Newsletter

Chairman's Message

Matthew Theobald

STAPELEY & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

Dear Resident,

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the newsletter. Although we produced a newsletter in June 2020, this was only published online as the distribution company had suspended its activities owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. We are pleased that the company has now re-commenced its delivery schedule and we hope that you enjoy reading the newsletter, but if you have any suggestions, please contact the Clerk.

During these trying times, the community needs to stand together to make sure that we are all as safe as possible. Cheshire East Council offers advice which you can find online at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk or phone the Cheshire East Information Line - 0300 123 5500.

It has been a challenging time for all of us in the parish over the last 8-9 months and many residents will have endured isolation.

We are indebted to the volunteers who stepped forward to help in whatever capacity they could, such as shopping for residents who could not leave their homes. There have also been many examples of informal support where people have performed acts of kindness and support to their friends and neighbours.

The Parish Council has continued to hold its meetings, and under the new regulations, these are carried out remotely, via Zoom and residents are welcome to join these meetings; just click on the link on the agenda which is published three days before each meeting. The next few meetings are 21 December 2020 and then 18 January 2021, 15 February and 15 March. Meetings start at 7.30 pm.

There is a public question time slot on each agenda where you can either ask a question or make a statement.

For those of you who are public-minded, you may be interested to know that there are currently two vacancies on the Parish Council (see inside for more information) and you may wish to observe the December meeting to see how the Council operates. Co-option to these two vacancies will be at the January 2021 meeting.

Please be sure to attend the meeting on Monday, 18 January 2021 at 7.30 pm, as this is the date when the budget for 2021-2022 is approved.

INSIDE THIS EDITION

- Parish Councillor and Ward Councillor contact details
- Restoration of Victorian Orchard
- Restoration of pond adjacent to Clarendon Court
- Website Accessibility
- Parish Council vacancies
- Talbot Way Conservation Area
- Useful contact numbers
- Muller Homes planning development.
- Community Hall - Covid-19 update
- Message to all contractors!
- Re-location of two of the new benches in the parish!
- Parish Council meetings during the pandemic (2020-2021).
- Community Hall regular bookings

Please note this newsletter is also on the Parish Council's website: **www.stapeleyparishcouncil.gov.uk**

Ward Councillors Representing the Nantwich South and Stapeley Ward

Councillor Peter Groves
07597 978 831
peter.groves@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Andrew Martin
07875 555 096
andrew.martin@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Parish Councillors Contact Details

(Total of 10 Seats – 8 filled and 2 vacancies)

John Davenport	01270 618971
Georgina Gwinn	07495 781709
Mike Docker	01270 619855
Jo Hillman (Vice-Chairman)	07766 652 011
Stephen Ford	07718 636 830
Keith Nord	01270 618534
Peter Groves	07597 978 831
Matthew Theobald (Chairman)	07941 495 786

RESTORATION OF VICTORIAN ORCHARD

(This featured in our June 2020 edition, but it is an important project and worth repeating some of the information provided in the on-line newsletter)

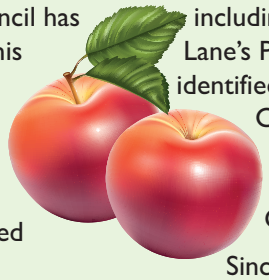
The Cronkinson Orchard (Victorian Orchard) has been highlighted by the Parish Council as being a worthy project for 2020-2021. A total sum of £5,000 was allocated in the budget to enable the ownership of the land to be established, through a title search. That work is now complete, but because of the pandemic, the Council has been unable to make any further progress. For this reason, we are rolling-over this project to the next financial year.

In the Neighbourhood Plan, the orchard was described as "A traditional orchard with numerous species of domesticated apple is located on the Cronkinson estate".

How many residents know of this traditional orchard or have sampled the fruit?

It is about ½ acre in size (0.18 hectare) and is adjacent to the footpath running between Hawksey Drive and the Community Hall.

