



DELIVERING FOR THE ECCLESHALL AREA

NEWSLETTER 9 | WINTER 2018

As the year draws to a close and people share Festive wishes with family and friends, I wanted to extend my best wishes for a Merry Christmas to everyone across the Eccleshall, Swynnerton, Trentham and Yarnfield areas – and all areas in-between—and wishes you a happy 2019. This latest newsletter 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 something positive and informative.

In this edition, we talk about :-

- Progress on Stafford becoming a Dementia Friendly Community
- The launch of many new groups or solutions locally to help support people in our community

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Borough and County Councillor Jeremy Pert

Stafford — a Dementia Friendly Community

The Power of Partnership

The media have been raising the awareness of mental health and also dementia consistently over the past twelve months and rightly so—to help reduce the stigma of these health based illnesses, given there seemed to be a disconnect between physical illnesses and mental ones.

In Stafford, Choices Housing, working out of the Dementia Extra Care facility at Limewood, which is part of the brand new—and award winning—Northfield Village, have been working to get Stafford to be a dementia friendly community by 2020.

Such has been the success of their work that in September 2018—a full fifteen months early—Stafford has been accredited by the Alzheimer's Society as being a Dementia Friendly Community.



Stafford recognised as Dementia Friendly

More than 2,500 new Dementia Friends have been created in 2018, with many new organisations committed to supporting those with the disease. But more can be done, as this disease is set to affect 1.5m people by 2050, as the population ages.

So the next step of the plan for Stafford borough's area is to set up a volunteer network to help carers to be able to maintain as normal a life as possible.

For more information on the new Lean on Me Service or to support the work of the Stafford Dementia Action Alliance, please contact Diane Wallace on (01785) 215678.

Destination Eccleshall Launches

As our High Streets fight to maintain shoppers and sales one of the things that can be done is to promote not just the individual businesses but also 'the destination' for the strength of everything the area has to offer.

With 40% of shops nationwide predicted to close over the next ten years, areas like Eccleshall need to be ahead of everyone else if they are to buck the trend. And once retail has deserted the High Street, the risk is that it is only residential conversion that's left.



'What's On In Eccleshall' is an attempt to address this by promoting the strength of the area, as well as the individual businesses and to encourage visitors to frequent the whole offer, whilst they're in town.

This is a bold attempt to do something different, as a collective.

Judges Award—Eccleshall Great War Project



Eccleshall's Historical Society was awarded 'The Judges Award' at this year's Stafford Borough Council Community

In 2013 Eccleshall Historical Society chose to commemorate the Great War by researching the history of the forty five men

and one woman who appear on the Holy Trinity War Memorial.

During this research they found several names that had connections to Eccleshall but didn't appear on the memorial. So the group decided to get these names added onto the memorial and launched a community dialogue, including a funding campaign to do so.

In 2018 the names of the men with connections to Eccleshall were added onto the memorial, along with a refurbishment of the memorial itself, with a re-dedication happening in the Summer of 2018—a fitting commemoration of those brave men.

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 eighteen months—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



Diane Wallace and Nigel Downs of Choices Housing on winning the Business Award at the Borough's Community Awards

Dementia Friendly Stafford wins Community Award

Choices Housing's work to raise awareness of dementia across Stafford Borough and to start to actively do something about supporting those affected by dementia was recognised at this year's Stafford Borough Community Awards, with their 2020 Vision of Stafford becoming Dementia Friendly.

Demonstrating that people can live well with Dementia and

improving awareness and understanding through starting a Dementia Action Alliance, engaging businesses and delivering Dementia Friends sessions throughout the Borough were powerful statements supporting their nomination.

That alongside achieving Dementia Friendly status for the community some fifteen months early, persuaded the judges.

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Double Quick Speed Signs for Great Bridgeford

Speeding vehicles have been a problem in Great Bridgeford for many years, with various initiatives used to try and curb their impact, including a longstanding Community Speedwatch group.

On 9th March 2018, members of Seighford Parish Council met out on site with a view of trying a new approach—that of using modern vehicle activated speed signs at three locations in the village.

Following some funding from

both the Safer Roads Partnership and some Eccleshall County Councillor Divisional Highways moneys, the Parish Council were able to pull together a scheme.

This scheme was launched on 29th September 2018 and demonstrates what can be achieved with focus, despite needing to source the funding, supplier of the signs and having them safely installed.

Well done to the Parish Councillors involved.



At the launch of the Great Bridgeford Vehicle Activated Speed Signs—with the team behind the scheme from Seighford Parish Council

Destination Eccleshall Supports Staffordshire Women's Aid

One of the first things that Destination Eccleshall members—Reeds Rains, The Little George, Fletchers Garden Centre, the Royal Oak, Perrys of Eccleshall and Bethan Ward of Eccleshall—as well as Staffordshire County Councillors - have supported was this year's Christmas Hamper for Staffordshire Women's Aid.

This was won by Annemarie Spilsbury and it was presented just before the big day itself.

The hamper raised a massive £500 for Staffordshire Women's Aid, supporting the work that they are doing this Christmas, and into 2019.



"We have been absolutely thrilled by the support for Staffordshire Women's Aid this Christmas from Eccleshall as a community and the County Councillors "
- Dickie James, Chief Executive

Housing Minister Round Table

Mrs. Heather Wheeler MP, the Housing and Homelessness Minister, was the latest high profile MP to visit Stafford to see first hand the work by Stafford Borough Council and their partners from across the Public and Voluntary sectors to prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping, through a variety of initiatives designed to focus support on those most vulnerable.

Similar discussions have been held with a number of other Local Authorities to share best practice as part of work nationally to address rough sleeping and homelessness.



