



# 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 :-

- Bus Services and the need for passengers to keep them on the road
- Social Isolation and the things that all of us can do to support people we know in the community

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## Borough and County Councillor Jeremy Pert

### Community Comes Together to Save Bus Services

#### The Power of Partnership

Bus services are a vital community link, particularly in the more rural areas, where for some it is the only option for getting into work or for further education or training.

But since the 1985 Transport Act, the running of buses has been a commercial concern, with individual routes needing to stand alone to justify their existence.

There are many things that bus companies can—and do—do to keep services on the road, but without people using buses and full fare paying passengers at that, it is increasingly difficult when running a route may cost £100,000 a year to sustain on small numbers.

So when the 07:50hrs bus from Eccleshall to Stafford, which is used

threatened with being discontinued as part of the loss of the rail replacement bus covering from Stone and Stafford via Norton Bridge, meetings were held with the senior management team at D & G Buses with the aim of trying to save this key weekday service.

An agreement was reached whereby top-up funding was found by County Councillor Jeremy Pert and Eccleshall Parish Council to keep the service on the road, from 1st April 2019.

This service is already well used, but with a few extra full fare paying passengers it could become viable in the medium term, so that it can still be supporting the local community for many years to come.

So please do :-



Councillors from Eccleshall Parish Council, Kevin Crawford from D & G Buses and Councillor Jeremy Pert

- **Use this service** as much as possible, so that we can keep it on the road as a vital service for Eccleshall
- **Consider whether you need to use your concessionary passes** or whether you could pay the full fare for the journey, as this will help with the bus's long term viability

by a large number of students and people working in Stafford, was

Let's see if we can maintain some of our key services despite the difficult nature of public funding and ever increasing service demands, as the local population ages.

## Swynnerton becomes the second parish locally with VAS



Residents in many rural villages are concerned about the speed of traffic going through their centres and have sought to address this through using a variety of measures including creating gateways on the entrances and exits to villages and through better lineage and signage to make drivers more aware of the limit in these areas.

A more recent tool has been the

**Swynnerton Parish Council install Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) signs to address concerns about the speed of traffic across many of their villages**

introduction of Vehicle Activated Speed signs to help make drivers aware more visually.

With these VAS signs, the impact can be seen immediately and it is hoped will have a lasting impact on driver behaviour.

The Swynnerton signs are planned to rotate round Swynnerton, Tittensor, Trentham and Yarnfield both on the entrance to villages as well as at known 'black spots' which have heightened public concern.

Eccleshall Parish Council are actively working on a similar plan, across a variety of areas of public concern.

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

## Potholes — please report them

I have reported plenty of pot holes over the last two 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

## Local Businesses Support Bus Timetable Circulation

**London House Restaurant**

**PERRYS**  
OF ECCLESHALL

**WHAT'S ON IN ECCLESHALL**

**iTech**  
Done in a click

**BENT'S BREW HOUSE**

*Eccleshall local businesses financially support the delivery of a new bus timetable to every house*

With the desire to keep the local bus service running for the long term five Eccleshall businesses have come together to fund the printing of sufficient timetables so that one can go to each of the 1,500 houses in Eccleshall.

Alongside the support of Eccleshall Parish Council it is hoped that these actions will have a lasting benefit.

Similar actions have had extremely positive outcomes in Northwood, where First Bus's Ferndown Drive route (72a) is now no longer loss making and has had a resurgence in passenger numbers.

To contact me

**EMAIL**

[jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk](mailto:jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk)

**TELEPHONE**

07740 924659

**POST**

Bank Farm,  
Croxtton,  
STAFFORDSHIRE  
ST21 6PE

**For Further**

**Information**

– please visit

[www.jeremypert.c.o.uk](http://www.jeremypert.c.o.uk)





## Website Relaunch

One of the ways that residents can keep up to date with some of the work going on in Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Councils is to **subscribe to this newsletter**—via [jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk](mailto:jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk)—which is circulated three times a year.

Other ways of doing so, is via my :-

- Twitter feed (@jeremypert) or
- Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/jeremy.pert](http://www.facebook.com/jeremy.pert))

Or via my recently relaunched website, which is at [www.jeremypert.co.uk](http://www.jeremypert.co.uk)

All previous newsletters and a host of useful information are available on this website, and updated regularly.

**Delivering for the Eccleshall and wider Stafford Areas** on Staffordshire County and Stafford Borough Councils

Home Experience Work Undertaken News Local MPs and Policies Contact Details Useful Local Contacts

**Home**  
Being an elected representative on both Staffordshire County and Stafford Borough Councils, covering the local area to the West of Stafford is one of the greatest privileges of my life.

