

# Village Update

WINTER 2015

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

## Our new defibrillator

Staplehurst Parish Council has organised the installation of an automated external defibrillator on the wall of the Library at The Parade. It is for use by any member of the public in emergencies 24/7. Notices have been displayed in shop windows as a reminder of the location, and it has been registered with SECAMB, so that ambulances and paramedics are aware of it.

The FIRST TASK if someone collapses is to ring 999 for an ambulance. After this the first 6 to 8 minutes after collapsing is crucial. Take the defibrillator to the person who has had an attack and switch it on. You will hear instructions on each step of the procedure, including where to place the electrode packs on his or her chest, how to administer resuscitation and when to press the 'Shock' button. The equipment will prevent the operator giving a



shock to someone who does not require it, so it cannot make the situation worse.

If you wish to attend a one-hour training programme to give you confidence to use the defibrillator in an emergency, this can be arranged by applying to the Parish Clerk on 01580 891761 or by e-mail to [clerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk](mailto:clerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk).

## STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Staplehurst Parish Council has prepared a Neighbourhood Plan that sets out a sustainable vision for the area and a series of policies the community is proposing to be used in the determination of planning applications.

As the next stage in the process, Maidstone Borough Council is organising a Borough-wide public consultation in advance of an independent examination of the plan.

Formal public consultation on the plan commenced on 23rd October 2015 and will conclude at 5pm on 4th December 2015. Copies of the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Development Plan and supporting documents are available to view and download at: [www.maidstone.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/consultations). Hard copies are also available for public inspection at:

1. Maidstone Gateway, King Street, Maidstone, ME15 6JQ:  
Monday - Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm (5.30pm Mondays);

2. Kent History and Library Centre, James Whatman Way, ME14 1LQ: Monday – Wednesday 9.00am – 6.00pm; Thursday 9.00am – 8.00pm; Friday 9.00am – 6.00pm; Saturday 9.00am – 5.00pm

3. Staplehurst Library, The Parade;

4. Staplehurst Parish Council Office.

Representations can be returned:

- Online at [www.maidstone.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/consultations) (which is the preferred option);
- By email to [neighbourhoodplanning@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodplanning@maidstone.gov.uk)
- Or by post to Spatial Policy, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ.

Representations received after the closing date will not be considered.

# Staplehurst

*Parish Council*

## PLANNING UPDATE

The largest application considered by the Parish Council's Planning Committee recently was for outline permission for a development of up to 110 houses on Stanley Farm, a site on the south side of Headcorn Road, beyond Slaney Road (15/507124). This site is not identified for housing in either the draft Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan or the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan.

The Committee recommended MBC to reject the application. Councillors were concerned that the expected increase in traffic would put a further strain on an already congested Headcorn Road and at the crossroads; the site was unsustainable; the area was liable to flooding; there were issues with existing sewage problems in the vicinity; there was a lack of access to the centre of the village other than via Headcorn Road and no children's play area was planned.

The Parish Council has also commented on the recent Regulation 18 consultation on amendments to the draft MBC Local Plan. Of particular concern was a further housing site "north of Henhurst Farm", i.e. just south of the Taylor Wimpey development now in progress and with the only access for vehicles through that development. Other points include the Parish Council's wish to see an extension of the Low Weald landscape of local value, the additional strain on the A229 corridor as a result of the location of housing and employment development across the Borough as a whole, and MBC's estimate of the need for new gipsy and traveller sites.

## PARTY IN THE PARK

A big thank you to the Carnival and Fete Committee for organising the Party in the Park event on September 12th, celebrating our Queen becoming the longest reigning English monarch. A fantastic time was had by all who attended during the day to listen to the music. The whole event was finished off in true celebratory style with a spectacular fireworks display. It was such an explosion of colour that many were able to enjoy the event from their own gardens, breaking into spontaneous applause at the end. Once more thank you to the committee for giving their time to create the event.

