

# Village Update

AUTUMN 2018

[www.staplehurst-pc.uk](http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk)

## WIMPEY FIELD NATURE RESERVE NEWS

Our heritage fruit trees are settling in well, some are even bearing fruit in their first year. We would like to say a big Thank You to our regular volunteers who have helped keep the trees watered and alive during that extremely hot, dry spell. It has been a great pleasure to see so many of you, adults, children and babies, wandering around and making full use of the picnic area during our glorious summer weather.

In mid-August we again ran a "Bioblitz" discovery day, led for us by Medway Valley Countryside Partnership; a really fabulous day, enjoyed by more than eighty residents, (including children from our Summer Play Scheme). Our youngest participant was two and a half WEEKS, our oldest was 80+. Thank you to Mark and Lindsay for guiding us around the reserve, finding beasties and bugs, to identify



and marvel at. Both children and adults were captivated and enthused by their finds which included a family of Mum, Dad and Baby slow worm, a healthy frog who obligingly jumped straight into the collection bucket and a Damselfly nymph, which I had never seen before. Also Yvonne found and photographed two beautiful examples of wasp spiders which Mark said was a sure sign that our reserve is indeed very wildlife friendly. We were also delighted that Lyndsay got to see big lumpy Toad, since we thought he had abandoned us. The best quote of the day was from an older participant who said, "I'll be walking around here with new eyes now".

Huge thanks to our Parish Office Staff and our Parish Councillors who turned up in support and special thanks to Robert our volunteer Warden and Yvonne our (un)official photographer. Please take a look at our "The Friends of the Wimpey Field" Facebook page for regular updates, some superb photos and informative flora and fauna articles and links. We'll be asking for volunteers to help out with maintenance and improvement works during the autumn and winter so we hope some of you will feel able to assist in our continuing success.

# Staplehurst

*Parish Council*

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As I write this, we are still in the school holidays and two events sponsored by the Parish Council have just ended, the three-week Summer Playscheme (and congratulations to Playplace on their OFSTED inspection) and the BioBlitz day at the Wimpey Field, run for us by Mark and Lyndsay from the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership.

But there are still plenty of leisure activities for children and young people in Staplehurst once schools and playgroups start their new terms. The Parish Council owns the Jubilee Field in Headcorn Road which hosts several youth football teams, the Kathy Lamb Guide Centre (Rainbows, Brownies and Guides) and the skateboard park, which will get its annual re-paint shortly.

The Staplehurst Youth Club (near the Village Centre) is supported by the Parish Council. Of course, there are many other activities for children and young people around Staplehurst, including the Cricket Club in Frittenden Road, the Scouts in Nicholson Walk (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers) and dance classes at the Village Centre, plus of course the activities run by the various churches, from parent and toddler groups upwards. Many of these opportunities rely on volunteers, and I'd like to express my thanks to all of you.

More help will always be welcomed by all these groups – and indeed by the other voluntary organisations who help to expand the range of leisure opportunities we all enjoy, whether children or adults.

*Cllr Burnham (Chairman)*

## COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP – SATURDAY 29TH SEPT

Press reports have said that house prices are reduced by 12% if the street is littered. Staplehurst Parish Council is again organising a second clean-up of the built-up area. It will take place on Saturday 29th September and we would like to invite YOU to take part. MBC will loan protective equipment and litter pickers, remove the rubbish we collect, provide guidance on safety and give insurance cover. We will be based at the Youth Club (near Sobell Lodge), by kind permission of their committee, and we ask you to arrive at 10 am. When you have cleaned your allotted area sacks need to be brought back to the Youth Club so don't overfill them! We aim to offer you refreshments after the work is completed. For insurance purposes we have to keep a list of helpers' names. Children and young people who take part must be accompanied by, and under the responsibility of, a parent or adult friend. Organised youth groups who wish to join in should contact the Parish Office in the first instance to discuss their plans. Even if you are not able to take part please try to tidy your own boundaries to help make Staplehurst litter free!

**We look forward to seeing you on the 29th September.**



## PLANNING

We are busy as usual with a flurry of planning applications ranging from the small domestic conservatory to large sites such as the Hen and Duckhurst site.

Please do remember that your Parish Council does need the support of its parishioners when it comes to either approving or refusing a planning application. MBC have the final say and SPC has no right to appeal, only the applicant. So if you get a notice about planning near you, remember to log onto the MBC planning website portal and add your comments either for or against it. You are welcome to attend SPC the planning meetings too.

