



DELIVERING FOR THE ECCLESHALL AREA

This newsletter has been going since December 2015, and usually it focuses on topical news and stories of what I have been doing as the elected representative on Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Councils. It covers stories supporting individuals to those that benefit wider communities. It picks up immediate concerns as well as those built up over many years, that I have tried to have a positive impact on and resolve.

In these uncertain times, the last edition focused on some of the local groups working to support neighbours, streets, or wider communities in the response to the Coronavirus pandemic, with some of the groups involved contributing articles as a 'guest edition'. *In this edition, some of the groups receiving COVID grants from me as a County Councillor have volunteered some articles, which detail their work to support everyone in the community to stay safe, as well as some of the Coronavirus challenges.*

There are many challenges ahead as we battle this virus together, please take care and stay safe, supporting friends and neighbours and with everyone's help and support we can get through this together.

In this edition, we talk about :-

- So many great support groups working in their communities to support those who most need it

There are ways of contacting them to volunteer or donate as these groups continue to work in response to the pandemic

Borough and County Councillor Jeremy Pert

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant Thanks Everyone for their Efforts throughout the Response to the Pandemic

from Mr. Ian J, Dudson CBE KStJ, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Staffordshire



The Lord-Lieutenant is HM The Queen's personal representative in the County. He represents Her Majesty on a wide variety of occasions which merit Royal support and which celebrate significant achievement in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

The Lord-Lieutenant works across the County, with his Deputy Lieutenants, to promote Staffordshire and to help it become a better place to live and work.



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The innovation, collaboration, courage and selflessness shown by so many across the County during the COVID-19 pandemic has been truly inspirational and uplifting.

As Her Majesty The Queen's representative, I would like to thank you for the wonderful contribution you have made to the County during these extraordinary and challenging times.



Mr Ian Dudson CBE KStJ
Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire

Mr Ian Dudson CBE KStJ
Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire



Delivering the Response to Domestic Violence

from Dickie James MBE, Chief Executive Officer, Staffordshire Women's Aid

Being the CEO of Staffordshire Women's Aid has brought many challenges over the years but 2020 just may be the one we look back on with most gratitude.

This may seem a strange thing to say given the impact that Covid-19 has had on all communities around the world.



Like many other charities, ours was affected in so many direct ways; our fundraising events being cancelled, staff and volunteers needing to be shielded, those in our care having to isolate whilst already living stressful lives. But perhaps unique to us and most worrying was - and is - the fact that so many in our community would be even more trapped and controlled through the lock down.

And so I would like to pay tribute to the many people across our county (and wider) who have given so much invaluable support to me personally, to the staff team, our incredible volunteers and most importantly, the women and children we protect and support.

Like other organisations, the way we work has changed; remote working, home working, being creative with our fundraising, working our way around the changing advice from Government whilst keeping everyone safe.



We have a refuge for 12 families, but we also support so many more out in the community, including a women's clothes and food bank. To sustain this, we work tirelessly to fundraise. Back in March we had to stop all dropped off donations and instead we launched an online fundraiser on JustGiving - [Stay Home Stay Safe](#) - which raised an incredible £4,425.

We had 169 supporter leaving us such incredible messages – our gratitude is not just for the financial donation, but for the community around us and the huge boost this gives to the women we support.



The national picture for victims of domestic abuse has been covered widely in the press and social media.

The increase in messages and calls is certainly mirrored in our organisation. Our 24/7 helpline remained open every day, operated by a team of highly trained staff and volunteers. As modifications to the phone service and staffing were made, the cost of this service increased.

And then we had some fantastic news in the form of 4 additional homes to add to our 12 existing refuge accommodation.

That was the good news – the challenge was how to make them habitable. And once again our local supporters rallied round. Another [Just Giving](#) appeal raised £1,000 and we received other support from local business; Amazon, Tesco, Severn Trent Water, Nationwide as well as local community and voluntary organisations.

We hope to share more details over the coming months when we move our families in to their new homes.

