village Update

SUMMER 2012

[www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk)

## THANK YOU SUE



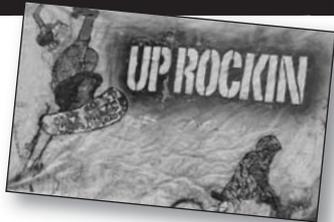
Sue Bassett has been Parish Clerk for sixteen years after being the Assistant Clerk for about four years. Throughout this time Sue has given her expertise, commitment and loyal service. She has decided to retire from full-time employment to spend more time with her family. She will

be sadly missed as she has been an asset to the community. She has worked with 5 different Chairmen and Councillors too many to count! The job of Clerk has changed enormously and Sue has grown with it. Sue is to continue to work for the Council for two days a week as our Responsible Finance Officer so we will still have the benefit of her vast experience.

## UPROCKIN

Diaries to the ready. UpRockin is returning to Staplehurst on 23rd June. Maidstone Borough Council is sponsoring the event and will be bussing in competitors from Maidstone. Donations to costs have been made by MBC, Golding Homes, Homeleigh, Highgrove Garden Centre and the Fish Farm. We aim to have up to 1500 people on site so local volunteers are needed to help with the car park marshalling and registration.

Those wishing to take part can complete the entry forms on site from 12noon. If you can spare an hour or more to help please call Paul Butcher on 07860818992.



## WELCOME MICK

The council has appointed Mick Westwood as the new Parish Clerk to work four days each week. He has a wide range of banking experience and committee work in the community. He is involved with the voluntary group looking after the Poyntell Road pond. Being Clerk is a very responsible and challenging position so Mick is on a steep learning curve! We are all looking forward to working together for the benefit and best interests of Staplehurst.

## MAYOR'S VISIT

Your Parish Council is pleased to announce that the new Mayor Cllr Rodd Nelson-Gracie and the Lady Mayoress are to visit Staplehurst on 30th May. This is to recognise the work of the staff at Woodland House and to visit two local businesses who support and help the children there. The visit starts at Greenworld Garden Centre where the Mayor will open the new café and all parishioners are welcome to attend. They will then move on to Iden Farm to see production of Staplehurst Blue cheese and end with a private tour of Woodland House.

## THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE 2012 – 2ND TO 5TH JUNE 2012

The organising group in conjunction with the Parish Council has produced a 32 page Souvenir Booklet. This features the programme of events planned for the Jubilee period with a particular focus on the Staplehurst community, the wealth of history and places of special interest that surround us. This booklet will be delivered to every household with our Update.

For all the latest news see:  
[http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee\\_celebrations.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_celebrations.aspx)

# Staplehurst

*Parish Council*

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Residents and Councillors joined together on April 23rd to hear Charlotte Osborne-Forde, the CEO of Voluntary Action Maidstone outline the amazing array of services provided for needy individuals in our



Borough by over 700 volunteers. Staplehurst is the newest growth area for their services with a member of staff and a minibus to be based here. John Perry, Richard Lusty and Eric Hotson gave full reports on the activities of the councils. Our rural area sergeant gave a thorough police report and answered many questions from residents. A presentation was made to retiring Clerk Sue Bassett to thank her for twenty years of outstanding service to our community.

## PLAYSCHEME

Playplace are working with the Parish Council to provide our usual playscheme based at the school. A leaflet explaining the dates, fees and how to book is inside this Update. Unfortunately, MBC will not be giving any grant towards our scheme this year.

## JEAN ROGERS

Jean Rogers died peacefully on the 2nd April. She will be sadly missed; she supported many organisations, working tirelessly for others. She single-handedly delivered three hundred Updates for the Parish Council. She will be remembered by many out walking her rescue greyhound Maggie. Thank you Jean for all you contributed to our community and for sharing your interesting life with your friends.

## WILDLIFE FRIENDLY PLANTING

Some local residents have recently formed the Staplehurst Natural Planting Group. They aim to promote native and wildflower planting around the parish – to attract visitors and wildlife, and for everyone to enjoy. They are working with the Parish Council and have had a positive response from MBC, who hope to save money by using less frequent 'conservation grade' mowing. If you would like to become involved in this excellent initiative please visit [staplehurstnpg.wordpress.com](http://staplehurstnpg.wordpress.com), contact [staplehurstnpg@gmail.com](mailto:staplehurstnpg@gmail.com) or the Parish Office.

## COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION

It is with regret that the Parish Council received the resignation of Councillor John Kelly at its meeting on 16th April. However, Councillors were pleased to hear that John has agreed to remain on our Rural Settlement, Allotments and Publicity & Website Groups to continue his excellent work in these areas.