## SHINE A LIGHT!

The Parish Council's Christmas lights will soon be released from store for their seasonal outing. The Parish Council is grateful to the local businesses who help support the cost of installing and taking down the lights. The energy-efficient LED lights use far less power than the old conventional bulbs – cheap and cheerful! We hope you enjoy them.

## COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD AT STAPLEHURST STATION

Southeastern has agreed to provide a notice board at the station so that local community events can be publicised to commuters and other train travellers. They have also indicated that they would be prepared to consider ideas for community involvement with the station. Please contact the Parish Clerk with your suggestions in the first instance.

## EMERGENCY HELP TEAM

Eighteen volunteers took part in the Staplehurst Emergency Help Team's training exercise on October 17th. The exercise was useful and helped to identify a number of issues which are being addressed. A Refugee Management Procedure has been drafted and added to the Emergency Plan. If you would like to offer your help and/or join the Help Team, you will be very welcome. Please complete the Volunteer Application Form at [www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/emergency\\_planning\\_team.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/emergency_planning_team.aspx) and forward it to the Parish Clerk by post or e-mail.



## COMMUNITY WARDENS

Community Wardens aim to help prevent crime by encouraging the building of a strong community and by discouraging low-level anti-social behaviour. Wardens do not take on the work of the police but act as a friendly visible presence within the community and you will often find Mira walking around the village. She helps raise awareness of problems such as scam mail, bogus callers and rogue traders. Mira helps to identify and tackle other local issues needing attention ranging from abandoned vehicles to welfare concerns. Wardens encourage social inclusion – there is no need for anyone to be alone or isolated.

If you see Mira out walking and wish to speak to her about her role in Staplehurst or any other issue please do so. Mira can be contacted by mobile phone: 07969 584179 and email: [mira.martin@kent.gov.uk](mailto:mira.martin@kent.gov.uk)

## LIBRARY SERVICES

Staplehurst library, on The Parade, supports reading for pleasure and information needs. It provides activities for different ages and interests.

Library services are also available when the local library is closed. The website [www.kent.gov.uk/libs](http://www.kent.gov.uk/libs) enables you to search the library catalogue, renew and request items. Click on "Online reference library" to find encyclopaedias, newspapers, eLearning resources and more. The Ask a Kent Librarian service is available 24/7 to help with research, homework and any other questions: Use the online enquiry form on the website, email [AKL@kent.gov.uk](mailto:AKL@kent.gov.uk), call 03000 41 64 38 or text AKL, a space, then your query to 07860 008025. There is also a Kent Libraries app, for library services on the go!

# NO 5 BUS SERVICE



With the much-appreciated help of our Borough Councillors Louise Brice and John Perry, the Parish Council continues its efforts to achieve a more satisfactory bus service for the many residents who depend on it. In addition to long-standing problems with reliability and overcrowding at certain times, we are particularly concerned at Arriva's proposal that the northbound bus which is currently due to leave Staplehurst Church at 07.03 should leave nearly twenty minutes earlier at 06.47. This bus is used by many children attending schools in Maidstone and the change will lengthen their already long day still further.

## DOG FOULING

Thank you to all responsible dog owners who 'pick-up' after their dog. Unfortunately a few owners do not and when residents point out dog fouling to the owner a few have been subjected to abusive behaviour in return, which is totally unacceptable. Please report any such incidents in confidence to the Environmental Crime Officer on 01622 602202. The Parish Office has helpful "Dog Watch" information available.

## LEEDS-LANGLEY RELIEF ROAD

Leeds Parish Council has invited support for an e-petition on the Kent County Council website which calls on "Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council to collaborate and provide and build a Leeds-Langley relief road as a matter of urgency." In its response to the Maidstone Local Plan, Staplehurst Parish Council mentioned the need for this road in view of the additional traffic from the housing developments proposed or actually under construction at many locations served by the A229 and A274. We are therefore pleased to support Leeds Parish Council. Residents who would like to sign the petition themselves can find details at [www.leedskent.org.uk](http://www.leedskent.org.uk).

## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

This was marked again this year by a service at All Saints Parish Church during which wreaths of poppies were laid at the village War Memorial in the St George's Chapel. Before the service, members of the British Legion and of uniformed youth organisations had marched from the Village Centre along the High Street to the Church. We would like to thank the volunteer marshals who carried out the traffic management for the event and without whom it could not take place.

## PLANNING SYSTEM UPGRADE

The Mid-Kent Planning Portal ([pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications/](http://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications/)) provides online access to details of planning applications on behalf of Maidstone, Swale and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils. We have been informed that, as a result of upgrades to the software used during the period from November 2015 to February 2016, there will be several periods when the system will not be available: 4-6 December, 17-20 December and 5-7 February. If you wish to submit comments on a planning application to Maidstone Borough Council while the system is unavailable, you may send them by e-mail to [planningcomments@midkent.gov.uk](mailto:planningcomments@midkent.gov.uk). Paper copies of planning applications affecting Staplehurst are available for inspection in the Parish Office during normal opening times.

## VILLAGE CLEAN-UP

We are planning to repeat this on Saturday 12th March 2016. More details in the next Update.



## VILLAGE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

This working group, which includes representatives from the Village Centre Trust, the Parish Council, users of the Centre and other residents, has had several meetings. We have surveyed the facilities available in a number of other village halls in the region and looked at how they are managed and financed. The group is currently listing the facilities the village needs, to see how the various options for future development could meet these needs. The Parish Council has also agreed to pay for a professional survey of the existing Village Centre building, to provide a better basis for these options. Any comments from users of the Village Centre (or those who don't use it now but would if it offered other facilities) would be of interest, and can be sent to the Parish Office.

## **Chairman's Report**

Summer holidays seem a distant memory, and we have had a busy time since school began. The buses have been problematic again, especially those taking children to school. The Council has been complaining to Arriva, and have organised a second meeting with our MP, Helen Grant, Borough Councillors and others to sort out a solution.

The Oliver Road Open Space continues to add interest to Staplehurst. Some (rather shy) adders have been seen in the area, which is a sure sign of a healthy environment. The Council is close to taking over responsibility for the Space, so why not think of a decent name for it? Let the Council Clerk have your ideas. Many of you will have enjoyed the pageant at the Surrenden Field to celebrate the Queen becoming the longest reigning English monarch in history. The Council thought it worth noting too, and sent a letter of congratulations. If you enjoyed the Carnival and celebrations this year, you might think of joining the Carnival & Fete committee to help out. The committee is dwindling in numbers (and, how shall I put this?), is getting no younger. If no new people join in to help, there will be no Carnival. Stark but true. Please give it some thought.

At long last we have a defibrillator publicly available in case of heart attack. It is on the wall of the library. It is available to anyone. It is so simple, it tells you what to do! Have a look for yourselves.

*Rory Silkin, Chairman*

# **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 MBC 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 7.30pm (if planning agenda is short). Contact the Clerk for details or check the website calendar page.

## **Meetings (usually Mondays) in 2015 are:**

Monday December 7th	Monday December 21st
<b>Meetings in 2016 are:</b>	
Monday January 4th	Monday January 18th
Monday February 1st	Monday February 15th
Monday March 7th	Monday March 21st

# Parish Council Information

COUNCILLORS

Rory Silkin (Chairman)  
Tom Burnham (Joint Vice Chairman)  
Paul Kelly (Joint Vice Chairman)  
Paul Butcher (Chairman of Planning)  
Margaret Ashby  
Joan Buller  
Anne Gosling  
Simon Green  
Neal Kemp  
Sam Lain-Rose  
Barrett Manning  
John Perry  
John Reardon  
Adele Sharp  
Peter Spearink

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@stapl

Tel: 01580 89176

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

## SURGERIES AT THE LIBRARY

Borough Councillor Perry's surgery will be on the last Saturday of each month, together with a Parish Councillor from 10am until noon.

PCSO Pete Gardner will hold Police Surgeries on these Saturdays from 10am to 11am on 12th December, 9th January, 6th February and 5th March

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

