



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. It also picks up some important developments in the local area.

August is a time when many young people receive news that determines some of their futures for the next few years, with their exam results. Often it is a period of great anxiety, followed by serious celebrations as the range of opportunities open up in front of students. This edition picks up on some of the investments being made in the Borough to help ensure that our young people can access the best quality education here locally in the Borough, whether it be at the Outstanding Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group or at Staffordshire University—and some of the developments that they are delivering to take Stafford to the next level.

It would seem that labour shortages across much of the World are something to be with us for the next five or ten years, so using technology and innovating—much like the use of virtual meetings over the last two year—has to be one way forward.

Borough and County Councillor Jeremy Pert

This edition covers :

- NSCG's New Institute of Technology development
- Eccleshall flood alleviation work
- Support during the cost of living crisis
- Road to Stafford closed for week
- New M6 signs
- Norton Bridge Planning application refused
- Community Awards & Funding
- Shire Hall re-opens for Business
- Staffordshire University's investment in Health innovations centre

New Institute of Technology to come to Stafford's Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group campus

Education is probably the only sure fire way of changing people's lives for the positive.

So to see £50m being spent on education facilities in the County Town supports the aspiration of bringing more and better paid, high tech jobs into the Borough.

The government announced back in April

2019 the creation of a new tier of education—Institutes of Technology (IoTs) - which were to be skills focused and fitted the gap between Further Education (16—18 year olds) and Higher Education (18 years +). This would be at Levels 4, 5 & 6, but linked to industry as part of a £290m investment in building the skills for the future.

The initial 12 IoTs were announced on launch and the final 9 were confirmed in December 2021. Given the geographical spread the IoTs are meant to be semi-regional.

Therefore for the Outstanding Newcastle

and Stafford Colleges Group (NSCG) to secure one of the remaining IoTs is a huge opportunity for education and the County Town, and coming so



Stafford is to benefit from an Institute of Technology, which will open in Autumn 2024 and will fill the gap between FE & HE

close to the development of the new £28m Skills & Innovation Centre on the main Stafford campus is a huge achievement to benefit all our young students locally.

The Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire IoT will widen participation in targeted Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) areas, with a specific focus on manufacturing and engineering across a wide range of specialisms, including the built environment, health sciences, sustainability and digital technology / innovation and will open in Autumn 2024, with at peak 1,500 on courses.

Severn Trent prioritise Eccleshall with additional project funds

Partnership working is the only way forward with shared infrastructure and complex systems

For much of the past fifteen years, Stafford Street in Eccleshall has become the focal point for surface water flooding on days when there has been a bout of heavy rain or on days where it has rained consistently for several days.

Back in 2014 the opportunity to increase the size of the drains along the Stone from the centre of Eccleshall to the pumping station was missed, when the Stone Road was being resurfaced.



Surface water flooding, Stafford Street, Eccleshall

And Severn Trent's reliance on outdated computer modelling to show both predicted and actual flooding did not explain what was being seen by residents in the centre of the town on a regular basis.

The County Council completed its own upgrade to the far end of the Stone Road in Eccleshall back in the Spring of 2021, by putting in additional capacity to take the storm water coming off the Sancerre Grange new estate and waters concentrating in that area, through their own £250,000 improvement scheme. This has taken waters out towards the River Sow and has successfully worked to remove flooding from that part of town.

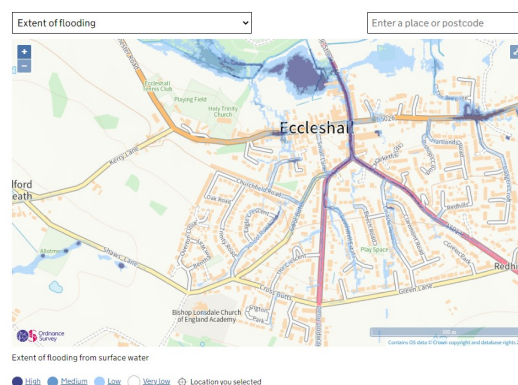
Over the last two years, Severn Trent have been working tactically to resolve some of the capacity issues, by trying to remove surface water from roofs and drives from the foul water system. They have also been working with land owners to encourage them to ensure that land ditches are hazard-free and free-flowing. This has identified some drains that have become blocked with things like rubble and others with more natural things like tree root ingress.

Severn Trent have now installed flow monitors to help identify the actual reality of what is being seen in Eccleshall at various strategic points in the town.

All of this has had an effect, by helping to remove most of the alarms from the local pumping station, notwithstanding the record drought seen this summer.

