

REVIEW



Autumn 2004

Issue No. 29

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STAFFORDSHIRE
CALENDAR**
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High praise for the activity programme for youngsters means...

South Staffordshire culture leads the way

South Staffordshire's innovative activity programme for young people, HYPE, has won nationwide acclaim.

The scheme to provide exciting and meaningful events for 11-17 year olds in the district is being held up as a shining example to all local authorities in the country.

The praise has come from the Local Government's Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), who cite HYPE as being one of the best examples of the vital role that cultural services can play in the community.

Sheila Healy, IDeA Regional Associate for the West Midlands, said: "Congratulations to South Staffordshire Council for leading on such an innovative project. HYPE events have become an enjoyable addition to the lives of local young people, and have helped make teenagers more responsive in preventing and reporting crime.

"This is a fine example of the innovative cultural services work that is taking place throughout the West Midlands and I urge other councils to learn from this example."

The HYPE programme - which is featured on page 2 of this edition of REVIEW - has been put together by South Staffordshire Council's

Leisure Services, in conjunction with the South Staffordshire Crime Reduction Partnership's .

It's succeeding in offering educational, preventative and diversionary activities to 11-17 year olds. Since the project started, over 3,000 youngsters have benefited from the advice and information available to them and enjoyed the HYPE events.

"I am thrilled that South Staffordshire Council has received national recognition from the IDeA"

- Cllr Robert Marshall

To date, HYPE has consisted of five club nights offering a nightclub experience with professional promoters, DJ's and dancers. Also included have been school tours for the under 13's.

But since IDeA's review of the project, HYPE has become bigger

and better to include festivals that have toured South Staffordshire during the summer showcasing Midlands urban talent including world class DJs, professional skaters, break dancers and professional basketball players. Plans are currently being finalised to enhance the initiative even further.

The success of projects like HYPE has also come to the attention of the Government. Tessa Jowell, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said: "It is wonderful to see local authorities, national agencies, voluntary and community groups working together to deliver cultural programmes that expand our boundaries and enrich our lives. I urge others to follow their example."

Cllr Robert Marshall, the Council's Deputy Leader (Community Services) commented: "I am thrilled that South Staffordshire Council has received national recognition from the IDeA. The HYPE initiative is the result of much consultation, especially with young people and it's one of many diversionary activities that contribute to reducing anti-social behaviour within South Staffordshire."

'Thank you' for Boulton Paul



Chairman of South Staffordshire Council, Cllr. Pamela Bromley presents a specially commissioned crystal chalice to Cyril Plimmer, chairman of the Boulton Paul Association, watched by Cllr. Cyril Bromley and Jack Holmes, as a reward for the Association's work in establishing the Air Museum.

Turn to the back page for a special article on the Boulton Paul Museum.

HYPE

the big summer festivals

Youngsters across South Staffordshire have been enjoying some Big Festival Fun this summer - and they didn't have to go to Weston Park to get it.



HYPE, the inter-agency youth project led by South Staffordshire Council's Leisure

Services as part of the South Staffordshire Crime Reduction Partnership, took the cream of Midlands urban talent on a six-stop tour of the district.

HYPE is funded by South Staffordshire Crime Reduction Partnership, led by South Staffordshire Council and supported by Crimestoppers, Staffordshire Youth Service, Staffordshire Police and South Western Staffordshire Primary Care Trust.

For more information contact Rachel Salt, HYPE co-ordinator on (01902) 696531 or email r.salt@sstaffs.gov.uk

The HYPE Big Summer Festival Tour 2004 visited venues across South Staffordshire highlighted as target areas to reduce anti social behaviour, nuisance and criminal damage.

And to kick out those "nothing to do" summertime blues, youngsters were offered graffiti painting workshops; skateboarding demonstrations with Warp Sports; basketball sessions with Big Sky Basketball; DJ workshops with KIC FM and DJ Mikee Lazy and breakdancing with B Boys Attic.

The next HYPE event scheduled to take place is one of our extremely popular dance nights taking place in Perton on Thursday 23rd December 2004. Birmingham based club promoters, The Big Cat Group will be co-ordinating the event transforming Perton Civic Centre into a real night club experience

13-17 YEAR OLDS...
HYPE
 Christmas Party
 Thursday 23rd December
 @Perton Civic Centre
 (Church Rd, Perton)
 Tickets £5.00 in advance
 Tel. 01902 696 531
 Free transport available

Our villages are calendar pin-ups

South Staffordshire
REVIEWED

2005



To coincide with the release of the Council's Publication - South Staffordshire 'Reviewed' by Paul Collins and Craig Walker, the Council are publishing a calendar showing archive images of 12 villages within South Staffordshire.