### Knoxbridge

A good example of this is the Knoxbridge / Fridays entrance off the main road. Fridays have made three applications to create a new road across their property in order to make a safer access. For various planning reasons though, it was turned down twice by MBC. Through the hard work of the locals affected, Fridays and your parish and borough councillors it has just been approved, with conditions to protect the Weald countryside.

### Hen and Duckhurst site

The developers produced their plan for the housing on this site which SPC and parishioners were all concerned about. Effort

was made to try and reduce the amount of housing, provide buffer zones, ensure drainage was correct, as well as access and connectivity. We managed, on plans at least, to get a bit of a buffer zone (not as much as we had argued for) and connectivity. We continue to ask all parties involved to assure us that the drainage is correct and have strongly argued our case at MBC planning meetings. The roundabout at the entrance of the site, off set from the main road has been approved by MBC. SPC continue to keep a close eye on the developers developing plans and how they are updated!

### Roadworks and Gas works

I am sure you are all well aware of the necessary road and gas works that have caused much disruption for us all. A quick look on the Kent highways map of roadworks will show it's happening everywhere in Kent, not that that is any consolation. There is no consultation by Kent Highways with SPC about these kinds of works, we are just informed.

### Parade

It seems that KCC have finished making safe the pavement bricks near the chemist. We are reliably informed that the replacement trees will be arriving in October. The owner of the 'garden' area is allowing the Parish Council to tidy that area too.

## REMEMBRANCE DAY

This year sees a very special anniversary. The Parish will be commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War at 11am on 11 November 2018.

### “At the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918”.

This year the 11th November is on a Sunday. There are a number of events being run on this day including the Village Parade from the Village Centre at 10:15. Various Parish Groups will march along the High Street and finish at the top of the hill outside All Saints Parish Church. This will be followed by our Annual Parish Remembrance Service. Additionally, in 2016 the Parish Council agreed to take part in a celebration called “Battle’s Over - A Nation’s Tribute.” There will be a further Church Service early evening that will involve lighting a beacon. This will be one of over a thousand beacons lit at 7 pm across the country and overseas territories to mark the occasion. It is hoped that many of the village will attend one or more of these events on this special day. Please keep an eye out for further announcements via the Parish Office, Church or Social Media.

There are also plans to place large Poppies on a number of lampposts along the High Street.

## PLAYSCHEME

Once again Play Place have organised a very successful playscheme on behalf of the Parish Council, based at the Primary School.

All of the staff has worked hard to provide a variety of activities using the excellent school facilities in a safe and happy environment. The Parish Council is pleased that our scheme has been well attended.

We are also delighted that the scheme has received a good Ofsted Report. “Well done” to Karen and her team!

## SCARECROW COMPETITION

Well done to Katie Higgins of “Made by Kent” who decided to organise a scarecrow competition to raise money for our local youth groups. Villagers embraced this idea and about forty scarecrow displays were created.

We all had fun finding them and seeing all of the clever ideas of the makers. The winner, chosen by public vote, was “Men at Work”, but every entry was greatly admired. The Parish Council hopes this will become an annual event. Congratulations to all!

## HOT TOPICS

### Road Works

The summer months have been a busy time for Southern Gas Networks. As this Update goes to print it would seem SGN are finishing their work in the Bathurst Road area. Sadly it’s not all over. Plans are afoot to install a roundabout in Marden Road for access into the new estate being built. This is to include (as current plans show) a number of Speed Cushions (road humps) in Marden Road between the lights on the A229 and Pagehurst Road. Early indications are that these works will take several months. Headcorn Road has also suffered its fair share of closures and diversion routes. These look to be coming to an end as all services are now connected or being connected to the new estate behind Hurst Close.

### Sainsbury’s

No update. It’s all very quiet. Both Borough Councillors and the Parish Council are still in contact requesting regular updates.

### Parking

Southeastern have announced a £1.1M upgrade to the car parking at Staplehurst Station. Work on the land adjacent to the current car park started in April and is expected to be completed in the autumn. Along with adapting the existing car park another 300 spaces are expected to be added. This will increase the capacity to around 750 cars.