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Delivering the Response to Domestic Violence (continued)

from Dickie James MBE, Chief Executive Officer, Staffordshire Women's Aid

I would like to use this opportunity to give a special thank you to Jeremy Pert. Jeremy has been a huge support to our organisation over many years and has raised awareness of the work we do and helped us to secure much needed funding and other resources on many occasions.

We are immensely grateful to Jeremy and his colleagues across Staffordshire County Council for the recent support via their Covid-19 Support Grant. This money specifically enabled us to keep our phone lines going as well as topping up our food supplies and contributing to essential items for our 4 new homes.

In the coming months, as restrictions ease, we expect to see a surge in the need for our support. We will also be launching a new countywide service for victims of sexual violence which will be called 'Survive'. We know this is one of the most challenging areas of our work, but we also know that with the backing of our local communities we will rise to this challenge.



From November 2018, at the visit of the then Housing Minister, Mrs. Heather Wheeler MP, and Stafford's MP at the time, Jeremy Lefroy

For more information about us please check out our website :
www.staffordshirewomensaid.org/

Telephone : 0300 330 5959 - 24 hour helpline

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant's Letter of Thanks

from Mr. Ian J, Dudson CBE KStJ, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Staffordshire

" In my capacity as Her Majesty The Queen's personal representative in this county I am endeavouring to express, on behalf of the people of Staffordshire, gratitude to all who have contributed to the fight against Covid-19.

I would like to recognise all contributions, in whatever form they have taken, those working in healthcare, all who have helped provide support in communities and all those who have continued to provide key services throughout this awful pandemic.

We have produced this 'Thank You' card (on Page 1) which I sincerely hope can be seen by as many of these individuals as possible.

Clearly however, I need some help to achieve this, hence this letter.

It would be fantastic if every Ward or Parish, every NHS Hospital and Trust, every Care Home, Hospice, Doctor's Surgery, every School, University and College, all the different Faith Groups, the Crown and Magistrates Courts, Prisons, Refuse collection organisations, Utility companies, Funeral Directors, Supermarket regional offices, Post Office for postal workers, Businesses involved in supporting the fight against the pandemic, all the uniformed Emergency Services and of course as many of the Voluntary and Charitable organisations as possible could receive at least one card and ensure that all their units and individuals can have sight of it."



Ian J Dudson CBE
HM Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire



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Scrubs for the NHS, Stoke — Stafford and Eccleshall

from Janet Markwell, Owner of The Corner Patch, Eccleshall

Lockdown at the end of March certainly didn't mean I was sitting bored at home. Somehow, shortly after the country was locked down, I found myself as one of the organisers of the local Scrubs4Stoke campaign.



Hospitals were short of scrubs as more staff were needing these loose, washable tops and trousers, so volunteers were being recruited to sew these in their own homes. I own The Corner Patch, a fabric and haberdashery shop in Eccleshall, so I was asked if I was able to source the fabric to make these scrubs and to find people to sew.

After putting out an appeal via social media, I was contacted by over 250 people from the local area who were offering to sew, and donations were flooding in. Then hospital staff also needed laundry bags, hats, headbands; smaller items that could be made by those who weren't confident about making the scrubs. Neither was it just hospital staff; requests came from care homes, community nursing teams, GPs, dentists and more.

Financial donations came from individuals, local businesses and organisations, including from Staffordshire County Council. Over £4000 was received and spent on the purchase of fabric. I spent many hours measuring, cutting and packing this fabric for distribution to those sewing, and collecting the completed items. We also used raided our own fabric supplies and begged sheets, duvet covers, thread etc. from friends and neighbours. If you visit our hospitals you may see some very bright and

cheerful scrubs being worn!

When the group was disbanded some weeks later we had sewn over 1100 sets of scrubs, plus countless laundry bags, scrub hats and head covers and ear savers (staff found that the backs of ears get very sore from wearing facemasks through a whole shift, and many solutions were devised to solve this problem).

Every item was donated to those working in the front line and was very gratefully received.