The Calendar will be on sale within the Council offices from the beginning of November priced at £2.00.

For information on the release of the calendar please contact either Paul Collins or Craig Walker on (01902) 696425.

Walkers on the path to health

A call has gone out to enthusiastic country walkers who would like to volunteer to lead organised walks in South Staffordshire.

The Council is looking to expand the range of walking routes in the district as part of its healthy lifestyles campaign.

Would-be volunteers need have no formal qualifications - walk and first aid training to a nationally recognised standard will be given.

"We're looking for people who enjoy countryside walking, have a bit of spare time on their hands and would like to help others enjoy the benefits of being out in the fresh air," said Marc Neeld, Healthy Lifestyles Co-ordinator.

"You'd be giving something back to the community and getting fit & healthy yourself at the same time."

If you are interested, contact Marc Neeld, Healthy Lifestyles Coordinator on 01902 696540 or email m.neeld@sstaffs.gov.uk

Winter Wonderland

Watch out for our Winter Wonderland.

For the second consecutive year, South Staffordshire Council is working in partnership with Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council to bring a magical festive event to South Staffordshire.



The event, which runs from Saturday 11th - Sunday 12th December in the beautiful grounds of Himley Hall and Park includes a craft fayre, Santa's grotto, street entertainment, fun fair rides and a snow attraction. There will also be a small firework display on the Saturday evening. For more information please contact Leisure Services on 01902 696540 or email leisure@sstaffs.gov.uk or visit www.sstaffs.gov.uk

Hi-tech leisure at new look Wombourne

Wombourne's new-look leisure centre is open for business after a £200,000 refit to provide state of the art facilities.



The work took seven months to complete - but customers agree it was well worth the wait!

The gym has been extended and completely refurbished to house over 50 pieces of the very latest Pulse Gym equipment. The equipment includes resistance, cardiovascular and free weights - some even have individual built in TV screens!

The refurbished gym also has new male and female changing areas with showers and lockers. What's more, the facility will be staffed by dedicated fitness professionals, who will be on hand to offer advice and support.

Further improvements at the leisure centre feature a dedicated spin cycle studio (static bike aerobic exercise) - the latest in Hi-Tech equipment with disco style lighting.

Cllr Marshall Deputy Leader (Community Services) said "The new facility at Wombourne has set it apart from many others in the area and leads the way for future leisure improvements across the South Staffordshire area".

For more information please contact Wombourne Leisure Centre on 01902 898202.



Fire and Rescue Service launches New arson drama:

'TWISTED FIRESTARTER'

Shock tactics are being employed in a bid to cut the rising number of arson attacks at school premises in South Staffordshire.

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service, together with the South Staffordshire Crime Reduction Partnership have commissioned a hard-hitting drama called "Twisted Firestarter" which will play to high school pupils throughout the district.

But to ram the message home, the children themselves will be taking part. Local actor and scriptwriter Simon Quinn will assist them in creating the performance.

He said: "The final result will combine a variety of media to create an evocative and challenging piece of drama."

There will be performances in High Schools and other community venues across the district later this year.

Area commander for South Staffordshire, Chris Bromley, said: "Tackling arson in schools remains a top priority. Arson costs about £2.2 billion each year and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, along with its partners, are determined to tackle this problem head on".

"Twisted Firestarter" is a unique initiative that uses the arts as a

tool to tackle challenging issues and to engage with young people".

The project is just part of a much wider programme of community education developed by Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service:

"We have been very successful in securing funding from our own service, the South Staffordshire Crime Reduction Partnership and a grant from Arts Council England," Mr Bromley added.

For further information about the project contact: Chris Bromley, Andy Buttery on 01902 843934 or Moya Lloyd (Project manager) on 07941 022 872.

The changing face of Cheslyn Hay



The proposed scheme for Chapel Square, Cheslyn Hay

Cheslyn Hay's proposed village makeover has been given a boost.

Local residents who are helping to design the remodelled village centre are hoping to have the assistance of a professional artist.

The area around the War Memorial is being transformed with new paving and planting. When considering how it should look, the artist will encourage villagers to focus on their identity and the history of the area, as well as looking to the future.

They will then explore ways in which this can be celebrated in the village, perhaps through a series of bespoke fences/paving or specialist lighting - it's all up to the community.