Public Notice of the Vacancy was displayed immediately. If no election was requested by 10 electors before 9th May the Parish Council will have to co-opt to fill this vacancy. If you are interested in becoming a Councillor please contact the Parish Office or an existing Councillor for further information.

## STAPLEHURST PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2012

Following the success of last year's competition, the Parish Council is pleased to announce the Staplehurst Photographic Competition for 2012. The competition entitled 'Staplehurst Moments' seeks to capture the best moments and events which have taken place in Staplehurst throughout the year and will be judged on that criterion. It is hoped that any images submitted will form part of a Website Calendar in 2013. See the current [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/image\\_gallery](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/image_gallery)

All entries must be submitted by 30th November 2012 and the top 10 images will be displayed in the Village Hall on Monday 17th December 2012. Our thanks go to the companies who have kindly agreed to donate prizes:

- DK Holdings, Staplehurst
- Photomegorgeous, Staplehurst and
- Maidstone Photo Factory, Headcorn.

For further enquiries - please

email [photocomp@staplehurstvillage.org.uk](mailto:photocomp@staplehurstvillage.org.uk)

For the Rules of the Competition please go to:

<http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/uploads/staplehurst/documents/10/1062.pdf>

### STRAY DOGS

There have been a number of reported problems with stray dogs in the village. One has been removed on welfare grounds and the Dog Warden has given a verbal warning to the keeper regarding the others. The Dog Warden's number is 01622 602117. If you feel threatened by any dogs please use the new police 101 number giving as much detail as possible.

### THE VILLAGE WEBSITE

Residents are reminded that the Parish Council maintain a website on behalf of the whole community including an area with free advertising for local groups - [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village\\_life.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_life.aspx) and for businesses - [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/local\\_directory.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/local_directory.aspx)

# MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL CORE STRATEGY UPDATE

The Core Strategy planning document sets the general direction of development in the borough from now until 2026. It deals with homes, jobs, shopping, leisure, environment, transport issues and provides the overall framework to guide development. It was hoped that the next draft of the Core Strategy would be placed before MBC Cabinet in June 2012. However it has now come to

## TESCO SUPERMARKET PLANS

Tesco Stores submitted a planning application on 14th February (MA/12/0232) for a new supermarket at the station. The supermarket itself, its 235 customer parking spaces, a petrol station and a bus turning area would occupy most of the land now used for car parking at the station. A 660-space car park for rail users would be built north of the railway, with access from George Street.

Staplehurst Parish Council arranged a special meeting on 6th March to consider its response. This was well attended by local residents who had two hours to express their views for or against the plan and to ask questions of the Tesco representatives present.

Parish councillors then discussed the application and noted that some residents favoured a new supermarket. However, a majority of councillors voted to recommend MBC to refuse the present application as there were a number of serious concerns which needed to be resolved. These included amongst others the scale of the new store, traffic problems with Lodge Road, the principle of a major development north of the railway, the danger of peak-hour traffic at the A229 junction with George Street and the liability to flooding of the new station car park. The next step will be for MBC to decide on the application, for which no date had been set at the time of writing.

## DEVELOPERS EXPLAIN THEIR HOUSING PLANS

When two development companies asked to present their plans to Staplehurst Parish Council they were requested to do it at a public meeting organised by the Council. This took place on 26th March and was well attended by residents.

Taylor Wimpey have owned land at the top of Oliver Road for many years (the "Wimpey Fields") and are now planning to build about 50 houses on just over one-third of the land. The remainder would be dedicated as a conservation area and community woodland. An outline planning application could be submitted later this year. More details are available at [www.pegasuspg.co.uk/staplehurst](http://www.pegasuspg.co.uk/staplehurst). The developers are planning a public exhibition about the scheme at the end of May – look out for details.

Gleeson and Miller Homes have an option to buy a large area of land at Hen and Duckhurst Farm, north of Marden Road and west of the Lime Trees estate and the Lodge Road industrial estate. Their plans are less advanced, but they are thinking of a phased development of 250 to 260 houses, plus some open space. Vehicle access would be by a mini-roundabout on Marden Road although they would

our attention that due to the number of responses to last year's consultation and further work required that there will be a delay in the process. It is not clear how long this delay will be, but any delay creates difficulties in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. The local Rural Settlement Group continues to monitor the situation. See [www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural\\_settlement\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx)

## COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP

The Community Clean-Up on Saturday 24th March was a tremendous success. Sixty eight people turned up to help on the day and twelve other residents helped earlier in the week. Over one hundred bags of rubbish were removed from our built-up area; all estate roads and the Parade were litter picked. We arranged a lovely sunny day and being centred at the Youth Club was a brilliant idea. Grateful thanks go to the WI for serving very welcome refreshments and to the Youth Club Committee for making their facilities available. Some volunteers litter-picked rural lanes separately from the organised event.