Being busy and occupied, and feeling that they were doing something to help, was hugely beneficial for many people and helped them cope through these strange times; that was something I heard many times from people who were sewing. Feeling that you are doing something positive to help gives back a sense of control in a world that seems to have gone crazy.



And then just as things were beginning to wind down, face coverings became required. What a good use for all those offcuts of fabric from the scrubs!!

Shops were able to reopen in mid-June so I went back to the 'proper job' for a rest!

For more information about The Corner Patch please check out our website :

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Dementia Support in North Staffordshire

from Gaynor Morton, Approach Staffordshire
Approach is a local specialist dementia charity who support local people with a diagnosis of all types of dementia and their carers.

Prior to lockdown we ran :-

- Day care groups in Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands
- 1-2-1 support for people with dementia thus providing some respite for their carers
- Carers Cafes
- Carers training sessions and provided advice to carers on a variety of topics

However, all of our group activities had to close as we entered lockdown at the end of March 2020.

Since then we have developed and adapted our services to support carers of people with a diagnosis of dementia. We operate a telephone helpline and have supported our own carers and service users during this time as well as many new enquires and requests, many of whom have not actively requested support previously.



Training sessions were moved to an online platform via Zoom and a series of 8 one hour sessions in a roll on / roll off formula developed for carers to access sessions which are of most interest or use to them or attend all 8 sessions, factsheets have been prepared to accompany each session giving more hints, tips and advice. The feedback from these sessions has been excellent.

We have developed activity packs to take out to carers to use with their loved ones which include a large variety of topics and associated activities according to their interests or hobbies, for example, gardening, music, football, crafts, art, local history

and many, many more. We have hosted singing and reminiscence sessions on Zoom which have been very well received.



Our 1-2-1 service is restarting as of 1st September 2020, all staff have attended 2 days of training and will be using PPE with all service users, initially it will be home based social activities, going for a walk or accessing suitable venues within walking distance observing all social distancing procedures which may progress onto going out in a car as conditions and Government guidelines allow.

The restarting of this service has been very welcomed by carers some of whom have not had a break or any respite from a caring role in 5 months and many of whom just want a couple of hours to themselves once a week. Unfortunately, we have observed major changes and deterioration in abilities and skills of people with dementia during lockdown.

We are planning to relaunch our carers support services in the next few weeks, we are not able to open the Carers Cafes at the present time, but are looking to have an appointment based information and advice session in the new Dementia Centre at Trent Vale or at the Lodges at Dougie Mac Hospice for carers who want a face to face discussion or assistance with filling in forms.

Approach continues to develop other areas within dementia care for the present time and for the future and is grateful for the financial support from Staffordshire County Council to adapt our services to support people in our community.

For more information about us please check out our website :

www.approachstaffordshire.co.uk

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Facing rising demand but leaving no one without support

from Linda Allbutt, founder of Period Power

Approximately three years ago I started a charity called Period Power whose core remit was to address the issues surrounding period poverty and to help women and girls to access the correct and safe period products.



During these three years we have supported over 220 schools and 140 foodbanks and charities throughout Staffordshire and the West Midlands with supplies of period products.

This has been possible with funding from many organisations, such as our local Borough Council in Stafford.

However, since the onset of Covid-19 we have had to respond to a massive increase in demand for our services and for an increase in the types of products we supply. We have responded in a very positive way and have, to date, never refused a request for help.

We have been very fortunate in being granted funding from many organisations such as The National Lottery, Staffordshire Community Foundation and Staffordshire County Council's COVID 19 support fund through County Councillor Jeremy Pert, amongst others, and without this support would not have been able to work at the rate needed.

As a charity, we have been overwhelmed at the public support in our area to go the extra mile to help the most vulnerable in our

communities and to make sure that nobody "falls through the cracks" and is left alone.



Hopefully, when we at last get through this pandemic, it will have taught us all to take care of each other on a daily basis and not to take anything for granted again.

I hope that we will come through this a stronger community and a stronger country.