The artist will work with South Staffordshire Council and the County Council to ensure the ideas developed by



Chapel Square as it looks today.

the community are incorporated into the final scheme.

The funding for the artist has yet to be confirmed, but it is hoped that this will pave the way for a new approach in South Staffordshire, involving artists at all stages of landscape & village improvement design schemes.

It is anticipated that initial work on the Cheslyn Hay scheme will begin next spring.

For further details regarding this element of the project please contact the Arts Development Officer, Rachel Henley in Leisure Services on 01902 696534.

Plant a tree - Watch it grow!

South Staffordshire Council's free tree scheme is with us again. Wherever you live in the District and even if you have received a tree(s) before you can apply.

The Council is keen to encourage the greening and general enhancement of its villages and the District as a whole and hopes that as many people as possible will take up the offer.

The closing date for applications is 31st January 2005. There will be collection points at Kinver, Wombourne, Codsall, Penkridge, Great Wyrley and Featherstone, where local tree wardens will be helping to distribute the trees.

There are five different species of tree to choose from:

- HAZEL (*Corylus avellana*)**
Large shrub or small tree.
- ROWAN (*Sorbus aucuparia*)**
Small tree up to 7.5m (25ft) tall.
- SNOWY MESPIBUS (*Amelanchier lamarkii*)**
Large shrub or small tree.
- CHERRY PLUM (*Prunus cerasifera*)**
A small tree
- HOLLY (*Ilex aquifolium*)**
Large evergreen shrub or small tree.

The size of the trees make them suitable for garden planting.

Successful applicants will be informed of their collection point, date and time after 31st January.

• Please note that the number of trees available is limited and will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

For more information please contact Steve Does on (01902) 696422 or email s.dores@sstaffs.gov.uk

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL FREE TREE SCHEME FOR GARDENS

To qualify for your FREE tree, please complete and return this application form by 31st January, 2005 to:

Head of Architectural & Landscape Services,
South Staffordshire Council,
Council Offices, Codsall,
South Staffordshire,
WV8 1PX



Name

Address

Daytime Tel :.....

ONLY ONE FREE TREE PER HOUSEHOLD.

Please read the notes carefully then tick your preferred choice:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazel | <input type="checkbox"/> Cherry Plum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rowan | <input type="checkbox"/> Holly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snowy Mespilus | |
- your preferred collection point:
- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kinver | <input type="checkbox"/> Penkridge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wombourne | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Wyrley |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Codsall | <input type="checkbox"/> Featherstone |

LOCAL BUILDINGS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE UPDATE

Nominations for South Staffordshire's own list of treasured buildings and heritage sites have come in thick and fast following our story in the last edition of REVIEW.

As explained then, the buildings to be listed may not meet national criteria for preservation, but are important to the people of South Staffordshire as well as being attractive and interesting in their own right.

As a result, a stream of letters and e-mails has added over 100 buildings and other places of interest to the local list database.

The nominations have come from individuals and groups in: Acton Trussell, Bednall & Teddesley Hay, Brewwood, Codsall, Featherstone, Great Wyrley, Kinver, Shreshill and Swindon.

Amongst the local features put forward are a whole streetful of lamp-posts, a total of three wells, plus a village pump!

Anyone who lives or works in the District can nominate something for inclusion on the local list. Why not tell us about the

buildings that are important to you - the ones you would miss if they were no longer there or were to be altered beyond recognition?

Send details of the building, object or site to: The Local List, Conservation Section, South Staffordshire Council, Council Offices, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall WV8 1PX. Please include information on the type of building, object or site (e.g. house, shop, pillar box, etc.), its address or location, plus as much information as you have on its age, function, and its significance to you and your locality. Photographs would be useful too.

Although there is no deadline for nominations, the sooner they are received the sooner they can be acted upon. It would be particularly good to hear about locally important items in those parishes not listed above.

For further information please contact Paul Collins on (01902) 696425 or email p.collins@sstaffs.gov.uk

PREPARING FOR OUR BUDGET

South Staffordshire Council finance chiefs are already working hard to prepare the authority's budget for next year, 2005-2006.

The Council has a proud record over recent years of setting low levels of Council Tax for its own services and the Council is determined to keep it that way.

This special article in REVIEW sets out the background to the budget proposals, highlighting some of the difficulties faced by local authorities and discussing some of the economic realities of 'the Council Tax'.

In this context, there is a summary of the medium-term financial strategy the Council's Executive is committed to pursuing.

