

Greener Staplehurst Group

Terms of Reference

1. PURPOSE

The Greener Staplehurst Group has been established as a working group of the Parish Council to devise and deliver initiatives to improve the parish environment.

2. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW POINT

These Terms of Reference have been drawn up to guide all members of the Group to ensure the Group's actions align with the objectives and obligations of the Parish Council. They may be reviewed at any time by the Council to ensure they remain appropriate for the requirements of the Council.

3. SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

- (a) Making the village greener. Using planting which considers longevity, water usage and sustainability, the Group will seek to improve the general look and feel of the village. It will introduce wild flower beds, making use of the Parish Council's assets where appropriate and linking up with local groups.
- (b) Engage local business to sign up to 'making a difference through business'. This will involve building knowledge about how they are currently trying to improve their impact on the immediate and wider environment. The Group will seek to assist businesses by providing them with benchmarking figures and tips from other local businesses to improve. The Group will look into helping businesses collaborate to make use of large-scale discounts on packaging to make it more economical for all.
- (c) Engage with local institutions such as nurseries, schools and care homes to share key education packs and ask them to sign up to a 'seeds of change' project – where they look to increase their reduction and recycling efforts. Speak to key members of staff on what they already do but also what could potentially be done in the future. Leverage some existing initiatives the Kent Wildlife Trust has set up to encourage wildlife in gardens or getting outside to appreciate the beauty of nature.
- (d) Work with Maidstone Borough Council on its current projects which include a biodiversity strategy, wildflower meadows and increased tree coverage.
- (e) Tackle littering and fly-tipping with key signage and messaging and by reporting incidents to the appropriate borough council enforcement unit. Work with the Parish Council and the borough council to support the clean-up of the village, encouraging residents to take part in clean-up days.
- (f) Propose to the Parish Council for adoption clear policy covering the environmental aspects of its activities.

Staplehurst Parish Council

- (g) To help reduce the local carbon footprint by undertaking activities that will reduce carbon and promote carbon reduction outlook amongst local residents.
- (h) To review the Parish services funded or potentially funded by the Parish Council. Including, but not limited to Planters, Tree Planting, The Wimpey Fields, Surrenden Playing Field and Allotments.
- (i) To continue to review the management of and development of, or (where the Council does not have the power) influence the authority responsible, Ponds, Verges and the environmental aspects of Footpaths, Bridleways and Public Walkways.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) The Group will consist of residents and Parish Councillors, appointed and ratified by the Council, including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman as ex-officio members. The membership of the Group may be reviewed at any time by the Council.
- (b) Members of the Group acting, claiming to act or giving the impression of acting as a representative of the Group or the Council, must adhere to the Council's policies and procedures, including the Council's Code of Conduct.

5. CHAIR OF THE GROUP

Group members, at the first meeting following their appointment, will agree amongst themselves who will be the Chair of the Group for the following year and will notify such appointment to the Parish Council.

6. REPORTING

The Group will provide copy meeting notes and/or update reports to the Council on a regular basis. Where a Council decision is required, the Group will provide a report, stating its recommendations and rationale, including sufficient detail to enable the Council to make an informed decision.

7. PROGRAMME OF WORKS

- (a) The Group is established as a working group of the Parish Council in accordance with Standing Order 4.4. It may inform, advise and make recommendations to the Council, but it has no power of commitment.
- (b) The Group will bring forward a programme of work and an estimated budget for approval by the Council. Once approved the Group will focus on delivery of the programme of work in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Staplehurst Parish Council

(c) From time to time an item may occur which is not in the approved programme of works. The group can consider the item and report back to Council for approval

These Terms of Reference supersedes all previous agreed Terms of Reference and was adopted by Staplehurst Parish Council on

Date ...11th May 2026.....Minutes...2472/8.5