For more information about Period Power please contact Linda Allbutt and check out our details online : www.periodpower.co.uk
Email : periodpower2017@gmail.com

Telephone : (07895) 361202

Details for The Community Foundation for Staffordshire, who regularly distribute funds to voluntary sector community groups, are :-

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www.staffsfoundation.org.uk/grants/
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Adapting to COVID-19

from Stephen Ream, Director, Re-Solv

Based in Stone, Re-Solv works directly with local communities to provide early intervention and prevention work around substance misuse prevention and mental health, in partnership with Stafford Borough Council.

We are a small national charity with over 35 years' experience in this field. In recent years we have delivered prevention work in schools and with local community groups to increase knowledge about substance misuse and to help local people improve their mental health.

Re-Solv

The demand for our services has been heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic - with a rise in anxiety, stress and mental health issues seeing some people turn to less healthy coping strategies.

When the Covid-19 lockdown hit at the end of March, like many other organisations, we had to figure out very quickly how to deliver our service under the new restrictions.

It proved to be a productive disruption as we are now able to deliver our prevention workshops and other outreach activities remotely through Zoom. Although remote delivery of outreach work is not a perfect substitute for face to face communication, it is an important additional tool that we can use to reach as many people as possible.

In addition, Dan Gibbons, who delivers work across the Borough, has produced a range of digital resources that are available on our

website. For example, Dan has created:

- a short recorded session on good decision making aimed at young people aged 10 to 11 ([you can watch here](#))
- some quick tips on ways to manage and improve your emotional wellbeing during these difficult times. ([you can watch here](#))
- and also a prevention video on the misuse of nitrous oxide ([you can watch here](#)).



Gases, aerosols, petrol, glues, solvents, poppers, laughing gas...

We're here to help.

Thanks to County Councillor Pert's support for our grant application from Staffordshire County Council's Covid-19 Support Fund we've been able to deliver additional work to support people struggling with the effects of the lockdown.

We've worked with local counsellor Julie Tanner from '[On With My Life](#)' to develop a new resource aimed at helping alleviate the effect on mental health of the enforced isolation of lockdown. The resulting leaflet has been printed and distributed across the Borough.

If you'd like a copy of this leaflet or want to find out more – **please just get in touch !**

If you would like any additional information or support you can visit our website or contact Dan at Re-Solv.

Stay safe and well !
The Re-Solv team

For more information about us please check out our website or contact Dan :

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Chebsey Parish Council's response to help support its Parishioners during Covid-19

from Margaret Ainsworth Hickman,
Chair, Chebsey Parish Council

As a Parish Council we tried to be pro-active in the wake of Covid-19, hence we delivered a letter to every property in the parish highlighting the support we were offering to those who were self-isolating or unable to get out and needed support, this included running errands, collecting prescriptions, shopping or even just making a friendly phone call or help with dog walking



We asked local parishioners if they were happy to volunteer in the parish, from this, volunteers were allocated 2 or 3 people.

We negotiated for the local milkman to take on additional customers for door step deliveries

We set up a weekly fruit and veg. order for the whole parish, ordered Monday, delivered Wednesday.

We advised parishioners of a potential weekly / daily newspaper delivery service.

We arranged for a weekly delivery on a Saturday from Perry's of Eccleshall, award winning Master Butchers and Game Dealers.

We asked residents who had on-line orders to let us know if they had any spare capacity so we could order hard-to-source items for other residents.

We arranged to bulk buy freshly milled flour, also sourced where residents could get fresh yeast to make their own bread

We negotiated a weekly wine, beer and spirits delivery to the parish.

We asked for volunteers to sew scrubs for Stafford and Stoke NHS and for those unable to sew requested that they consider a donation towards the purchase of vital material.

We informed residents of Eccleshall Cares, another local group who offer support like ourselves but with a more formal structure

What was the response

Up to writing we have supported 872 community requests, made up as follows: 422 general requests which include shopping, collecting prescriptions, running errands etc., 361 fruit and veg orders and 89 flour requests - ordering a total of 426.5kgs of unbleached white and wholemeal flour.

We believe we made a huge difference to our community and many parishioners have sent personal notes thanking us for our endeavours.