I have sought to champion the issues and concerns that affect local people, as varied as they are - from pot holes and highway maintenance, inappropriate planning, dog fouling and concerns over housing, through to pushing for more local facilities, greater work for local firms and apprenticeships for local young people straight out of college.

As a Cabinet Member on the Borough and a Cabinet Support Member on the County, I have supported a wide variety of things from raising the awareness of Dementia, to the need for a balance of all housing types and tenures, and reducing homelessness, through to supporting Stafford's voluntary sector so it remains strong and vibrant.

**Quick Links - click on images**

**Other Interests**  
- please click on item to see more details

- Governor of Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group
- Trustee of Eccleshall Eagles Junior Football Club
- Independent Equalities Scrutiny Panel member at HM Prison Drake Hall

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

## Soroptimists Celebrate 80th Birthday

The Stafford Soroptimists started in 1939 with the aim of transforming the lives of women and girls locally, nationally and internationally through Education, Empowerment and Enabling.

Since that time locally, they have been strong supporters of

- Staffordshire Women's Aid
- those with Multiple Sclerosis in Stafford
- educating girls in Pakistan and
- campaigning about human trafficking, when it was still a little known issue

In their eighty years supporting people in the Stafford area, they have inspired action and transformed lives, so planting an oak tree to mark their milestone anniversary seemed quite apt.



Attending the commemorative tree planting ceremony to mark the Stafford Soroptimists's eightieth anniversary, with President, Judith Carder

## Social isolation could affect anyone

Social isolation can affect anyone of any age, with 1.2m people chronically lonely and 500,000 people going five or six days without seeing anyone. 3.9m people say that their main company is the television.

Social isolation in health terms is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day and has similar risk factors to high blood pressure and obesity.

However, isolation can be reduced simply by all of us recognizing the risk factors and the triggers and spending time with those most likely to be affected—may be as simply as **dropping in for a chat or a 'cuppa'** with those we are concerned about in our community



Recently interviewed by BBC Radio Stoke to heighten the awareness of social isolation and how it can easily be addressed within communities



To contact me

**EMAIL**

[jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk](mailto:jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk)

**TELEPHONE**

07740 924659

**POST**

Bank Farm,  
Croxtan,  
STAFFORDSHIRE  
ST21 6PE

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## Award winning BeConnected Scheme comes to Eccleshall



*At launch of the Eccleshall BeConnected scheme*

**Next meeting dates for Eccleshall Friendship Group at Eccleshall Parish Room, Holy Trinity Church :-  
Wednesday 17th April 2-3:30pm and  
Wed. 15th May 2-3:30pm All Welcome to attend**

An award winning scheme to help those lonely and isolated in our communities has launched in Eccleshall.

BeConnected offers people who would otherwise have been alone at home the chance to take part in a range of fun and free activities including arts, crafts, gardening and exercise classes. More importantly, it provides an opportunity to make new friends and spend time with people they might not otherwise have seen.

This scheme, run by Stafford and Rural Homes, has been supported financially with the help of funding from my County Councillor's Community Fund, which has supported the start-up, growth and development of many local groups or supported helping make groups financially viable for the longer term.

## Swynnerton Saturday Service Restored from April 2019



A bus service stopping in Swynnerton five times every Saturday was one of the

causalities of the bus service review in October 2018. This has left the village cut off without any buses stopping in the village from 17:45hrs on a Friday to 06:44hrs on a Monday morning.

With the help of D & G Buses, they have now agreed to re-instate a couple of buses on a Saturday calling at 10:29hrs and returning back to Swynnerton at 16:14hrs.

Although, as with every bus service the maxim has to be: **'use it or lose it'** and given the work to get the re-instatement of a service, this really must be seen as the last opportunity to make the case for this service to be maintained for the long term by making sure the passenger's voice—and patronage—counts.

## Speed Limit Secured for Cotes Heath - *subject to consultation*



*The A519 at Cotes Heath is to be made into a 40mph zone based on safety concerns raised by local residents*

The A519 through Cotes Heath currently is a national speed de-restricted road—with a 60mph speed limited.

But with a number of houses and road junctions along the route, local residents have been concerned by the speed of traffic and safety for all road users through the village.

With this in mind, County Highways have confirmed plans to make this a 40mph area, subject to public consultation and the relevant Highways Order.

One of the other junctions in the area had extensive highways visibility improvements introduced in 2018 to improve safety there for all road users.

