



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.

Spring is a time for growth and new beginnings, a time for us to turn our back on the past two years of uncertainty and global pandemics, but under the unexpected tragedy of a world at war. Something I never thought that I would see in my lifetime and which may potentially fundamentally change our way of life. The global consumption that we have all chased for the past two or three decades casts a long shadow as we re-draw what is sensible, affordable and morally the right thing to do, whether that be the impacts of the energy crisis to supporting people and communities through the next few years.

One way we can do that is through taking some of the learnings of the past two years with communities coming together and working for the benefit of each other to make a tangible difference. I'm up for the challenges ahead, I hope you're with me.

Borough and County Councillor Jeremy Pert

This edition covers :

- NSCG's Stafford campus development
- Whitgreave Lane closure
- Newport Road pavements refresh
- Our Beautiful Businesses
- Beaconside four sewer works
- £650k funding for street homelessness work
- Stafford in the World back
- Social housing decarbonisation

Delivering Top Quality Education Locally — NSCG's Relentless drive for Excellence

So much has happened at Stafford College since 2015—it is such a great example of a local organisation that has relentlessly followed a path of continuous improvement and striving for perfection—the best it can be, for the benefit of all its students.

Admittedly at that time, the College had some well documented issues including an OFSTED rating of 'Inadequate' - the lowest possible rating.

In the space of seven years the College has merged with Newcastle College, strengthened the leadership and management teams and brought in A Level syllabuses, amongst other things.

At the most recent OFSTED back in November 2019, it was the only College Group at the time to be rated 'Outstanding'—the highest possible rating—under the new framework and the only College Group to be rated 'Outstanding' in every category in the last ten years.

The impact on students is that their exam results have improved by in excess of 10% and there is a specific focus on English and Maths attainment. Student numbers have also gone up as young people react to the breadth of courses available and the quality of all round education on offer.

During this time, the College has invested £10m in general infrastructure a further £3.5m in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths)



At the Skills & Innovation Hub ground breaking ceremony with Stafford MP, Theo Clarke, & NSCG Principal, Karen Dobson OBE

Centre that opened in August 2017 and has recently broken earth on the Skills and Innovations Hub investment.

This latter development, replacing the Broad Street and Earl Street buildings is to open in June next year at a cost of £28.6m.



Overall that is some investment in the future learning and development of our young people.

This is the first project of its kind with the Department for Education running the contract directly and I am sure that this will be an exemplar within the Further Education sector.

[The story of this latest development can be seen online by clicking here](#)

Road Closure impact reduced

Whitgreave Lane closed for seven months

The closure of any road junction can be extremely disruptive, but when it is the main road into and out of a community and the closure is planned for fourteen months then the impact can be severe to those residents living there.

So when the County Council announced that the Whitgreave Lane junction with the A34 north of Stafford was to close originally in February 2022, for fourteen months there was significant concern in the village. The other route into Whitgreave had been the source of significant flooding over recent years and some of the road surface had deteriorated significantly.

When Royal Mail removed collections from the post box in the centre of the village, it must have felt like all services were being removed with the village isolated and cut off.

Following discussions with County Highways and the developers, the roadworks were able to be re-phased such that the planned closure could be reduced from 14 months to 7, with a phased re-opening of the lane to traffic. Additionally significant carriageway repairs were undertaken, with pot hole filling, edge of carriageway failures re-instated and a general surface dressing of the lane applied.

Works were also undertaken to identify the source of the carriageway flooding, with land drains re-introduced, silt removed from a critical drainage pipe and root ingress removed, such that the flooding experienced should now be a thing of the past.

Royal Mail, when contacted, also re-introduced their daily postal collections in the village.

So whilst the seven months of road closure will, I am sure, be highly disruptive to local residents many of the man-made hazards that they might have faced have either been removed or reduced as far as possible.



Whitgreave Lane closed at the junction of the A34 north of Redhills, Stafford

Newport Road Pavements resurfaced with new compound

Sometimes new and innovative solutions are the only way to get things delivered

With money for Highways increasingly scarce, then new ways of finding solutions for carriageway and pavement repairs can often be necessary. Following three and a half years of trying to get the pavements on Newport Road in Eccleshall resurfaced without success and as the



Newport Road, Eccleshall, where the pavements have received an innovative new compound as part of a surface dressing undertaken in March 2022

pavements continued to deteriorate, a new approach needed to be adopted, just at the time the County Council started to test out a new resurfacing material.

