



DELIVERING FOR THE ECCLESHALL AREA

This newsletter has been going since December 2015, and if this is the first time that you have seen it, please send me an email to subscribe electronically to keep up to date with topical news and stories on what I have been up to as the elected representative for the area on both Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Councils, working to support everyone across the Eccleshall, Swynnerton, Trentham and Yarnfield areas – and all areas in-between. This latest newsletter is not designed to be an exhaustive list of all the things I have been involved with nor a list of the 'most important' but instead just something interesting & informative.

In this edition, we talk about :-

- Significant footways works delivered in Great Bridgeford
- So many **GREAT** organisations to be **PROUD** about in our local area, including HM Prison Drake Hall and Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group, who both top national league tables

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Borough and County Councillor Jeremy Pert

Significant Footway Reconstruction Delivered

Working to Secure Improvements

For the best part of ten years Great Bridgeford's residents have been suffering with poor and deteriorating pavements, but without seeing any solution in sight.

The pavements had deteriorated to such an extent that applying a coating over the top—a slurry seal—just was no longer practical as that wouldn't last more than a few months.

Instead what was required was a complete reconstruction of the footway over 2,500m², with repair also taking place to the collapsed highway with re-enforced steel mesh added to the carriageway to strengthen where the road was collapsing. At the same stage, additional highways gullies were installed to improve highway drainage and all existing gullies were checked to ensure that they were working properly.

These works over a four and half



Highways teams working on the footways in Great Bridgeford

month period have cost in excess of £350,000 and involved four to seven men on site over the period.



The works in Great Bridgeford will be finished by the end of January 2020 and it is hoped that these will last for at least the next thirty years

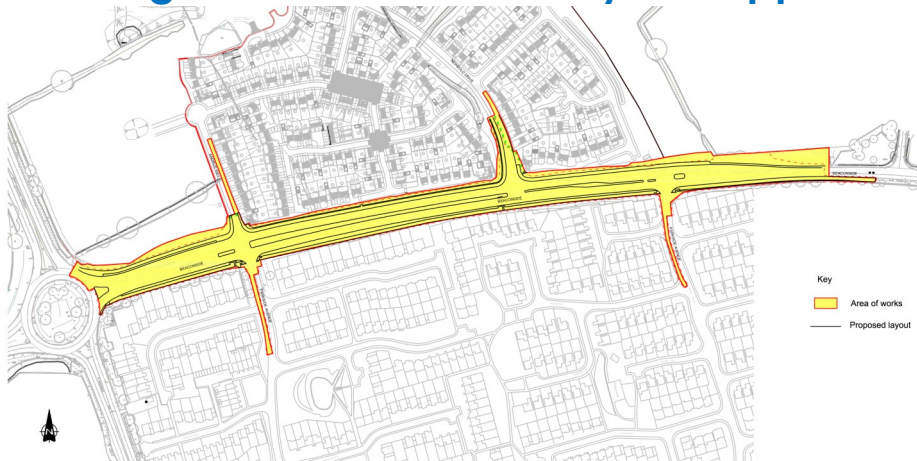
This is just one of only two footway improvement schemes being undertaken across the whole County this year - all 3,950 miles of roadway.

A similar scheme was undertaken two years ago in Tittensor and that was the catalyst for them to enter the "Best Kept Village" awards, to such success.

There are a number of other areas badly in need of reconstructive pavement works and trying to get these resolved is an ongoing battle.

Going forwards, pre-emptive work - slurry sealing—has to be the answer as it costs £5—12 / m² versus up to eight times that for complete reconstruction, provided the surface has not deteriorated too far.

Dualling of Beaconside Finally to Happen from January 2020



With the new housing on the top side of Stafford it was always planned to put in an additional lane each way to help improve the traffic flow.

These works—including some along the A34—have been due to start for much of the last eighteen months, but the final hurdles to starting have now been resolved and work is due to start on site as early as the end of January 2020, with works lasting 36 months.

With the development of houses at Marston Grange on the top side of Beaconside, significant highways improvements are planned to start at the end of January 2020 and will last 36 months

Potholes — please report them

The best way of getting a pot hole fixed is to report it online or via telephone—it will be assessed and then prioritised

I have reported plenty of pot holes over the last three years—and some of the worst ones were on the minor road network.

The ones linking Whitgreave and in Little Sugnall were some of the worst, as was the A519 at Cotes Heath.

Despite continual discussion on how best to get potholes fixed,

the message is not fully understood - that pot holes won't be looked at if the County Council is not aware of them.