The Council aims to ensure that anyone, or any organisation, affected by the budget proposals, has the chance to put their point of view BEFORE they are approved.

Anyone with an interest in the Council's budget may put forward their views and comments for consideration as part of the budgetary process. There is no set format for such comments.

Any comments received will be taken into consideration when the Executive's Medium Term Financial Strategy, incorporating its initial Budget proposals, is approved for consultation at the Executive's meeting on 7th December. Consultees will then have five weeks - until 11th January - to respond.

Final proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy, together with the Capital Programme and recommendations for the level of Council Tax, will be approved at the meeting of the Executive on 11th January and submitted to the Council on 1st March, 2005.

Comments may be made in writing to

**Budget Consultation,
SSC
FREEPOST MID21881
Codsall,
Nr Wolverhampton,
South Staffordshire,
WV8 1BR**

By fax to Budget Consultation on:
01902 696136

Or by e-mail to:
budgetconsultation@sstaffs.gov.uk

District Council Budget

Most people already know that, in addition to setting the rate for its own services, South Staffordshire Council is obliged by law to be the collector for the local taxes levied by other bodies.

These bodies are the County Council, the Staffordshire Fire Authority, the Staffordshire

Police Authority and your local parish council.

They set their budgets during January and February each year, notifying the District Council of their requirements when completed. The District Council, as "billing authority", acts as the council tax collector on behalf of all these bodies, sending out a combined bill to local taxpayers, collecting the payments and passing on the various shares at agreed stages throughout the financial year.

South Staffordshire Council has no control over the budgets or levels of council tax set by these other bodies.

Only a small portion of your Council Tax (less than 7%) is levied by South Staffordshire Council and the budget being discussed here concerns solely that element.

The table below sets out the budgetary requirements for each of the other authorities involved for the current financial year, along with the resulting charges. (These are shown at Band D equivalent only. Properties in other bands are charged proportions or multiples of the Band D charge based on a nationally agreed formula. A - 6/9, B - 7/9, C - 8/9, E - 11/9, F - 13/9, G - 15/9 and H 18/9.)

Authority	Budget Requirement £	2004/05 Tax Levied £	% of Total Bill
Staffordshire County Council	31,358,255.00	823.11	72.59
Staffordshire Police Authority	5,274,190.00	138.44	12.21
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Fire Authority	1,987,505.00	52.17	4.60
South Staffordshire Council	3,012,729.00	79.08	6.97
Parish Councils	1,568,565.50	41.17	3.63
Total	£43,201,244.50	£1,133.97	100.00

As the table (above) shows, South Staffordshire Council will keep less than 7% of the money that it will collect this year.

Put into a nationwide context, only five district councils set a lower level of council tax than South Staffordshire in 2004/05. What's more - four of those five councils had a higher percentage of their requirements funded directly by central government.

(Source: CIPFA Council Tax Demands and Precepts 2004-05).

South Staffordshire's place among the elite of low Council Tax authorities has been achieved by the application over many years of sound financial practices, the consistent application of the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and the careful husbandry of what is, and remains, public money.

Budget Aims

In setting its budget for the next financial year, the Council faces many challenges, some beyond its direct control.

The Executive of the Council proposes a budget in line with the Council's longstanding aim: to keep the council tax as low as possible, whilst continuing to deliver the quality services that people need and value.

Background Briefing

Central Government has imposed many new duties and changes on local authorities without always providing a compensating increase in funding.

A significant amount of Council work has gone into these new areas, for example the regime of Best Value Reviews and requirements to collect data for statutory performance indicators and Comprehensive Performance Assessments.

Some developments have received specific and targeted funding to enable the Council to make initial progress, such as recycling and the advancement of electronic government. But these will involve continued revenue expenditure by the Council in future years.

Partnerships

The Council is increasing its voice and influence in new partnership arrangements with other public bodies on behalf of South Staffordshire people, in areas which really affect their lives:

- health,
- crime and disorder,
- transport
- education,
- social benefits, etc.

A Local Strategic Partnership has been formed from representatives of bodies with an interest in public services in South Staffordshire. Input to its

deliberations from local people will be encouraged and welcomed.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

The current strategy covering the period up to and including 2008/09 was approved by the Council on 2nd March 2004. It is based on a detailed projection of current service provision costs and known new developments and takes into account the effects of inflation on both pay and prices. This report marks the first step, following the approval of the Budget and Policy Framework and Timetable, in updating the current strategy for factors and developments that have changed since then. The end result will be a new strategy covering the period up to 2009/2010 and a budget and council tax requirement for 2005/06.