By volunteering to be a test site and early adopter of this compound, a way has been found to bring forward the repair of these pavements and this was undertaken in March of this year. Now let's see what we can achieve elsewhere.

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Our Successful Businesses — Something to Celebrate

A great place to live, work and thrive

Underpinning the whole area is our exceptional local businesses who provide quality goods and services in a seamless manner. With many employing local people and spending in the local economy, such that they are the backbone to economic development across Staffordshire.

Celebrating our fabulous award winning businesses—which I was able to do in part at the recent Taste of Staffordshire awards—is something we don't do enough of, so this list across the local area will inevitably be vastly incomplete, but notwithstanding that :-



Enjoy Staffordshire Tourism & Good Food Awards winners 2022 include :-

B&B and Guest House of the Year

The Little George, Eccleshall – Gold

Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Award

The Trentham Estate – Silver

Independent Restaurant of the Year

London House Indian Restaurant, Eccleshall – Silver

Unsung Hero Award

Andy McGee, The Little George – Silver

Pub of the Year

The Little George, Eccleshall – Highly Commended

Resilience & Innovation Award

The Trentham Estate – Gold

Large Visitor Attraction of the Year

The Trentham Estate – Gold

Trentham Monkey Forest – Highly Commended

Farm Shop and Food & Drink Retailer of the Year

Perrys of Eccleshall – Silver

Casual Dining Restaurant of the Year

The Crepe & Waffle House, Trentham Shopping Village – Highly Commended



Experience of the Year

Breakfast with the Monkeys, Trentham Monkey Forest – Silver

Perrys Field to Fork Artisan Butchery & Cookery School, Eccleshall – Highly Commended

New Tourism Business of the Year

Perrys Field to Fork Artisan Butchery & Cookery School, Eccleshall – Highly Commended

Other local success stories and award winners include :-

- Nicola Jane Dyson of Reeds Rains in Eccleshall who won West Region Best Conveyancing Performance and Most Improved Lettings at the National Home Move awards
- Tara Farmer's Flawless Skin Clinic at Sugnall Business Centre who was named the most promising new start-up business at the 2021 Staffordshire Chambers business awards, which started trading during the pandemic and is now employing six people and attracting customers from across three counties
- James Du Pavey of Eccleshall, Nantwich and Stone who was the winner of Best Estate Agent Guide for Sales, Marketing and Service in their 2022 awards

All our local businesses are success stories in how they have come out of the pandemic and absolutely need all of our support and custom as we go forwards. For a look at what the Borough Council is doing to promote businesses in Eccleshall, Stafford and Stone, please visit [the campaign](#)

[Facebook pages by clicking here](#)



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Highways Safety—a priority for all road users on Beaconside

Essential Road Works don't need to come at a safety cost

Essential infrastructure works need to be undertaken by the statutory providers, and their impact often causes a lot of disruption to many people. However learning and reacting quickly to issues can reduce that impact.

Such was the case at Marston Grange, where Severn Trent, on behalf of two housing developers wanted to link into the foul sewer running underneath the A513 Beaconside Road in Stafford, which services the 500 odd homes now on Marston Grange but also forms part of the arterial road that rounds along the top of Stafford.

So when the first iteration of temporary road layout was introduced that removed a vital set of pedestrian traffic lights that allowed children to cross between Marston Grange and Parkside and potentially allowed two streams of traffic to use the same lane at the same time by not following the relevant directional flows, it was clear that a new scheme needed to be implemented—and quickly.

Whilst this new scheme—introduced in a day—resolved one set of problems it created a huge delay at peak periods for householders trying to get off the Marston Grange estate.



The safety of all road users needed to be taken into account, which lead to revised schemes

Recognising this, the next day the length of time the lights for Marston Grange traffic only could flow through the road works was increased with that reducing the delays from thirty five minutes to a more acceptable ten, without impacting significantly on other road users.