Today there are not the reactive crews to go and survey each and every road in the County (- all 3,950 miles of them, 86% being minor roads). Instead country lanes are only surveyed

annually, so unreported problems could go a maximum of a year without being picked up.

Reporting highways faults can be done online at :-
<https://apps2.staffordshire.gov.uk/web/reportfault/#divSelectionHeader>

Or by telephone at :
0300 111 8000

Reminder of Riparian Land Owner Responsibilities



With concentrated rainfall falling on what was already saturated land this Winter has seen some significant flooding in local communities, with many homeowners left feeling the misery and desperation caused by flooding.

However, land owners have a responsibility to properly maintain their ditches and water courses. These responsibilities have been laid out and shared with Parish Councils so that **everyone can be reminded of their Riparian land owner responsibilities** before tragedy strikes again.



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HM Prison Drake Hall, Eccleshall—is recognised nationally

There are high performing institutions locally that are recognised nationally — many of whom don't shout about their achievements so these can go largely unnoticed.

Her Majesty's Prison at Drake Hall is just one of those organisations, employing 172 people (FTEs) locally but it recently was adjudged to be the top performing closed prison in the country.

HMP Drake Hall was also the first prison service managed prison in England and Wales to become dementia friendly.

The prison recently had their chaplaincy audited and in 26 categories with three marks in each category only dropped one point overall.

This year the prison became the first in the UK to open 'its gates' to members of the public to visit its gardens, as part of Eccleshall's Open Gardens weekend. And it actively works with Staffordshire Women's Aid, Stafford Soroptimists as well as the WI, amongst so many others, to support its women with rehabilitation, education and skills.

The prison has created an enabling environment so that it can spend more time on rehabilitating prisoners, preparing them for life outside of prison, with as many as 10% of the establishment working in either the voluntary sector or paid capacity.

It was the first prison to establish a link with Halfords—the car and bike retailer—creating a Bike Academy within the prison to give the women new skills and an offer of a paid job on

release, locally to them, if they meet certain standards.

What between the Borough Council's housing team working to get the women housing on release, if required, and having a job as well—it is a great example of working together to offer people the best chance.



HMP Drake Hall Governor Carl Hardwick at the installation of the new 'Pedestrians in road' signs

For a long while, visitors to HMP Drake Hall, including many prisoner's families have been concerned by the safety of crossing from the visitors car park on one side of the road to get across to the prison.

By working with the County Council, these highways concerns have been alleviated by installing improved road-side signage to warn motorists of the danger, as well as improved lining on the road with 'Slow' markings.

London House Wins Best Indian Restaurant at London Awards

London House Indian Restaurant has been a popular fixture on the High Street in Eccleshall for the past eighteen years, serving customers from across Staffordshire with high quality Indian cuisine.

Back in November, it also demonstrated that it could more than compete on the national stage by winning CurryLife's "Best Indian Restaurant of 2019" award.

Winning such an accolade, judged by the industry is as high a compliment that London House could be given and shows some of hard work consistently over many years has paid off.



Mahbub Miah, Sir William Cash MP and London House owner, Mohid Miah at the Awards



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Sancerre Grange Play Area Opens at last, after 'Final Push'



The Bovis Play Area on the new Sancerre Grange housing estate in Eccleshall, where it has taken eighteen months to get the developer to finally open the play area

Legal agreements—commonly known as Section 106s—are regularly used in the planning system to require developers to put in community facilities to meet the needs of the new estates that they build. However no one expected the play area on the Sancerre Grange estate in Eccleshall to take eighteen months of wrangling to be opened.

In the end, despite conversations at the highest level with the developer, emails, face to face meetings, false promises and many false dawns, the local press made all the difference. Their decision to run the story across their front page was picked up by Bovis's Group Chief Executive and within days the works required to open the area were undertaken, it was lucky that he saw the article ! Unfortunately, it's not stopped raining since for families to fully enjoy the new area.

Eccleshall Becomes the Third Parish to Pick up SID Advice



Installation of Speed Indication Devices in Eccleshall

Back in October 2019, Eccleshall Parish Council became the third Parish Council locally, following Great Bridgeford and Swynnerton to react to local residents concerns about the speed of traffic in their area, by installing mobile Speed Indication Devices (SiDs).

A guide has been completed to help any Parish Council locally interested in installing their own devices to help share

best practice and to save every Parish from having to invest significant time and effort in understanding the issues and options.