Severn Trent Water has allocated a project budget to investigating all the inflows to the system within Eccleshall and will take the data from the pumping station and the flow monitor records to help plan a response that keeps Eccleshall (and its residents) dry. This work will also involve a CCTV camera inspection of all the pipework locally to identify any further blockages, as well as an identification of where the foul system has been connected to without permission. It will also look at where the surface water system links into the foul system, which then creates capacity issues at times of peak rainfall.

The project group between Severn Trent and the County Council meets regularly and aims to review the initial report of findings at the end of the municipal year in April 2023. The work undertaken to date has made an improvement, but probably still needs a more long-lasting solution to fully resolve and this is what is being worked on



Surface water flooding map of Eccleshall—the darker the blue the heavier the flooding risk

To contact me

EMAIL

jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk

TELEPHONE

07740 924659

POST

Bank Farm,
Croxtan,
STAFFORDSHIRE
ST21 6PE

For Further

Information

– please visit

www.jeremypert.co.uk



Using all of the armoury in the cost of living crisis

Please don't suffer in silence as there is support either available or being created to help

The last few years have been impossible to predict for a whole host of reasons. But they have left many residents in a much more difficult and precarious position—we should not under-estimate where we start from or the massive effort that helped everyone in our communities to respond to them, not least from within the health and social sector and voluntary sectors.

But it won't take much to recognise the threats coming down the line—in terms of the cost of living crunch, whether that be through the rises in food prices in the shops, electricity and fuel cost increases or the general cost of living pressures being seen.

For some, these will be new pressures to many families across all areas and ensuring that everyone gets through the next year or two will be a huge challenge—but it comes off the back of what was achieved during the last few. And when we do succeed, our communities and everyone will be all the more cohesive as a result.

It is impossible to mitigate the global impact of inflation, but there is support available locally through a variety of schemes, including :-

- **Holiday activities and food during school holidays**
- **Energy saving measures**
- through raising any change in circumstances with housing (i.e. private sector landlords or **Housing Associations** or with mortgage providers)

So I guess everyone in the public sector has the same message—**please don't suffer in silence.**

The support of other organisations includes people like **Citizens Advice** and the **Energy Saving Trust**. And during periods of massive change it is always important for people to **claim anything that they may be entitled to**, including **the government's latest support measures**.

There are new support schemes being worked upon right the way across national and local government and within Stafford Borough these include :-

- Grants into supporting the voluntary sector
- Increasing the supply of food and basic essentials into **the voluntary sector** to help in the work that they do to support their communities
- Safe, warm spaces for people to go to and use to help reduce isolation, food and fuel poverty

Some of these schemes are being created to respond to the situation as it unfolds and will be announced over the next few weeks.

But we should expect to see more people looking for help and support and new demand in areas that have hitherto been somewhat immune from these pressures. So the more people can do to help support within their communities the better it will be. Please just ask for help and support.

PLEASE USE THE LINKS IN THE ABOVE TO FIND OUT MORE ON THE VARIOUS SCHEMES



The cost of living crunch will affect many, including from new communities unused to providing this level of help and support to a growing number of individuals



To contact me

EMAIL

jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk

TELEPHONE

07740 924659

POST

Bank Farm,
Croxtan,
STAFFORDSHIRE
ST21 6PE

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Information

– please visit

www.jeremypert.co.uk

Road Closure to impact Eccleshall road users

Fixing longstanding issues can affect all of us, but will reduce problems long term

The way to report Highways issues and concerns is through the County Council's "Report It" app—**which can be found by clicking through here.**

A Highways Engineer will then be sent out to investigate the nature of the problem and assign the response to the relevant team within County Highways. Without residents reporting the concern, highways issues can go on unresolved for many years.



The road between Eccleshall and Stafford will be closed from Monday 12th September 2022 during the day for a week

This is the case for the road between Eccleshall and Great Bridgeford, where the gully system has become blocked and ceased to be effective through things like tree root ingress and outflowing ditches not working effectively. This has led to flooding along various parts of the road over the last few years, which increasingly lasts longer and becomes more severe with the passage of time.

From Monday 12th September 2022 the length of the road between Stafford and Great Bridgeford will be closed with a camera crew investigating all of the gullies along this road with the aim of identifying specific blockages and issues and getting them resolved there and then.

Due to the works, the road will be closed to through traffic - and not residents for access - during the day from 9am through to 3.30pm, for the duration of the works.

Additionally any outstanding works to the Highway in that area will be picked up and resolved to make best use of the road being closed. This will include repairing the delaminated surface at the top of Stafford Road in Eccleshall, which has gone unresolved due to the need for a full road closure.

