

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 a cross-section of them.

The latest Newsletter covers news of the launch of a new Duke of Edinburgh’s scheme in Eccleshall in the New Year, an initiative locally to raise awareness of Dementia and the launch of a scheme to promote male role models in sport through ‘The White Ribbon’ campaign alongside news of the Parliamentary Select Committee process for HS2.

D of E Comes to Eccleshall

Just about everyone will be aware of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Awards scheme - the eponymous scheme founded in 1956 by Prince Philip, which today runs across 144 nations and has influenced the lives of over 6m young people in the UK. The awards recognise young people up to the age of 25 for completing a series of self-confidence, team building and developmental exercises.



Of late, many of these schemes locally have been forced to close down or stop as funding has dried up for anything other than delivering statutory public services.

But as of Tuesday 6th February 2018, a new scheme will be launched in Eccleshall run by the Staffordshire Adventure Services, who already run a similar scheme in the south of Stafford at Walton on the Hill.

The Walton scheme will act as ‘an umbrella’ scheme for Eccleshall, offering support and team leaders, allowing Eccleshall to benefit from sufficient scale to offer all three awards – Bronze, Silver and Gold – whilst minimising the time that participants have to travel to enrol and get involved in activities.

The funding for this has come from the County Councillor’s Community Fund and it is hoped to attract young people from 14 to 25 who are interested in participating.

Anyone interested in getting involved either in the Awards or as a volunteer, please contact me by email and I will provide details.

Dementia Friends

Dementia remains an illness that is not properly understood by many people and yet the level of incidence is on the rise, affecting more than 1% of the UK. It particularly affects older people and starts with small amounts of near-term memory loss and can end up with loved ones not being recognised.

This mental disorder affects people in different ways and no two sufferers with the same types of dementia are affected in the same way. So plotting a common cause or even a common trajectory over the course of the disorder is often difficult.

The new ‘Northfield Village’ in Stafford has a specialist dementia care unit with an outreach arm led by Diane Wallace, who has the ambitious vision of helping Stafford borough’s geographical area to be :-

“Dementia Friendly by 2020”

Diane will come out into the community to deliver awareness sessions to groups or to businesses, which last about ninety minutes. And in the last year Diane has given sessions to more than 750 people who have become “Dementia Friends”, as part of this aim.



Helping individuals and businesses to get the relevant knowledge and awareness can help support people whose loved ones are affected by the disorder or help service designers take into account the needs of sufferers in creating new services.

If you would like more information, want to become a Dementia Friend or want any specialist input from Diane, her details are dwallace@choiceshousing.co.uk

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Curry Sunday Success

“Curry Sunday” returned to Eccleshall’s London House restaurant on Sunday 29th October 2017, with the restaurant playing host to just over one hundred people across lunchtime, late afternoon and evening sittings.



With profits from the meal going to support the work of Staffordshire Women’s Aid and support the victims of domestic violence and abuse.

The reputation and quality of food from London House carried all before them and everyone who attended had a thoroughly memorable day – and in the process raised £1,100. Thank you to everyone who attended.



From left to right - Mohid Miah, from London House Restaurant; Cllr Jeremy Pert; the Mayor of Stafford, Cllr Aidan Godfrey and Jeremy Lefroy MP

Spring’s Trip to EU Parliament

The planned trip for local residents to the European Parliament in Brussels has been scheduled for 1st March 2018.



Hosted by our two MEPs, Anthea McIntyre and Daniel Dalton, this will include a tour, presentation as well as the opportunity to attend a plenary debate in Parliament, which is something that only happens a couple of times a year, as most take place in Strasbourg.

HS2 Parliamentary Process

HS2 could bring greater transport connectivity and faster journey times both north and south from Stafford now there is a classic compatible train scheduled to stop hourly in Stafford.

It would also bring some much needed additional rail capacity along its length. However for those people living alongside or in the path of the proposed new high speed line, it could also bring devastation to homes, livelihoods and businesses alike.

Therefore securing the best mitigation for the line is critical given it is likely to go ahead



HS2 Ltd .Parliamentary Process

The First Reading of the Bill in the House of Commons, to make HS2 a reality, was in July 2017, with further consultations from HS2 on the route and environmental impact and railway connectivity happening after that.

Once the Bill receives its Second Reading, the only way of securing adequate and appropriate mitigation will be through the Parliamentary Petitioning process and for people and groups to appear in front of the Select Committee of MPs to raise their concerns. The Second Reading is now likely to be in January 2018.



Both Borough and County Councils have set aside moneys to Petition Parliament on issues relating to their own individual areas of responsibility – including for the Borough on noise and the County on Highways.

Individuals can still Petition in their own right by registering and paying the small relevant fee. More information is available at :- <https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/highspeedrailwestmidlandscrewe.html>

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

To Contact me

By Telephone

Mobile – 07740 924659

By Post

Bank Farm,
Croton,
Staffordshire
ST21 6PE

By Email

jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk

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

For Further Details please visit :-

www.jeremypert.co.uk

Wider Council Work

Community Information at the Touch of An App

A new technology-based solution is being developed to bring community services and groups just that one step closer to everyone in the community, with a development kicked off in the last few months.



The web-based application is being designed as part of a competition and project work with students from Stafford College, with collaboration across various parts of the College including arts and design students and IT technology students, with the aim of allowing users to enter a few personal details or register for an account, so that they can receive more information and an introduction to local groups

These groups could vary from weekly coffee mornings through to sports and recreational groups. But anyone with an interest in helping others in the community or securing new members can be listed with the aim of providing that personal link between the individual and community groups. The development has been co-funded through the County Councillor Local Community Fund.

Celebrating The Voluntary Sector in Stafford

Staffordshire has a long, proud, rich heritage in volunteering with a large diversity of groups available to individuals to benefit from, along with many people supporting the work of these groups through volunteering on a daily basis.



Presentation of Small Grants in Market Square, Stafford – Nov '17

Stafford Borough continues to support the voluntary sector through supporting the work of organisations like Support Staffordshire (www.supportstaffordshire.org.uk) and through the Small Grants Scheme which invests £10,000 every year in the voluntary sector.

The last grants were presented in Market Square in November, with the next round opening for applications in January 2018. More details are available from the Community Foundation of Staffordshire (<https://staffsfoundation.org.uk/grants/staffordboroughcouncilsmallgrantsscheme/>)

Sporting the White Ribbon 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.

It also seeks to promote gender equity and a compassionate vision of masculinity. The campaign is active in over sixty countries, since its inception in 1991.



Much of the work centres around prevention of gender violence, through educating and mentoring young men about issues such as violence and gender equality, with males encouraged to wear white ribbons as a symbol of their opposition to violence against women.

With recent examples across Society, there has never been a more poignant time to raise awareness of this issue, using classically male bastions, like some sports, to help get some of these positive messages across.

<https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/>

Another Year's Coming to an End

As we approach the conclusion of another year, all it leaves me to say is :

'Merry Christmas' and best wishes for a successful and prosperous New Year



With the Mayor of Stafford, wishing everyone Seasons Greetings this Christmas-time