There are many factors to be taken into account. These include the level of financial reserves, assumptions on inflation and interest rates and spending requirements identified since the budget was set.

All of these, and any others that emerge over the coming weeks, will be evaluated and taken into account before the next stage of the process, which is the publication by the

Executive of the new Medium Term Financial Strategy and initial budget proposals at its meeting on 7th December.

Central Government Expectations

Last year, during the budget setting process, the Government announced that it would not look kindly on council tax increases that were more than twice the rate of inflation, then running at 2.5%. This Council took the message on board, with an increase of 4.99%. Several authorities around the country did not heed the warning with the result that five councils and one fire authority were 'capped'. Furthermore, four fire authorities, one police authority and one council had notional budgets set for them, as they were not proposing increases significantly above the capping level.

This year, based on the observations so far made, it seems clear that the government is looking for increases to be no more than 3%, which is the current rate of inflation.

Central Government Funding

Almost 63% of the Council's funding comes from Central Government in the form of its share of the national business rate pool (£2.9m in 2004/05) and revenue support grant (£2.3m). The latest advice received on these amounts is that the funding formula currently being used to calculate grants will remain the same for next year. However, the Local Government Association, acting on behalf of all local authorities, has identified within the Chancellor's latest spending review, an assumption that income to be derived from council tax next year is to rise by 6.7%. This conflicts with the government's desired 3% increase and the LGA is pressing the government to fill this apparent gap with a further commitment of £700m plus £300m targeted specifically at waste and other environmental services.

You can help

Members and officers will continue to search for efficiency savings and improvements across all services, with a brief to maintain or improve service quality and to achieve tight performance targets. Through its partnership working, the Council will continue to seek to bid for funds, to bring in partner contributions and to gain economies of scale in order to make South Staffordshire a better place in which to live and work.

If there are any points - large or small - you feel should be taken into account when the Executive draws up its detailed budget proposals, please let us know by **26th November 2004**. You can write to us, fax or email us at the addresses detailed earlier in this article.

The proposals for the budget can also be viewed on the Council's own website www.sstaffs.gov.uk

**Thank you in advance
for your time.**

First in line to save lives!

A dedicated group of trained volunteers throughout South Staffordshire is on standby to help out in a medical emergency.

In the event of an accident or a patient collapse, they can be on the scene within minutes to render potentially life-saving care to a victim.

The volunteers are called Community 1st Responders and South Staffordshire's team of 30, alongside Shropshire's team, has recently won national recognition in the emergency care category of the health and social care awards.

The 1st Response team in South Staffordshire has been operating for 18 months.

The scheme enables trained volunteers to be alerted by ambulance control when there is an emergency in their village. They will usually arrive on scene before the ambulance and they will have with them an emergency kit comprising:

- Mobile phone (to allow them to be alerted)
- Bag-and-mask ventilator
- First aid kit
- Emergency oxygen
- Defibrillator

West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust has trained them to use the equipment to prevent deterioration of a patient's condition prior to the arrival of an emergency vehicle.

Save a life

The minutes saved by providing this vital service could help save a person's life.

In South Staffordshire, the scheme is fully backed by the Council and local parish councils.

For example, both Perton and Pattingham Parish



Cllr Joan Burton MBE, left, presents first responders Ian Morris and Diane Hatton and community paramedic Sarah Partridge with a new emergency kit.

Councils have donated in the region of £1,700 for emergency kits for their villages (most of the cost is the defibrillator for heart attack victims). Cllr. S. Oatley also donated a Defibrillator

However, four of the volunteers have succeeded in gaining full time employment as trainee ambulance technicians and will soon be leaving. More volunteers are needed to replace them.

The scheme would also welcome more donations to help supply emergency kits.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer or who would like to contribute towards a new kit can call Sarah Partridge on 07968 409475.

Readers flock to help our barn owls thrive

The feature on barn owls in the last edition of REVIEW struck a chord with many of our readers.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust had a tremendous response to the article, with over 40 people offering their land, skills and time to help increase the barn owl population in South Staffordshire.

Barn owl specialists from the Trust are now following up the offers of nest sites in order to pick the best ones for the birds.

Habitat

A suitable site must be close to an ample food supply if a barn owl is to take up residence. The best habitat is rough grassland supporting a high field vole population.

In September, eight people attended a nest box

workshop at the Wildside Activity Centre, resulting in four nest boxes being built.