The community spirit on the day was amazing and some residents are carrying on being a volunteer picking up rubbish at their own risk. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped! Let's keep Staplehurst tidy by not dropping rubbish for others to pick up.



create walking and cycling routes to the station.

Residents raised a number of issues with the representatives of the companies, including traffic, drainage, impact on schools, local facilities and the effect on the environment.

## SAINSBURY'S DEVELOPMENTS

Sainsbury's Supermarkets submitted a planning application on 17th February (MA/12/0220) for a new petrol filling station on the Staplehurst Service Station site. The planning committee of the Parish Council considered the proposal at its meeting on 19th March and recommended MBC to approve it, subject to some comments intended to reduce its impact on neighbours, particularly those in Cornforth Close.

At the time of writing MBC had not set a date to decide on the application by Sainsbury's for a new supermarket near the station (MA/11/1944) or the associated application for a new factory for DK Holdings (MA/11/1943) which were submitted in November 2011.

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In the previous Village Update I mentioned that Sue Bassett our Clerk for over 16 years will be relinquishing her post and taking up a new part time position as the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO). We have now carried out a series of interviews and I am pleased to report that we have appointed Mick Westwood to replace Sue as the Clerk to Staplehurst Parish Council. Mick is very well qualified and as a local resident has an extensive knowledge of the issues affecting our community. I should like to welcome Mick on board and to wish Sue all the best in her new role as the RFO.

We have received a lot of positive feedback on the two new security cameras that we have installed so we are actively considering purchasing an additional camera. This would allow us to retain a camera in Market Street while fulfilling the original requirement to install one at Jubilee Field. The Market Street camera could be moved if there was an issue elsewhere in the parish.

As part of developing the communication process with residents we have introduced our own Parish Council surgeries and these are now well established. These usually take place at the Library on the second Saturday in the month. Two Councillors are present to listen to your concerns and views; please take this opportunity to come and meet us.

We have made some significant progress towards resolving how services undertaken by parishes on behalf of MBC are funded. However, there are still some issues outstanding and we are making every effort through the auspices of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) to reach agreement with MBC. As one of the largest parishes in the Borough Staplehurst continues to play a leading role in ensuring that the views of the parishes are taken into account.

We are a proactive council delivering services to meet local needs and striving to improve the quality of life in the community; the improvements to the Jubilee Field drainage, the maintenance of the public toilets, the introduction of the expanded street cleaning service and the new security cameras are all part of this aim.

*John Perry*

## STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Local electors and the press have a right to listen to Parish Council Meetings, but not to take part. At the beginning and after the closure of the Parish Council Meeting, the Chairman will invite members of the public to speak for a maximum of 3 minutes each relating to issues on the Agenda or about issues of local concern. You are requested to state your name and address prior to speaking. The Parish Council as a planning consultee makes recommendations to Maidstone Borough Council, which makes the decision. All meetings are held in the South Hall, Village Centre. Planning Committee meetings begin at 7pm with Full Council following on at 8pm (or

earlier if planning agenda is short). Contact the Clerk for details or check the website calendar page.

### Meetings in 2012 are:-

May	Monday 28th	
June	Monday 18th	
July	Monday 2nd	Monday 16th
August	Monday 6th	Monday 20th
September	Monday 3rd	Monday 17th
October	Monday 1st	Monday 15th
November	Monday 5th	Monday 19th
December	Monday 3rd	Monday 17th

## Parish Council Information

### COUNCILLORS

John Perry

(Chairman)

Tom Burnham

(Joint Vice Chairman)

Paul Kelly

(Joint Vice Chairman)

Paul Butcher

(Chairman of Planning)

Margaret Ashby

Joan Buller

Anne Gosling

Simon Green

Sam Lain

Barrett Manning

John Reardon

Adele Sharp

Rory Silkin

Peter Spearink

vacancy

### CLERK

Mr Mick Westwood

### RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER

Mrs Sue Bassett

### ASSISTANT to CLERK

Mrs Deborah Jenkins

### Address:

The Parish Office,  
Village Centre, High Street.  
Staplehurst TN12 0BJ

Email: [clerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk](mailto:clerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk)

Tel: 01580 891761

### Opening hours:

9am to 1pm Mondays to Fridays,  
except on Thursdays when it is by  
appointment.

### COUNCIL SURGERIES AT THE LIBRARY

Two Parish Councillors will attend a surgery at the Library on the second Saturday of each month from 10am until noon.

Borough Councillor Lusty's surgery will continue on the last Saturday of each month.

PCSO Pete Gardner will be holding a surgery on June 16th from noon until 1pm, July 14th and August 18th, both from 11am – noon.

You are welcome to talk through any local problems or ask questions about local issues.