It contains just over 30 fruit trees, the majority of which are apple trees, as well as four pear trees and two damson trees. When it was surveyed in 2013 by local residents, samples of fruit were taken from each apple tree, where possible, and preliminary identification obtained. Of the 19 apple samples identified, the majority were cookers, including the cultivars Grenadier, Newton Wonder, Lane's Prince Albert, and Arthur Turner. Fewer were identified as eating apples, such as Autumn Pearmain, Court Pendu Plat and Margil. Some were dual purpose apples so can be used for cooking or eating, and others such as Golden Pippin and Golden Spire can also be used to make cider.



Since 2013, the trees, most of which are very old, have continued to deteriorate; most contain dead, diseased and dying wood, and some have fallen over.

Although this dead wood creates a rich habitat for insects and fungi, we will lose a historic aspect of the local landscape if remedial work on the orchard is not undertaken.

We will keep residents informed of progress.

RESTORATION OF POND ADJACENT TO CLARENDON COURT

This was also a project for 2020-2021 and as with the Victorian Orchard, is to be rolled over to 2021-22 for funding.

This scheme was added following an impassioned plea by a resident of Stapeley, at the October 2019 meeting when he asked the Parish Council to do what it could to bring the neglected pond up to an acceptable standard to make it into an attractive conservation area which can be used by residents.

The pond, which is behind Clarendon Court Nursing Home on Peter de Stapleigh Way used to be a healthy pond which was a habitat for the Great Crested Newt and insects such as damsel and dragonflies. There were also small carp in the pond which has now dried up and is filled with detritus of various sorts.

The Parish Council's legal advisers have now completed the title search for this pond, and also for the Victorian Orchard, but has yet to decide on the next steps, and this is principally owing to the pandemic.

As these two projects have been rolled over to 2021-22, it is likely that the Council will consider this further later in this financial year (which ends on 31 March 2021) with the intention of making significant progress on both these projects.

Website Accessibility

Regulations are in force which require public bodies to comply with the Public Sector Bodies (Website and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 by 23 September 2020, or have a plan of action in place to ensure compliance.

The Parish Council commissioned the Website Manager to carry out an audit of its website, following which a statement of accessibility has been published on the website. There are some non-compliance issues and the Website Manager is addressing most of those in the short-term. Other matters may require additional funding and the Parish Council will consider this as part of its budget process for 2021-2022.

PARISH COUNCIL VACANCIES

STAPELEY & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

There are two vacancies for parish councillors. These were notified to Cheshire East Council in February 2020 and although Notices of the Vacancies were published on the website and in the noticeboard inviting registered elections to request a by-election, no election was called. It is, therefore, for the Parish Council to co-opt to the two vacancies.

It is expected that the Council will consider co-option at its meeting on 18 January 2021. Candidates must be present at that meeting.

The process was suspended during the pandemic, but it is permitted for candidates to be co-opted by attending a virtual meeting of the Parish Council. These are held each month via Zoom. You do not need to have Zoom as one of your own apps; all you need to do is click into the link on the Parish Council agenda.

If you are interested in becoming a parish councillor, the following are the qualifications:

- You must be at least 18 years of age at the time of co-option (there is no upper age limit), and:
- be a UK or Commonwealth citizen, or
- be a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, and
- be a registered elector of the parish

There are also some disqualifications which will prevent potential candidates from being considered and those relate to (a) bankruptcy; (b) criminal conviction where the sentence was more than 3 months (even if it was a suspended sentence); and (c) having been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices under election law.

If you would like an informal chat about the vacancy, please call the Clerk (Carol Jones) on 01270 812065.

Candidates are encouraged to observe the meeting to be held on 21 December 2020 (7.30 pm start). This will give you an idea of how the Council operates.

Successful candidates are required to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and the regulations require that this is a 'wet' signature and must be signed in front of either the Clerk or a Councillor. Until the Declaration is signed, the candidates do not become councillors.