Last October the group learnt how to erect a very heavy box in a large, old and isolated tree and select a suitable indoor site with

access high above the ground and with good shelter.

You can continue to support the barn owl by supporting the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. For further information telephone (01889) 880100, email staffswt@cix.co.uk, or visit their website at www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk



Photograph courtesy of: Tom Marshall

The day we went to Buckingham Palace



Off to the Royal Garden Party are Cllr. Brian Wood and his wife Susan, with the Chairman of the Council, Cllr. Mrs. Pamela Bromley and her Consort, Cllr. Cyril Bromley.

It was a day to remember for two South Staffordshire councillors and their consorts - tea with the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

The Chairman of the Council, Cllr. Mrs. Pamela Bromley with her Consort, Cllr. Cyril Bromley, and Cllr Brian Wood, accompanied by his wife Susan, had invitations to the Royal Garden Party on 20th July.

In keeping with the occasion, both couples were chauffeur driven from the Council Offices in Codsall to the Palace, to represent South Staffordshire at this prestigious event.

Cllr. Mrs. Bromley said, "It was a splendid occasion and to be in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen and other members of the Royal family was a great honour. It will be a day I shall always remember".

Councillor Brian Wood said, "My wife and I very much enjoyed the Royal Garden Party, it was a very memorable day for us".

WORD SEARCH COMPETITION

Can you find the following words in the grid? They may be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal and could be backwards or forwards.

- OLYMPIC • GAMES • ATHENS
- TRACK • FIELD • EVENTS • SPRINT
- HURDLE • RELAY • PUTTING • SHOT
- THROW • DISCUS • JAVELIN • HAMMER
- LONG • HIGH • TRIPLE • JUMP • DECATHLON
- SWIMMING • FREESTYLE • BACK • STROKE
- BUTTERFLY • DIVING • WEIGHT • LIFTING
- ARCHERY • BASKET • VOLLEYBALL
- SAILING • HOCKEY • TABLE • TENNIS
- TRIATHLON • CYCLING • ROWING
- WORLD • RECORD • GOLD • SILVER • MEDAL

G	O	L	T	N	O	L	H	T	A	C	E	D	F
D	R	O	C	E	R	E	M	M	A	H	G	I	H
I	H	F	T	E	N	N	I	S	T	N	E	V	E
S	I	R	E	V	L	I	S	Y	D	L	O	I	W
C	Y	E	K	C	O	H	A	L	D	G	T	N	E
U	R	E	S	G	D	L	I	F	T	I	N	G	I
S	E	S	A	E	E	D	L	R	O	W	I	N	G
W	H	T	B	R	M	P	I	E	L	D	R	U	H
I	C	Y	O	A	U	A	N	T	Y	P	P	T	T
M	R	L	L	T	T	O	G	T	M	B	S	A	R
M	A	E	T	H	R	O	W	U	P	A	A	B	I
I	N	I	L	E	V	A	J	B	I	C	D	L	P
N	N	O	G	N	I	L	C	Y	C	K	E	E	L
G	N	O	L	S	T	R	O	K	E	R	M	G	E

There are **two words** in the list that are **NOT** included in the grid.

Write them on the back of a postcard (or sealed envelope) TOGETHER WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS and send to:

Chris Mantle
Word Search Competition,
South Staffordshire Council,
Council Offices, Codsall,
South Staffordshire. WV8 1PX

The first correct entry picked after the closing date of
4th January, 2005,
will win a
£25 Prize

WORDSEARCH WINNER:

Congratulations to **John James Roberts** from Great Wyrley who won £25 in the Word Search Competition in the Summer 2004 Edition of the South Staffordshire Review.



Village swallows time capsule

Wheaton Aston's annual Carnival Parade had a VIP visitor to lead the way this year - the Chairman of South Staffordshire Council.

Cllr. Mrs. Pamela Bromley had the privilege of leading the parade of floats in the Council's official car.

She was also invited by the Carnival organisers to judge the floats competitions and a local version of Pop Idol!

One of the features of this year's Carnival, though, was the burial of a "Time Capsule". Amongst many of the interesting memorabilia being buried was a millennium porcelain plate and embroidery by local members of the village.

The capsule is scheduled to be opened in 2054.

Cllr. Mrs. Bromley said, "It was a pleasure to meet the people of Wheaton Aston, and to be part of the historical "Time Capsule" ceremony. Both my husband and I thoroughly enjoyed the occasion."