The Way Forward

With the changes to the Covid-19 restrictions being revised and lifted many parishioners have recently found increased confidence to regain an element of normality within their lives, thus the requests for help and support have now significantly reduced, although a small number of individuals still need our support at times.

We have been able to continue with the weekly fruit and veg delivery, albeit in a slightly different format so as to remove the administration input from the Parish Council. The doorstep milk delivery also continues as does the weekly meat and wine / beer and spirits delivery. Offley Mill have also agreed to supply flour to those parishioners who wish to order directly from them.

As rural services have declined over the years it is really promising and encouraging to see an increase in services, long may this continue. It is also important to support those local businesses that went the extra mile to support vulnerable individuals and communities. **For more information and details on the Council please visit : www.chebseyparishcouncil.org.uk/**

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Getting Our High Streets Open and Trading Safely Again

If the High Street needed anything to undermine its progress further in their fight to remain relevant and to compete against the online market place, the Coronavirus has dealt it a cruel hand.

With many unable to trade during lockdown, those most innovative sought new ways of serving people or sought out new markets to serve, just to keep afloat.

It was with this entrepreneurial spirit that many High Street premises started to re-open from Monday 15th June 2020, having adapted to 'the new normal'.

Make it | **Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire**

So it was with this in mind that Eccleshall was featured in a film made by the "Make it Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire" organisation to help promote the re-opening of Staffordshire's High Streets, showing Eccleshall's ability to safely welcome customers old and new.

Well done to retailers [Spencer the Jeweller](#), [Bethan Ward of Eccleshall](#) and [Perrys of Eccleshall](#) for being so proactive and sharing their experiences of what they had practically done to keep customers and staff safe.

Additionally, Stafford Borough Council has recently agreed to officially recognise Eccleshall as one of its key towns for support and focus from its Economic Development team alongside the existing centres of Stafford and Stone.

Thank you to Everyone Supporting the Efforts—so what did we learn

The first part of the pandemic has had a huge effect on our daily lives and as we learn to live with the virus, at least until a vaccine is found, we are about to start to see the economic impacts of the pandemic affect more and more people in our communities.

This is very likely to be people who have not seen themselves as vulnerable before and have not needed the help and support of others around them.

Recently I took part in a video conference with community leaders from right the way across



Make it Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire video to showcase what has been done in Eccleshall to allow customers to shop safely—[watch here](#)

This should give Eccleshall greater attention, just at a time when we need everybody supporting local businesses as they come out of the pandemic.

The Borough Council has also been awarded money by the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (the LEP) to help support these three local High Streets.



Meanwhile, during the pandemic, the Borough Council delivered business support grants that totalled over £25m across 1,839 businesses across the whole of the Borough.

the world to see how the disease has affected them and their communities and also what the responses have been.

This has been one of half a dozen initiatives I've undertaken to assess lessons and learnings, both locally and internationally.

Another one has been a short video that has been made — [available on my YouTube channel](#)—which looked at the learnings locally from the pandemic and how the aftermath is likely to affect communities going forwards.

It can [be watched here](#).



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DELIVERING FOR THE ECCLESHALL AREA

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 Chair of the County Council's Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee.

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

Let's Recognise those Community Champions

This year's Community Awards will take place virtually over a whole week, with people being encouraged to be as creative as possible with their supporting material for nominations for people and groups that they want to recognise—for being consistent 'Community Champions'.



Nominations are now open and will remain open until 23rd October 2020, with further details available on the Borough Council's website at :

www.staffordbc.gov.uk/communityawards

Nominations need to be sent to communityawards@staffordbc.gov.uk

What better way to recognise the efforts of so many heroes, operating in such different and difficult circumstances to life pre-COVID, than to nominate them for a 2020 award.



**Winners of Community Awards in 2019
- Stafford Litter Heroes**

Categories include

- Sports & Leisure
- Community Action
- Environmental Impact
- Social Wellbeing
- Local Hero

Let's recognise all those who supported everyone in our communities throughout all of the year

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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