Whilst it is not great to be delayed in traffic at any stage, looking at ways to optimise the flow and reduce the delay as far as possible can at least demonstrate that individuals concerns are being listened to and acted upon—in a fast reactive way.

Beaconside Road Widening works will happen this Autumn

Disruptive Roadworks combined to reduce overall impact

Road widening works to the A513 Beaconside Road in Stafford were planned at the time of the development of the Marston Grange housing estate some six or seven years ago.

As the estate has been developed out the year long scheme has been consistently delayed. Such that the volume of traffic now using the Redhill roundabout has reached capacity, without installing a signalised roundabout to improve the flow. These works will also take approximately a year to complete.

Rather than inflict two years of delays on road users in that area, the plan is to undertake the works together, accepting that the impact will cover a slightly wider area but be over a more



Multi-million pound investment in local highways infrastructure

concentrated period. The current start date for these works is Autumn 2022 and represents an investment of over £5m in local infrastructure.

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Significant Funding secured for Homelessness Support

Stafford Borough has long been seen as an innovator when it comes to its work to reduce street homelessness, whether it be in being reference in the House of Lords for its Housing First work or in being the first NPSS 'Gold Standard' Housing Authority in the whole of the Midlands.

One of the things the Housing team have done is to set up many new and innovative partnerships covering roles like the Community Matron—also known as 'the Angel of Stafford'. Its latest partnership is one of creating a co-ordinated approach to homelessness with the mental health services, as well as drug and alcohol services, as the individuals being seen have more and more complex issues.

The Housing team have recently secured over £650,000 to set up amongst other things supported accommodation to house five long term rough sleepers and provide them with the support needed to get them back into stable sustainable housing for the long term.

Continued focus on reducing homelessness in Stafford Borough will see the introduction of supported accommodation as part of £650,000 being spent in the Borough, which has been secured from central government - in a 'a names not numbers' approach

Housing Options in Stafford

If you are homeless, face losing your home in the very near future (or in the next three to six months) or if you have to rethink your housing options because of a change in your circumstances.



The work, alongside charity, Humankind, started in the Autumn of last year and will be fully rolled out during the Spring and Summer of this year.

Stafford in the World returns after a two year absence

Stafford in the World was set up by the then Member of Parliament for Stafford, Jeremy Lefroy, as a celebration of Stafford's international links—many of which are not ordinarily seen or talked about and covers both local businesses as well as voluntary sector organisations. It will take place as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in Victoria Park on Thursday 2nd June 2022. More information about attending **can be found here**.

Local Government Funding & Planning Policy discussion

Lobbying for the changes we all know need to happen

For the last few years, local government has had to operate with a funding time horizon of just twelve months, which makes it considerably harder to budget and invest in the future without any real certainty.

So at a recent meeting with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, the discussion covered amongst other things the local government settlement as well as the need to build carbon neutral housing as a simple planning policy principal.

There is little point after all in building any new homes that within the matter of a few years will need to be retro-fitted to save energy and become carbon neutral.



It is difficult to manage in local government when there is only certainty for the next year ahead—with Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP



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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 eleven 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 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

Housing role in reducing climate change

Working together to bring in more funding to tackle joint challenges

Lots is talked about climate change and undertaken to 'keep the 1.5 alive', which was the primary aim of the recent climate change conference in Scotland—COP 26.

Detailed plans are being made by just about every organisation to minimise the use of energy, move to the use of renewables and then as a final resort off-set.

An example of this was heard by the County Council's Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny committee in early April 2022, when the NHS came and presented its detailed Net Zero Plans by 2040. The proceedings from the session can be watched back on the [County Council's website or by clicking here.](#)

Housing creates 25% of the country's carbon emissions and decarbonising housing is a key role for everyone—home owners and landlords alike.



£1.2m of funding has been secured to improve the energy efficiency of 100 properties in Stafford with Housing Plus Group

The challenge for many older properties is immense.

The Borough Council, in partnership with social housing provider, the Housing Plus Group, has started that journey following the award and investment of nearly £1.2m to install wall, underfloor and loft insulation, draught proofing and ventilation in 100 local properties.

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.

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