It seems in every Update parking is being discussed

again. As we come to the end of the school holidays we will see the return of many parking issues around the school. Further discussions are being held with the Parish Council, School Governors and the local authority. We all must be aware of the traffic movements and take it upon ourselves to park in an acceptable position so as not to cause an obstacle for other road users and pedestrians especially disabled, parents with buggies and of course children. Vehicles have been noted with all four wheels on pavements. Whilst the law is not clear on pavement parking the local authority does have the power to take action if they consider the parking to be a danger to others. The Parish Council is liaising with MBC to determine what can be done.

### Parade

As mentioned in the planning section the work to make the red brick area facing the A229 is complete. Trees are to be planted in October. The flowerbeds are mostly clear, but further work remains.

### Community Payback Team

Regular visits continue on Saturdays around the village. Most recently work has been completed on the Jubilee Field. The Parish Council would like to continue to use this valuable resource for as long as possible. If anyone is aware of an area that needs sprucing up (cutting back, digging over or other minor work) please contact the Parish Office.

## THE McCabe DAY CENTRE

The McCabe Day Centre is a multipurpose hall with en-suite kitchen and toilet facilities located within a Sheltered Housing Estate. Owned by 'Golding Homes' (formerly 'Maidstone Housing Trust') it offers a shared facility for local volunteer activity groups to provide social interaction primarily for local elderly and disabled residents. The facility is managed by The McCabe Day Centre Management Group, a volunteer organisation currently chaired by Caroline Highwood. The range of activities provided by the various independent activity groups through the week are as follows:

**Mon:** **Community Hub Afternoon Tea (CHAT)** – 2pm – 4pm open to residents over 55. Contact: Rita – Age UK Local Leader or just turn up! Tel: 01580 890541; rita.agame@hotmail.co.uk

**Tues:** **Age UK Community Hub Lunch Club** 10:30am – 2:30pm. A fee of £11.00 will include a two course lunch, Hot and Cold Refreshments and Snacks and various activities throughout the day. Contact: Age UK Maidstone - Tel. 01622 753618 Website: www.ageuk.org.uk

**Thurs /Sun** **Lunch Club** for over 50's 11:45am - 1:45. pm (Thursdays & every second Sunday in the month.) Lunch is currently £3.00 on a Thursday and £3.50 on a Sunday. Contact: Elaine Martin: 01580 892033.

**Fri:** **The Weald Club for Disabled People Club** (including Lunch) 9:30am - 1:30pm for people who enjoy companionship, shopping trips, visiting places of interest, games and excellent home cooked meals. Transport provided with specially adapted mini-bus to carry wheelchair users with help from our volunteer escorts and support members. Contact: Maggie Weller: 01580 891870 or Ken Collins: 01580 8913

## 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. Dates and times of meetings are also advertised on the Parish noticeboard and website.

### Forthcoming Meetings:

Monday 24th September  
Monday 15th October  
Monday 5th November  
Monday 26th November  
Monday 17th December (North Hall)

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Parish Council would like to thank the Community Events Group for another wonderful fun-filled day on the 30th June at the Annual Fete. While the sun was shining the crowds enjoyed all the stalls and entertainment provided. Additionally, the same group held the Staplehurst 10K a few weeks before. This was very well attended. Our thanks go to all the organisers and marshals as without your support these events would not happen. By the time this is printed the music festival in the Jubilee Field will have happened. Then we can look forward to the Fireworks display in November. It's great to see so many people volunteering their time for these great events. Well done everybody.

# Parish Council Information

### COUNCILLORS

Tom Burnham (Chairman)  
Margaret Ashby  
Joan Buller  
Susan Forward  
Sam Lain-Rose  
Paul Kelly  
Barrett Manning  
John Perry  
John Reardon  
Patrick Riordan (Vice-Chairman)  
Adele Sharp  
Rory Silkin  
Gillian Smith  
Elaine Symes

### CLERK

Mr Mick Westwood

### DEPUTY CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER

Mrs Deborah Jenkins

### PARISH SUPPORT OFFICER

Mrs Jean Terry

### Address:

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

**Email:** clerk@staplehurstvillage.org.uk

**Tel:** 01580 891761

### Opening hours:

9am to 1pm Mondays to Thursdays,  
other times by appointment  
(closed Fridays).

### SURGERIES AT THE LIBRARY

- Borough Councillor Perry's surgery is on the last Saturday of each month, from 10am until noon.
- Parish Council: last Saturday of each month from 10am until noon.
- PCSO Pete Gardner: please check village website for details

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