

## Delivering for the Eccleshall area

### Community News

*The aim of this Newsletter is to bring together various pieces of topical, but local, news from across the Eccleshall, Swynnerton, Tittensor and Yarnfield areas – and all areas in-between. It is not designed to be an exhaustive list of all the things that I have been involved with nor a list of the ‘most important’ but instead just something informative.*

*The latest Newsletter covers news of several highways schemes being delivered within the local area, updates on progress in making Stafford and the wider area a dementia friendly area, the launch of a pan sport, pan Staffordshire initiative with grass-roots sports clubs and an update on work supporting some of the most vulnerable in the local area.*

#### Traffic Concerns Raised

A lot of people – not just in rural areas - rely on their cars to get around. And with the growth in the number of cars on the highways – and often their speed – local communities often become concerned by the potential impact.

Most communities have raised their concerns with both the Highways team and their local Parish Council to get their support and buy-in.

Road improvements, whether it be in terms of the addition of double yellow lines, speed limit reductions, road layout changes, build-outs, village gateways, additional lineage and signage or flashing speed signs tend to be hard won campaigns over many years, with any improvements undertaken in stages.

At the moment new solutions are being developed in Great Bridgeford, Yarnfield, Swynnerton, Trentham and Tittensor with the addition of flashing vehicle activated speed signs with the local Parish Councils.



*Site visit with Staffordshire County Highways, Borough Councillor Ray Sutherland and the Chair of Seighford Parish Council, Councillor David Price*

On PrimePoint 14 Marston Gate, Eccleshall and Tittensor work is going on with the addition of some new double yellow lines to improve safety and amenity.

And finally a speed limit change is being consulted on to create a new 30mph zone in Norton Bridge, with a 40mph buffer zone.

#### Stafford - Dementia Friendly 2020

Dementia, as an illness, is only just beginning to be recognised as something that will affect many more people going forwards.

Today it affects more than 1% of the population and as we become an aging population, this number is only set to rise.

However by raising awareness of the mental illness, we can help sufferers maintain as close to a normal life, living in their own homes, for as long as possible. Equally we can design future services to take into account the needs of sufferers, to help support them, rather than closing down their interaction with the world outside of their own environment.



Diane Wallace of Northfield Village's Dementia Care centre in Stafford is spearheading the work to make Stafford and the surrounding areas a dementia friendly, caring and supportive environment.

Organisations to sign up to becoming dementia friendly include Staffordshire County Council, Stafford Borough Council, Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group and the Stafford and Surrounds Clinical Commissioning Group, to name but a few.

HMP Drake Hall is the first 'prison service managed' prison in England and Wales to sign up to becoming Dementia Friendly and has undertaken extensive staff training to ensure that anyone with even early onset dementia can be identified, diagnosed and supported.

Communities and organisations can join the '2020 Challenge' by contacting Diane at [dwallace@choiceshousing.co.uk](mailto:dwallace@choiceshousing.co.uk)

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**Spot The Difference**

There are no prizes available for this quick game of ‘spot the difference’ :



*Taken from the highway on B5026 in Pershall, near Eccleshall – on a Saturday in March 2018 and again three days later*

Apart from the difference in weather conditions between the pictures, the clear difference is the fly tipping of a double mattress on the first picture.

The item was reported on the Borough Council’s web-based app on a Saturday afternoon and had been removed by 9am on the Tuesday morning, which is a great example of technology working for all residents.

Yet, whilst this service is flexible and highly responsive, it is disappointing that Council Tax needs to be spent on the needless actions of a few, instead of supporting individual people with greater needs or wider Borough services.

**Creating Partnerships**

Increasingly I spend more and more time working to bring together interested parties to work together to collaborate in specific areas.



*Partnership working  
- with the Governor of HMP Drake Hall*

One of these areas has been with HMP Drake Hall where they support with pre-vetted women, prior to parole, to work at Eagles Park, providing diverse roles, skills and sometimes much needed self-confidence prior to release.

**A Little Bit of Brussels ... Brought to Life**

With less than twelve months to go before the UK formally leaves the European Union, a group of Eccleshall residents recently made the journey to Brussels to see the European Parliament in operation first-hand, as guests of local MEPs Anthea McIntyre and Daniel Dalton.



*Eccleshall residents on a recent trip to the European Parliament in March 2018*

The trip brought to life much of the work that goes on within the European Parliament and certainly shone a light on much of the lesser-known work that goes on.

During the trip people were able to see the Parliament Buildings, a plenary session and voting within the Chamber as well as understand the size and scale of the European Union.



Separately, the County Council has recently launched its “All Party Member Group” (- of which I am a member) manifesto for ‘Staffordshire outside of the European Union’, with this being presented to businesses at a session hosted by the chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership, David Frost CBE and representatives from the Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses.

For Staffordshire, with its focus on smaller businesses, having a manifesto that allows them to thrive in a post-Brexit world will be critical. So having a clear plan, created with input from all stakeholders, helps to start this process.

**ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE ON THE COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILS FOR THE WIDER ECCLESHALL AREA**

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**PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO YOUR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES OR SUGGEST THAT THEY SUBSCRIBE DIRECT**

**For Further Details please visit :-**

[www.jeremypert.co.uk](http://www.jeremypert.co.uk)

**Wider Council Work**

**The Speaker Comes to See Housing Work First-Hand**

In March, Stafford hosted The Speaker of the House of Commons, the Right Honourable John Bercow MP, as he came to see first-hand Stafford Borough Council’s work – and that of its partners – in the daily prevention of homelessness and at its most extreme, street homelessness.