TALBOT WAY CONSERVATION AREA

Following a difficult period last year when the conservation area was neglected owing difficulties with contracting arrangements, a new contractor was appointed in March this year (CES which is affiliated to the Cheshire Wildlife Trust).

Work was due to start in the Spring but was delayed owing to the lockdown. It was started in September and up to now, the hedge-cutting and nettle removal works has been completed, and further work was carried out during the week of 14 September 2020 to cut back the on-site bramble patches and to strim the rough grassland/wildflower area.

The cutting back of the Willow and Alder tree next to the pond will be carried out in November/December 2020, following which there will be visits on a six-eight week basis to assess the need/scope of required on-going habitat management and maintenance works.

We hope that residents will be pleased with the work carried out, as this photo demonstrates.

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS:

Cheshire East Council	0300 123 5000
Bus and train times (Traveline)	0871 200 2233
Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefit	0300 123 5013
Electoral Registration	09300 123 5016
Environmental Health and Trading Standards	0300 123 5015
Fly tipping	0300 123 5500
Large scale fly tipping	0800 807 060
Planning and Building Control	0300 123 5014
Planning Enforcement	0300 123 5014
Pot-holes and Highway Maintenance	0300 123 5020
Waste and Recycling	0300 123 5011
Local Waste and Recycling	01270 661527
Pear Tree School	01270 685155
Stapeley Broad Lane Academy	01270 685020
Police – non-emergency	101

MULLER HOMES
DEVELOPMENT OFF PETER DE STAPLEIGH WAY

Residents will be aware that Muller Property has been granted permission to build the first phase of a potential 1100-home "Nantwich South" development on land off Peter de Stapleigh Way (July 2020).

In a 133-page decision notice, the Secretary of State said that he agreed with the planning inspector's report following a second Public Inquiry held over four days back in February 2018.

The Inquiry was held after Muller appealed an original decision by Cheshire East Council to refuse planning permission for the first phase of the development, which amounts to 189 homes and an access road.

As with residents of the parish, the Parish Council is outraged at the decision, and on behalf of the Parish Council, a press release was issued. The following is a summary.

Despite 8 years of intense campaigning by residents, local groups, businesses and Stapeley & District Parish Council itself, leading to two Public Inquiries, thousands of signatures on a petition, thousands of objections, and a robust Neighbourhood Plan being put in place [in February 2018], our community has been silenced by a Government Minister in Westminster.

With the 'stroke of a pen', our community's voice has been silenced by the Secretary of State. The evidence points to government riding roughshod over our community, in favour of political dogma. So much for localism and community decision making!

The Parish Council is extremely saddened by the government's decision to 'drive a bulldozer' through the concerns, desires, and aspirations of everyone in our community, and to what end? This is not what our community said it wanted. This was not what our young people, families, and older people said they needed, to build a life in Nantwich.

To those who speak of the plans for community facilities, a note of caution: experience tells us that promises like 'primary school site; public open space including new village green, children's play area and allotments, green infrastructure including ecological area' often fail to be delivered once development starts. As this development trudges through the 'reserved matters' stage of planning and is eventually built, the Parish Council, and others, will be doing everything they can, to keep this developer to its 'promises'.

The Parish Council gives its heartfelt thanks to everyone who was involved in the 8-year campaign to stop this unwarranted, unsustainable development. The coming together of our community over this issue is an example of the best of community spirit. We can hold our heads up high, proud in the knowledge that we did absolutely everything we could to prevent this situation.

Looking to the future, the Chairman added:

"Now that it is clear the development will go ahead, I call upon the MP for Crewe and Nantwich to step across party lines and join us in pushing for sustainable infrastructure and services to support our community."

COVID-19 UPDATE
STAPELEY COMMUNITY HALL RE-OPENING ARRANGEMENTS

As residents may be aware, the Community Hall has been closed since 23 March 2020. Once the lockdown arrangements were relaxed and various public venues were re-opened, the Parish Council discussed arrangements for the re-opening of the Community Hall at its July, August and September meetings.