The time capsule at Wheaton Aston



Steering a course to E-Government

THERE'S a new skipper at the helm of a cutting-edge partnership dedicated to making public services in Staffordshire better and more convenient than ever before.

All the local authorities in the county have until December next year to fully launch all their services in electronic format.

The man tasked to make sure it happens is South Staffordshire Councillor Brian Edwards, who was elected chair of the Joint Committee of the Staffordshire E-Government Partnership.

With his hand on the rudder for the first time, Cllr. Edwards has pledged that the partnership would continue helping its 10 councils to hit the Government's December 2005 target.

Cllr. Edwards has succeeded Tamworth member David Foster, whose 12 months in the hot seat saw the partnership putting in place the infrastructure for some of its biggest projects.

Initiatives moved forward under Cllr. Foster included a Customer Relationship Management system that will allow

councils to log and track service requests on line - as well as delivering services for each other. Also poised to go live is a Joined-Up Directory that will enable council workers to contact each other effortlessly, thus accelerating services.

Four of the partner authorities will be introducing an e-payments facility this summer.

With Cllr. Edwards now steering the ship, the partnership will continue to consult the public to make sure that Staffordshire's biggest councils are providing the right services in the right way.

Initiatives

He explained: "The whole purpose of the partnership is to enable customers to benefit from joined-up services accessed via the telephone, Internet or one-stop shops."

A founder member of the Joint Committee, he said he was "delighted to have been elected. The partnership was at the forefront of e-services nationally and would continue going from strength to strength."

He added that the partnership's



Cllr Brian Edwards

prominence was indicated by the fact that he and Programme Manager, Tim Chesworth had lectured in the United States and Canada for the national Information Exchange Partnership. Their presentations formed part of a study tour sponsored by two software giants.

A member of South Staffordshire District Council for 21 years and a resident of Kinver, Cllr. Edwards is the authority's cabinet member for support services and has been a county councillor for 17 years.

RURAL BUS RIDES

A public transport service linking villages in South Staffordshire is just starting its second year of operation.

South Staffs Ruralink operates between Codsall, Perton and Wombourne via Bilbrook, Pattingham, Lower Penn, Trysull and Seisdon. The vehicles run on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

It is a hail and ride service which means the bus will stop anywhere along the route to pick up or drop off passengers, as long as it is safe to do so.

The service, operated by Codsall Cars and funded by the County Council and the Countryside Agency, has been running since June 2003. During that time over 2000 passenger journeys have been made.

If you have not tried the service before why not give it a go?

For further information, timetable leaflets or business card size timetables (which fit easily into the purse or wallet) please contact Codsall Cars on 01902 842842 or the Rural Transport Co-ordinator at Staffordshire County Council on 01785 276730.



Air museum is worth shouting about

South Staffordshire's best kept tourist secret must surely be the Boulton Paul Heritage Project's Aircraft Museum at Bilbrook.

The company's proud record of innovation in the aircraft industry is celebrated there with full-size replicas of its two most famous planes.

The P6 Bi-plane from the First World War and the World War 2 fighter, the Defiant, are examples of how Boulton Paul broke the boundaries of flight engineering.

Frequently "overshadowed" by the glamorous reputations of the Spitfire and Hurricane, the Defiant played a vital role during the blitz on London and at Dunkirk.

The story is being preserved on the site of the Boulton Paul factory at Bilbrook by a dedicated and

skilled band of enthusiasts.

However, the Boulton Paul Museum is not, and doesn't pretend to be, another Cosford, as can be seen in the memorabilia and displays. It is very much a working museum where visitors will see skilled craftsmen beavering away on one of their current projects - one of which involves replicating part of a Boulton Paul Balliol aircraft.

Presentation

South Staffordshire Council is aware of the importance of Smith's Industries to the local economy, and appreciates the achievements of the group behind the Heritage Project.

In recognition of this, the Chairman of the Council, Cllr. Mrs. Pamela Bromley, presented a commemorative chalice to Cyril Plimmer, Chairman of the Boulton Paul Heritage Project and Jack Holmes its Chief Engineer.

Both Jack and Cyril have a long association with the company, joining soon after the factory was founded on the site in the 1930's, when aircraft production was

switched from Norwich to Bilbrook - which was of course very conveniently placed next to Pendeford airfield.

The museum is open on the 1st Sunday in the months of December, February, April, June and August - and will next open on the 5th December. Make a note in your diaries!

For further information contact Cyril Plimmer on (01902) 843118.