Round-table discussion on Stafford's work to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping with Housing Minister, Mrs. Heather Wheeler MP



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Ensuring local community engagement with new housing development helps integrate them into the local community at the earliest opportunity—with Karen Armitage of Stafford and Rural Homes, Harpers and Homes England

New Housing Being Delivered in Blythe Bridge

Stafford and Rural Homes—the largest social housing landlord in Stafford Borough, with some 6,500 homes—had long wanted to transform the former Blythe Lodge site, which had been for older persons accommodation. It had become tired and was not modern fit for purpose housing.

So supported by £390k of funding from Homes England - the Homes & Communities Agency - Stafford and Rural Homes and construction partner Harpers have been

working to transform the site, with the development of thirteen new affordable homes for rent at Spring Lodge Avenue which will include a mix of one and two bed apartments and two and three bed houses. These will be available in the Spring 2019.

Bringing forward these schemes to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of housing of all types and tenures, right the way across the Borough, is an important way of ensuring that Stafford has sufficient housing to meet the needs of all local people.

Tips on bus services :-

- They need to be **commercially viable to stay running**—so **use them or face losing them**
- If you don't need to **show your concessionary card, and instead can afford to pay, please don't show the card, it can affect the viability of the whole route**

D & G Buses Support an Alternative Way of Working

When Norton Bridge station ceased to be a stopping point for trains, a rail replacement bus service was put on.

That service—the 13 and 13a—has cost £100,000 a year of central government funding to run but is due to terminate at the end of March 2019.

One of the services potentially affected is the 07:50hrs Eccleshall to Stafford commuter service, if proposals are implemented as planned.

Having met with the Managing Director of D & G Buses we have looked at ways of maintaining at least the busy commuter service at 07:50hrs, even if other less

popular services are terminated.

It will take some additional funding from a variety of partners, but at this stage it is believed that a suitable plan can be delivered to maintain the 07:50hrs Eccleshall to Stafford service, when the existing service terminates in March 2019, if nothing more.



Housing and Homeless Minister, Mrs. Heather Wheeler MP, with Dickie James and Charlotte Almond of Staffordshire Women's Aid and Stafford MP, Jeremy Lefroy - in front of the Tree of Life

Housing Minister Announces Domestic Violence Funding at Stafford Refuge

Staffordshire Women's Aid has secured an additional £103,000 of funding, towards mental health support services for women affected by domestic violence. The national announcement of an additional £22m of funding towards domestic violence was made from the Stafford refuge during a visit there.

"I was inspired to see first hand how the Stafford ForWard House refuge helps survivors and to see how this vital fund will help ensure survivors get the support and accommodation they need to address their needs and move their lives forward"
- Heather Wheeler MP

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Isabel Trail parkrun Launches

After 15 months of planning the Isabel Trail parkrun launched in December. It is a free to attend run over the same timed 5Km course every Saturday starting at 9am—from the other side of J Sainsbury Stafford car park.

It is run along the scenic but flat Isabel Trail—good for those new into running as well as those looking for a personal best. It has been funded by the Borough Council, Freedom Leisure and my County Councillor Community Grant.

parkruns :-

- encourage new people into exercise and actively keep people engaged — about 60% of attendees would not have done any exercise otherwise
- are volunteer and community based, so become self-sufficient very quickly
- encourage 'tourists' - being one of only 3 "I"s in the country encourages new people to come to Stafford



The Isabel Trail parkrun launched on 8th December 2018 with 195 people taking part in the first event, supported by 25 volunteers

More details available from www.parkrun.org.uk/isabeltrail/

Community Footprints—Signposting Groups

County Councillor Community Grant funding has helped to develop a new web-based application to help signpost people to some of the groups and activities available within their local community.

This app has been developed to make a direct link between the individual and the local group, as often one of the issues is knowing what actually is available locally.

This has been populated with

some Eccleshall data as a trial but the app's developers would be grateful for any first hand 'test user' thoughts and comments—it is available at the following location :-

www.theoriginalyeti.co.uk/communityfootprint/index.html

If anyone wants to help develop this pilot further, please do get in touch, as it is hoped to use this system to target social isolation in communities going forwards



New web-based application launched as an almanac of community groups and activities

Putting Wheels in Motion

December saw the launch of a new scheme whereby stolen bikes, that have been left unclaimed for many months and unable to be returned to their rightful owners, are being donated to the Halfords Academy within the walls of HM Prison at Drake Hall, Eccleshall.

There the women serving sentences can learn new skills in repair and refurbishment before the bikes, as good as new, are donated to local charities.

Whilst this benefits those local charities, Halfords guarantee the women on attaining a certain level of competence a job on release in one of the 465 Halfords stores across the country.



Partners involved in bringing bikes back into use, whilst helping with rehabilitation and long term skills



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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 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

**Stafford Together Debuts —
Making a Long Term Difference**

Stafford Together is a bold attempt to support the local voluntary sector through grant giving—'Stafford people looking after Stafford people'.

The grants are given out from the growth in the capital held, with the overall capital never being touched so that it will always be there to support people in the local Stafford area.

To date the fund has raised £60,000 as it hopes to raise £1m over forthcoming years.

To date, Tesco Extra, Virgin Trains, Freedom Leisure, Staffordshire County Council, amongst others have

come on board to help support the initiative.

Next Year there will be a sponsored walk of **The Staffordshire Way**—all 92 miles of it—amongst other things. **If you want to get involved please contact me directly.**

More details available at :
www.staffsfoundation.org.uk/welovecommunityfunds/stafford-together/

or
[/www.facebook.com/staffordtogether/?ref=bookmarks](https://www.facebook.com/staffordtogether/?ref=bookmarks)

Making a difference across the borough



**stafford
TOGETHER**

"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.

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