This guide has been shared across the County now, with many local areas picking up the resource. And is similar to the generic Highways Cost booklet and now the Riparian Land Owners Rights and Responsibilities booklet produced.

£20,000 Targeted at Gully Emptying locally



Gully emptying has been prioritised to get as many longstanding blocked gullies working

January 2019 started with an additional £20,000 coming into the local area to support additional Highways maintenance.

This one-off money has been used to target those gullies that have been blocked for many years, could potentially be the source of localised flooding or where gullies needed linking into the local drainage system.

Works have been undertaken in Chebsey, Cotes Heath, Creswell Grove, Croxton, Eccleshall, Standon and Swynnerton, amongst a whole host of places locally. This may have reduced some flooding locally.

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Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group — Officially Outstanding



Stafford College merged with Newcastle College in 2016 and has seen £12.5m of investment in facilities and equipment in the last three years

The Group is the only College in the country to be rated as Outstanding under the new framework and is the only College in 10 years to be rated as Outstanding in every inspection category, making the College one of the top education establishments in the Country.

Since the merger of Stafford College with Newcastle College to form NSCG, there are many things that the students have seen, not least the introduction of an A Level syllabus, the investment of £12.5m in new computer technology, robotics and a new "STEM" centre.

But the official verdict of how the transformation has progressed was delivered in November by OFSTED when they adjudged the Colleges Group to be **OUTSTANDING**.



OFSTED rated the College Outstanding

Tree-mendous Result in confirming Tree Preservation Order

Tree Preservation Orders are a way for particularly well-established and notable trees to be protected from land owners who suddenly find them an inconvenience.

Taylor Wimpey recently fought the application to apply Tree Preservation Orders to a range of trees on land below Shaws Lane in Eccleshall, on land that they have an option to purchase on.

However, following many representations from interested members of the public and myself, as local Ward Member, Taylor Wimpey's appeal was dismissed and the order was confirmed, protecting the trees for many generations to come.

At a time when we need to become Carbon Neutral, removing trees seems to be the wrong thing to do.



Members of the public after the Tree Preservation Order was confirmed, celebrating that the trees will remain part of the local skyline

Bringing Empty Homes 'Back into Use' features on ITV News

With the level of new houses being built across the whole of Stafford Borough, leaving properties empty for long periods of time does not seem sensible, particularly when some of these properties have been empty for more than ten years, being left to decline and decay slowly.

So bringing empty homes—there are about 670 in the Borough—back into use is a renewed focus within the Borough's Housing strategy, as often these homes are the source of community concern about anti social behaviour, infestations or general safety and security.

By offering suitable incentives and support it is planned that 50 problematic empty homes will be brought back into use every year over the next four years, with this story being picked up by ITV Central news and featured in October. **If you are concerned by an empty property, please contact me.**



An item on bringing long term empty homes back into use was featured on Central News in October 2019



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Councillor Jeremy Pert is the elected member to Staffordshire County and Stafford Borough Councils for the area west of Stafford over to the border with Loggerheads and as far north as Trentham and most of the areas in-between (- for the exact area please see website—www.jeremypert.co.uk).

I have been an elected Borough Councillor for the past nine years and prior to that was a Parish Councillor for ten years on Eccleshall Parish Council. I am the Cabinet Member for Community & Health on the Borough Council and Cabinet Support Member for Community for Stafford Area at County.

I am heavily involved with numerous community groups including Eccleshall Eagles Junior Football Club, Stafford Together, Stafford United Charities, etc.

For more general details and work please visit www.jeremypert.co.uk

Eccleshall Community Deal Consultation Results

A plan outlining how Eccleshall might look over the next ten or twenty years was created to generate local Eccleshall residents views over the summer. And boy did it do that !

There were 1,400 plans delivered locally with over 300 responses received (22.6% response rate) with over 1,000 comments across a whole variety of subjects made—from car parking through to cobbles and housing. In the end 80% of respondents felt engaged enough to make a useful comment or two.

There were a number of clear themes—that most people thought having a plan was a good idea, with only 4% against the idea.

The analysis of the responses will no doubt continue for a while to come, but it is clear that most people are concerned about car parking in town, significant numbers



Staffordshire's Rural Crimes team, including trainee Police Dogs at this year's Eccleshall Show

think that the town has either seen too much development or sufficient development and that there is a need to support the delivery of new public sector infrastructure.

Anyone who left their email address to be kept up to date with progress should have received the summary of the results.

Four Dreaded Letters – GDPR (and Your information)

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.

**Representative
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