“Welcome to Staffordshire” - the County’s Open for Business

Staffordshire is sometimes referred to as the ‘hidden county’ - instead it’s a gem of a County

Many Counties advertise to road users that they are entering their region and for the last four and a half years discussions have been taking place with National Highways—formerly Highways England—for Staffordshire to have the same. This also incorporates the County’s new ‘place’ logo.



“Welcome to Staffordshire” signs that have been installed on the M6 motorway to show the County boundary at a cost of £17,000

Installing signs—like most things—is not an easy task, with the signs themselves needing to be accident resistant with crumple zones and installed during a planned closure of the motorway, so are not a cheap initiative.

By getting these signs, both north and south bound, it takes every opportunity to let people know that they are in this great County of ours and at long last the County has been ‘put on the map’, metaphorically speaking. And let’s hope this will encourage more people to come and investigate this area as a great place to explore, live, work and thrive.

To contact me

EMAIL

jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk

TELEPHONE

07740 924659

POST

Bank Farm,
Croxtton,
STAFFORDSHIRE
ST21 6PE

For Further

Information

– please visit

www.jeremypert.c

o.uk



Young People keen to understand democracy & local history

Often Local Government can seem a dull topic of conversation—well 'dry' at best. For Class 6 at Bishop Lonsdale Church of England Academy, it was anything but. It started with an assignment, which involved an hour's discussion with their local Borough and County Councillor, which included a question and answer session.

This was followed in July with a visit to Stafford Borough Council to meet with the First Citizen of Stafford Borough—none other than the Mayor of Stafford, Councillor Philip Leason - where the history of how Stafford became a key settlement back in 535, how it was chronicled in the Domesday Book in 1088 all the way through to having its first Royal Charter in 1206 and first Mayor in 1614 was discussed.



Bishop Lonsdale Year 6 Class of 2022 visiting The Mayor and Mayoress of Stafford gaining an insight into the history of the Borough of Stafford and Mayoralty

For many meeting the Mayor and the Mayoress face to face was a highlight and they both were bowled over by the letters of thanks that they received afterwards from the whole class, citing the things that they had been most interested by.

Hopefully one day in the future, one of the Class of '22 will seek to represent their local community as a direct result of the school assignment and visit.

Planning Application on bad bend refused in Norton Bridge

Common sense isn't all that common today—or so it can seem

A desire by phone operating company EE to improve the quality of the mobile phone signal in the Norton Bridge area, particularly for train users led to them submitting a planning application to install a new phone mast just to the north of Norton Bridge.

Following some pre-application discussions, where objection was made to the location due to road safety concerns and the fact that it was an existing 'accident black spot', but not the principal of improving the service locally for all users, the operator instead of finding a new location choses to better protect the mast were it to be hit by an errant vehicle on the bend.



Stone Road, Norton Bridge where EE wanted to install a phone mast

This resulted in the operator submitting a planning application on the road side at the point of a ninety degree bend. Following strenuous objection and representation, County Highways objected to the location and the Borough Council planners recommended that the planning application be turned down



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EMAIL

jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk

TELEPHONE

07740 924659

POST

Bank Farm,
Croxtan,
STAFFORDSHIRE
ST21 6PE

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Information
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Stafford Station Gateway Regeneration Zone

Opportunity to shape the future development of the County Town

By regenerating the land north of Stafford's station there is an opportunity to create new jobs, housing located adjacent to work spaces, with supporting retail and leisure facilities, all a stone's throw from Stafford town centre and linked into regional and nation travel corridors.

By bringing this redundant land back into use, it is hoped to achieve 'Character Zones', which collectively have the potential to deliver :

- Up to 1,000 residential dwellings comprising a mix of townhouses and apartments
- @ 33k Ft² new Grade A office space
- @ 15k Ft² new retail and leisure space
- @ 106k Ft² to create smaller workspaces
- An 80-key hotel
- Up to 350 space new multi-storey car park
- A new Innovation Hub

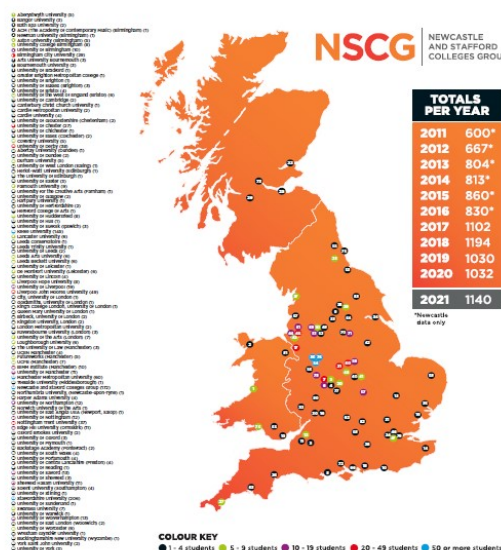


The Stafford Station Gateway—a community incorporating the latest in design and modern living, with working space onsite

All supported by high quality public realm and open spaces, including an upgraded water corridor running through the study area and a unique lakeside setting.