A risk assessment has been carried out, and the Council is now aware of the restrictions which must be put in place. This facility is a valuable community asset, and the Council is keen for it to be brought back into use as soon as it is safe to do so.

At its meetings held on 21 September and 19 October 2020, the Parish Council reviewed the latest guidance on the opening of multi-use community facilities and has, reluctantly, decided that the hall cannot be re-opened at this time.

This also means that PCSO Alexis Barrington is unable to hold her regular surgeries at the hall.

This matter will continue to be reviewed at each monthly Council meeting.



Message to all contractors!

The Parish Council is seeking quotations for the following projects:

Community Hall – Fire Alarm Safety

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires that all business premises must have an appropriate fire detection system. Aside from installing smoke detectors, heat detectors, alarm sounders and other devices, it is also imperative to carry out fire alarm tests regularly; otherwise there is no guarantee that the alarms will work during an emergency.

We are seeking an appropriately qualified electrician who can issue a fire alarm safety certificate for the Community Hall at Pear Tree Field, to be retained for the Parish Council's records.

Regulation BS 5839 recommends inspection of the fire alarm system every six months, but some providers advise quarterly services dependent on the size of the premises.

Community Hall – Cleaning Contract

The cleaning contract at the Community Hall is due for review in November/December, and the Parish Council is seeking quotations from interested companies which are able to provide a cleaning and caretaking service as follows:

- Carrying out cleaning to a standard in line with the cleaning specification and securing the building afterwards.
- Observing all relevant health and safety procedures and reporting any matters of concern or potential danger to the Parish Council.
- Clean all building floors by sweeping, mopping, scrubbing or vacuuming and carry out periodic 'deep clean' of the floor in the main hall.
- Cleaning of high corners and skirtings.
- Clean and polish furniture and fixtures.
- Clean inside windows and mirrors, using soapy water or other cleaners.
- Dust furniture, walls, machines, and equipment.
- Clean toilets (men, women, and disabled) and provide toilet rolls.
- Follow procedures for the use of chemical cleaners and power equipment, to prevent damage to floors and fixtures.
- Ensure that all cleaning is in accordance with prevailing Covid-19 regulations.
- Monitor building security and safety by performing such tasks as checking that all electrical sockets and all lights are switched off; all doors and windows are closed; locking the exit doors on leaving the building; and opening hall curtains.
- Move furniture, equipment, and supplies as necessary, either manually or by using the trolleys in the hall.
- Note any defects or necessary repairs required, as soon as they are identified and report them to the Parish Council (via the Clerk).
- Provide own cleaning materials and equipment.
- Legionella testing monthly.
- In consultation with the Clerk arrange for contractors, such as plumbers, heating engineers and electricians, to attend the hall for inspection/repairs to equipment and to meet them on-site.
- Provide an opening and closing service for the private parties at the community hall, all of which are on Saturdays and Sundays, by meeting clients on site and opening half an hour before commencement of the event and closing half an hour after the conclusion of the event, and checking that the hall is left in a satisfactory condition.

Please contact the Clerk if you are interested in submitting a quotation for either of these contracts (contact details on the front page).

RE-LOCATION OF BENCHES

(SECOND DIG LANE AND TALBOT WAY)

As reported in the June 2020 newsletter (only available online at www/stapeleyparishcouncil.gov.uk) the Parish Council is currently trying to make arrangements for the re-location of one bench, namely that which is at the junction of Second Dig Lane with the A51 London Road.

The background to this is that in May 2018, the Parish Council consulted residents via the newsletter, inviting suggestions for the location of six benches in the parish, but unfortunately, no suggestions were forthcoming. The Council, therefore, decided on the locations.

The Council subsequently received two complaints: One from a group of residents near to Second Dig Lane where a bench was placed on the triangular area of grass at the junction with the A51, London Road. Their complaint is that the seat is rarely used, the grass is very rarely mown, and it would be more suitable if this were to be relocated.