*The Speaker of The House of Commons, the Rt. Hon. John Bercow MP visits Stafford with Jeremy Lefroy MP and partners from South Staffordshire and Shropshire Mental Health Trust and Midland Heart*

The Speaker was keen to understand more about Stafford’s Housing First project – where homeless people are provided with housing and the appropriate support so that they can sustain their tenancies for the long term - as Stafford is one of the first areas in the UK to pilot the approach.

This approach has been used in Finland and the US, where they have been able to achieve long term success, with in excess of 80% being housed two years later.

Stafford has also created a fast-track referral system for those homeless people suffering from mental health problems, so that they can access the most appropriate support available.

Overall, with the support of Stafford’s Community Matron, Stafford has seen a 50% reduction in the number of people sleeping rough locally, against a backdrop of a 15% increase nationally.

This work has been referenced in the House of Lords recently by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

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 Cllr Jeremy Pert  
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Dear Jeremy,

And included an invitation to appear on the BBC’s Victoria Derbyshire national day time TV programme to talk about the work that is being led in Stafford.

However, with rough sleepers on Stafford’s streets still, there is more work to be done as one rough sleeper is one too many. Although the issues surrounding rough sleeping are far more complex than just a debate about the availability of suitable housing.

**Supporting the White Ribbon in Sport campaign**

The White Ribbon Campaign aims to raise awareness about the prevalence of male violence - both physical and mental - against women, and instead to use men as role models to promote healthy relationships. And is active in over sixty countries, since its inception in 1991.



Staffordshire grass-root sports clubs and their respective regional “National Governing Bodies” are looking to come together in a pan Staffordshire pan Sports campaign launch to offer Clubs the opportunity to be at the forefront of creating role models for what appropriate relationships and behaviours to any individual look like.

This high profile launch is scheduled for September 2018, with the likes of Rugby League International Ikram Butt, amongst others, fronting the launch locally.



*From left to right – Ikram Butt of the White Ribbon Campaign, Cllr Jeremy Pert, Judith Carder of Stafford Soroptimists, Dickie James of Staffordshire Women’s Aid and Chris Green OBE of WRC*

Although there is an opportunity for any sports club to express an interest in the campaign in advance of this.

**County Councillor – Community Grants Now Open**

Each year every County Councillor receives £7,500 to support local community based groups to :-

- Be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefit of economic growth
- Be healthier and more independent
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community

**Invitation to Meet with The Housing Minister**

Shortly after the new Housing Minister was appointed, there was an opportunity to meet with Heather Wheeler MP in Westminster to talk about the impact that the funding crisis in short term accommodation is having on the availability of accommodation, the level of needs catered for and the lack of new funded provision.

This particularly affects those fleeing from domestic violence and in need of temporary accommodation for the homeless.

It was a unique opportunity as there were both providers of services, like Staffordshire Women’s Aid and the YMCA of North Staffs, as well as the Local Authority present, providing different perspectives on the same issue, speaking with one voice.



*Discussing the funding of short term accommodation in Westminster with Jeremy Lefroy MP, Danny Flynn of YMCA North Staffs, Dickie James of Staffordshire Women’s Aid and Cllr Jeremy Pert*

The meeting was well received and was just another step in the same discussion to highlight the issue since 2014.

**Your Information**

Thank you for reading this Newsletter, the first one of which was published in 2015. There are clear policies and protocols that are used when publishing this newsletter including an ability to have your name removed from further newsletters and communications and the right of anonymity.

As part of the data policy, I am committed to protecting and respecting your privacy in compliance with EU - General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016/679, dated April 27th 2016. In addition to which you have the following rights with respect to your personal data :

- The right to request a copy of your personal data that is held about you
- The right to request that your personal data is corrected, if inaccurate or out of date

Please feel free to contact me with any data questions or concerns that you have.

Last year successful recipients locally included CASS – the Carers Hub to help set up the monthly Eccleshall Café, The Staffordshire Adventure Service to help set up the new Duke of Edinburgh’s Scheme for Young People in the local area, HeBrews and the Norton Bridge Drop In Cafés to help support their services and Stafford FM.

Anyone interested in applying for a Community Grant, in the first instance, is suggested to contact me directly.

**Supporting Those Impacted by HS2**

HS2 will impact the lives of many residents in not just Staffordshire but the whole of the West Midlands, although with the reading of the latest Bill in Parliament, which was passed with a massive majority, there is now little that can be done to stop HS2 in their tracks.

Instead now the only avenue available is to ensure appropriate mitigation and amendments to the proposals from HS2, through the Parliamentary Petitioning process, which ultimately would involve a trip to London to the Palace of Westminster to appear at Select Committee.



Only those individuals and bodies directly and specially affected by the Bill can object through the Petitioning Process, although given there have only been three Hybrid Bills (Channel Tunnel, Crossrail and HS1) passing through Parliament since 1992, they remain something of an exception to standard procedures.

Locus Standi can be challenged by HS2 Ltd. and the Select Committee, if petitioners are not directly and specially affected by the Bill, which has ruled out my potential petitioning on behalf of residents or communities.

As many petitioners will be footing additional costs through this process, through no design or fault of their own, they can apply for a small amount of financial support from the County Council to help with some of these additional costs, based on local County Councillor support, in those areas where the line goes through.

Details of this financial support scheme can be supplied directly for any Petitioner in the Eccleshall division.

One of the groups being financially supported through this ‘County Councillor-approved’ scheme has been the Stone Railhead Crisis Group, where there has been a grant of £1,000 to support travel and administrative costs to be able to appear at Select Committee to make the case for the relocation of the proposed Railhead between Yarnfield and Stone, to other more suitable locations.