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STAFFORDSHIRE  
ST21 6PE

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[o.uk](http://www.jeremypert.c)





## Speed Limit Reduction to 30mph for Norton Bridge

Chebsey Parish Council and Norton Bridge residents have long argued for a reduction in the speed limit covering Norton Bridge itself due to safety concerns.

These concerns have been listened to and as a result during the early part of 2019 a new speed limit will be introduced including a reduction in the limit covering the village to 30mph with a buffer zone at 40mph

introduced to make cars more aware of the reduction in speed limit and get better adherence to the new limit.

The 40mph buffer zone also includes the nearby community of Shallowford.

This speed reduction has been argued for since 1948 and will make a sizeable improvement for local residents given the increased through traffic that the village has seen with recent developments.



*Norton Bridge's 40mph speed limit to be extended to create a buffer zone with a 30mph limit covering the village itself*

## Success to date for Ferndown Drive Bus — Route 72a

First Bus had concerns about the long term viability of their route via Ferndown Drive South, Northwood and Clayton Village to Newcastle bus station during the early part of 2018.

Following meetings with First Bus, representatives from local residents groups and the relevant Councillors a plan was created to make local residents aware of the impending issue—that really more people needed to use their local convenient bus service—or face the very real prospect of its loss.

The plan included leafletting all houses, providing a clear message, as well as some money off vouchers to encourage bus usage.

Nine months on and the service has increased its full fare paying passenger numbers. However, in the current climate no service can be considered permanently safe. Without continued and regular usage the 72A could well be deemed unviable.

**Services run based on usage.**



*First Bus—Route 72a via Ferndown Drive and Clayton village has successfully increased full fare paying passenger numbers to a point where it is now viable*

## Smart Motorways control Traffic with mobile VAS signs

Highways England have agreed to place a mobile Vehicle Activated Speed sign rotating between the A34 outside of Tittensor and Whitmore Road in Trentham to advise drivers of their vehicle speeds, following the decision to close the motorway overnight and restrict speeds for a prolonged period as part of the Smart Motorway upgrades being implemented to the M6 motorway. This is to help manage the additional flows of traffic on local roads in a responsible way and to minimise the impact on local communities.



*Highways England have placed mobile Vehicle Activated Speed signs outside Tittensor and in Trentham*

A **full motorway closure** of Junction 13 and 14 of the M6 is planned for Saturday 23rd March at 20:00hrs to Sunday afternoon 24th March 2019 to remove an over-bridge.



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ST21 6PE

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**BOROUGH AND  
COUNTY  
COUNCILLOR  
JEREMY PERT**

Bank Farm,  
Croxtan,  
Staffordshire  
ST21 6PE

Phone: (07740) 924659

Email:

[jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk](mailto:jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk)

.uk

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

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

I have been an elected Borough Councillor for the past eight years and prior to that was a Parish Councillor for ten years on Eccleshall Parish Council. I am the Cabinet Member for Community 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](http://www.jeremypert.co.uk)

## Stafford Together — Making a Difference Locally

Stafford Together—set up last year—has an aim to provide grant funding into the local voluntary sector in a sustainable way—so that moneys raised can be supporting the local area for many years to come through giving out grants only from the growth in the funds held

In its first year as an endowment fund—held by The Community Fund of Staffordshire—the fund has raised £60,000 with a long term ambition to get to £1m.

Supporters like Tesco Extra, Virgin Trains, Freedom Leisure, Staffordshire County Council, have more

recently been joined by The Bears Lair, who are using this as their charity of the year and Stafford Railway Building Society.

If you know of anyone who would be interested in raising some money for charity or supporting a local fund where 100% stays local and 100% is used to support good causes, then **more**

**details available at :**

[www.staffsfoundation.org.uk/](http://www.staffsfoundation.org.uk/)

[welovecommunityfunds/stafford-together/](http://welovecommunityfunds/stafford-together/)

Or

[www.facebook.com/staffordtogether/](http://www.facebook.com/staffordtogether/)



*"Small amounts of grant funding can mean so much to organisations in the voluntary sector, to help them grow or develop additional support for people within the Stafford area.*

*Doing this through a sustainable fund which will be supporting people for generations to come is the bold ambition of Stafford Together."*

*Lord Stafford, Patron of  
Stafford Together*

### **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  
STAFFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY & STAFFORD  
BOROUGH COUNCILS**

To contact me

**EMAIL**

[jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk](mailto:jeremyp@jeremypert.co.uk)

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