These plans have been in development for a couple of years now and are out for public input and consultation until the end of September 2022. The consultation can be [found using this link](#).

Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group expand horizons



Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group is creating a formidable reputation for their excellence in education, not just regionally, but on the national stage. One of the ways of measuring this is through their exam result performance and another (of many) is the destinations that their students attain, rather than just aspire to.

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EMAIL

jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk

TELEPHONE

07740 924659

POST

Bank Farm,
Croxton,
STAFFORDSHIRE
ST21 6PE

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Community Awards—the setting for a ‘star-studded’ night

Stafford Borough Council's Community Awards have gone from strength to strength over the past six years since they were launched, with the aim of recognising some of those 'unsung heroes' - both individuals and organisations—whose endeavours often go unseen and un-thanked.

None more so is this the case, than over the past couple of pandemic affected years. Two of last year's 'Special Contribution' award winners were the County Showground and other Vaccination team volunteers as well as the Community Foundation for their work in getting support grants out to the voluntary sector during the COVID pandemic.

This years awards are being held on Thursday 24th November 2022 and it's not too late to nominate your own heroes to be recognised as the deadline is the end of September 2022.



Nominate your community champion—individual or organisation—before the end of September 2022

The Categories include :-

- Community Learning
- Community Action
- Local Hero
- Social Wellbeing
- Sports and Leisure
- Sustainable Environments

More details can be **found here**

Stafford in the World & Jubilee Celebrations

Stafford in the World returned following a two year absence in June this year. It had its first year in Victoria Park, as part of Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

As part of these celebrations, over £8,000 was given out in Jubilee Small Grants by Stafford Borough Council to local voluntary sector groups, including the 'Friends of Norton Bridge' and Bishops Offley Methodist Church.

There is another round of Small Grants open at the moment, which closes on 9th September 2022. **Further details are available here**



Stafford Borough Small Grant recipients at Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations

Shire Hall centre-piece re-fashioned into Business Hub

Dating back to 1798 and designed by John Harvey, Shire Hall had lacked a modern day purpose for the past few years, only being brought out of mothballs every so often to support some courtroom drama or other.

Until that is a £2m investment was secured to bring the iconic building back to life as a Business Enterprise Centre, with flexible modern office space as well as contract lets. The Stafford Chamber has been one of the first to take up occupation, after it formally re-opened in the middle of July 2022.



Stafford Borough and County Councillors at the re-opening of Shire Hall with MP for Stafford, Theo Clarke



To contact me
EMAIL
jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk
TELEPHONE
 07740 924659

POST
 Bank Farm,
 Croxton,
 STAFFORDSHIRE
 ST21 6PE

For Further Information
 – please visit
www.jeremypert.co.uk



**BOROUGH AND
COUNTY
COUNCILLOR
JEREMY PERT**

Bank Farm,
Croxton,
Staffordshire
ST21 6PE

Phone: (07740) 924659

Email:
jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk
www.jeremypert.co.uk

**Representative
STAFFORDSHIRE
COUNTY & STAFFORD
BOROUGH COUNCILS**

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 eleven years and prior to that was a Parish Councillor for ten years on Eccleshall Parish Council. I am the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community & Health on the Borough Council and Chair of the Staffordshire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the 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

Investment brings reality closer to home

New technology can simulate lots of life-like situations to make learning better

Staffordshire University's Health, Science and Wellbeing School, based on Blackheath Lane in Stafford, has an impressive range of health based **courses available** from Nursing and Midwifery through to paramedic science.

However they have just opened their Centre for Health Innovation following a £5.8m investment in facilities. These include a fully immersive room, where they can stage a life-like scenario which includes the use of drive in areas for things like ambulances and to simulate car accidents.

These sorts of environments can help bring the reality of courses 'to life' or **allow people to use immersive technologies to hone their skills** and experience.

The investment also includes simulation Wards, where patient interventions can be monitored with different responses programmed and monitored in real time.



Staffordshire University have recently opened their Health Innovation Centre at a cost of £5.8m

The site will be the home to 2,000 students going forwards and will help drive the digital health agenda and accelerate the transformation of our health and care workforce using immersive technology and advanced teaching, which is a far cry from the classic view of careers in health and social care and another demonstration of the investment in the future of our County Town.

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.

To contact me
EMAIL
jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk

TELEPHONE
07740 924659

POST
Bank Farm,
Croxton,
STAFFORDSHIRE
ST21 6PE

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Information**
– please visit
www.jeremypert.co.uk