The second complaint is from residents on Talbot Way. The bench is in the lawned area which is owned by the Parish Council. The complaint is that there is significant drug activity and anti-social behaviour taking place at this location, causing great disturbance to the area which is a small close community.

A quotation has been sought from Cheshire East Council (CEC) for the removal of the bench at Second Dig Lane, and this is awaited. It will also be necessary for CEC to grant approval for it to be re-located elsewhere, and the removal and re-location need to take place at the same time.

With regard to the bench at Talbot Way, the Police have been asked for their views on the anti-social behaviour. When these are available, the Parish Council will make a decision about whether it should be moved.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS – 2020-2021

Parish Council meetings continue to be held monthly, generally the third Monday in the month, commencing at 7.30 pm.

These are now held remotely, via Zoom. Remote meetings were introduced under S.78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 to enable parish councils to hold meetings remotely until May 2021. At that time, it is expected that there will be an Annual Parish Council meeting (17 May) where the calendar of meetings for 2021-2022 will be approved.

It is also expected that the Annual PARISH meeting will be held on the same evening, prior to the Council meeting. The Parish Meeting comprises local government electors registered for the parish. If present, the Parish Council Chairman must chair the Parish Meeting. In his absence, the Vice-Chairman must preside if he is present; otherwise the meeting must elect its own chairman from those present. A Parish Meeting may discuss parish affairs, and resolutions may be passed which the Parish Council is obliged to consider but not necessarily accept.

As noted elsewhere, members of the public are able to observe those meetings by clicking into the link on the agenda which is published on the website at least three clear days before each meeting (i.e. not counting the day of issue of the agenda and the day of the meeting).

If you need any more information about remote meetings, please contact the Clerk.

COMMUNITY HALL – REGULAR BOOKINGS

The Community Hall was closed on 23 March 2020 and is currently closed. The Parish Council is reviewing the situation each month taking into account the latest Government guidance. In the meantime, residents may be interested to see the schedule of the regular activities, below. These will re-commence when the hall is re-opened.

Day	Times	Activity	Contact	E-mail address
Mon	4.00 – 6.00 pm	Dancing	Jo Smith t/a Miss Jolene	missjolenes@live.co.uk
3rd Mon	7.30 – 10.00 pm (monthly)	Parish Council	Carol Jones	carol.jones@stapeleyparishcouncil.gov.uk
Tues	9.15 am – 10.15 am	Pilates	Wendy McKenna	Wendymckenna1969@gmail.com
	7.30 – 8.00 pm	Intensive workout	Sam Bennett	Saml.bennett@hotmail.co.uk
Wed	9.00 – 10.30 am	Intensive workout	Sam Bennett	Saml.bennett@hotmail.co.uk
Bi-monthly	12 noon – 1.30 pm	Blood Cancer Support Group	Karen Bonell	K.bonell@lymphomas.org.uk
Thurs	4.00 – 5.00 pm	Dancing	Jo Smith t/a Miss Jolene	missjolenes@live.co.uk
	6.00 pm – 7.00 pm	Beaver Scouts	Jo Hillman	stapeleybeavers@gmail.com
	7.00 pm – 8.00 pm	Cub Scouts	Jo Hillman	stapeleybeavers@gmail.com
Fri	9.15 am – 9.45 am	Intensive workout	Sam Bennett	Saml.bennett@hotmail.co.uk
	10.30 – 11.30 am	Dancing	Jo Smith t/a Miss Jolene	missjolenes@live.co.uk
	1.00 pm – 2.00 pm	Dancing	Jo Smith t/a Miss Jolene	missjolenes@live.co.uk
Sat	Daytime available for private parties			
	6.00 – 8.00 pm	Youth Club	Charles Maines Mabyn Meredith	charles.maines@wishingwellproject.net mabyn.meredith@wishingwellproject.net
Sun	Available for private parties			