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

CONTACTS:

Tel: (01902) 696000

Fax: (01902) 696800

Website: www.sstaffs.gov.uk

A-Z DIRECTORY



Council verdict is fair

South Staffordshire Council has received its rating from the team of Government watchdogs who carried out an inspection of the authority's services.

The Audit Commission's verdict was: "South Staffordshire is a fair Council, which is improving its priority services."

Praise

The Council was praised for its community leadership and the way that councillors and members of staff work together.

Rolf Levesley, the Council's Chief Executive, responded to the Commission's conclusions by saying: "I am satisfied with the result which gives the Council the highest marks of the six Staffordshire Districts rated as fair."

"The next step is for the Council to draw up an Improvement Plan focused on the local priorities for South Staffordshire maintaining an emphasis on good value service delivery".

The Council's methods of providing services came under scrutiny from a team of inspectors from the Audit Commission in December 2003. The inspectors looked at all aspects of the Council, from its corporate governance through to its service delivery, interviewing members, Strategic Directors, staff and service users.

Councillor Bill Brownhill, Leader of the Council said: "I am pleased with the result and particularly the comments of the Audit Commission on the effective community leadership provided by the Council and on the good relationships between members and staff".

South Staffordshire Council's new Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive



Rolf Levesley,
Chief Executive



Steve Winterflood,
Deputy Chief Executive

for prompt attention at competitive rates contact:

Engineering Services

on **01902 696541**



- cesspool & septic tank emptying
- skip hire & collection (commercial/domestic)
- drain unblocking



South Staffordshire Council
Council Offices
Codsall
South Staffordshire WV8 1PX



Bug-busters on call

Got a problem with a pesky pest? South Staffordshire Council can help debug your home.

The Council provides a disinfection service, free of charge, for domestic households for public health pests such as rats, mice, fleas, bed bugs, cockroaches and infestations of flies.

There is also a service for nuisance pests such as wasps, ants, other insects and squirrels inside occupied property, for which we make a charge sufficient to cover the costs. This charge is waived for treatment of wasps and squirrels, where the householder is in receipt of means tested benefit

Pest control services are not available for birds, rabbits, foxes, moles, squirrels (other than inside occupied properties) woodworm, lice (or other

personal infestations), bats or any other protected species.

The Council also provides a disinfection service for local businesses, in respect of all the pests referred to above, at very competitive rates.

Contract services for local businesses are also available, with free surveys and individual quotations provided

The Council waives its charges for disinfection of public health pests in places of religious worship, registered charities and village halls eligible for non-domestic rate relief.

Full details of all our pest control services are available on our website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk or can be obtained by telephoning (01902) 696204.

Help for homebuyers

Would-be homebuyers in South Staffordshire are to get a helping hand from the Council and a local housing association.

The financial package on offer is open to existing housing association tenants and people on housing waiting lists who are in housing need.

Under the scheme, called 'Homebuy', prospective purchasers who qualify put up 75% of the cost of the property they want. The remaining 25% is lent by the Beth Johnson Housing Association, but the buyers do not have to make any monthly repayments on it. The money is paid back when the property is sold.

Partnership

The Council is working in partnership with Beth Johnson Housing Association to provide the scheme, which is funded by the Housing

Corporation. It is operated in Staffordshire and Shropshire by Beth Johnson Housing Association.

The benefits of the Homebuy scheme are not confined to those assisted with a purchase. By helping them onto the housing ladder, their homes for rent are freed up for others in housing need, thus reducing waiting lists in areas where there is a shortage of affordable housing.

The scheme is strictly limited to those who qualify and a reminder of those eligible are:

- Existing tenants of Housing Associations
- Those on housing waiting lists who are nominated by the Council as being in housing need.

For more information contact Pamela Platt or Gill McGovern on (01782) 203570 / 69 or email Pplatt@bjhg.co.uk or GmcGovern@bjhg.co.uk

THE COUNCIL'S CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR SERVICES

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL OFFICES

Council Offices close on **24th December, 2004**, at 1pm.
and re-open on **4th January, 2005**.

Tel: (01902) 696000

for emergency services from the Council.

REFUSE COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS

Normal collections up to and on Friday 24th December, 2004

Mon	27 th December, 2004
Tues	28 th December, 2004
Wed	29 th December, 2004
Thurs	30 th December, 2004
Fri	31 st December, 2004

} No collection

Mon	3 rd January, 2005
Tues	4 th January, 2005
Wed	5 th January, 2005
Thurs	6 th January, 2005
Fri	7 th January, 2005

} Normal working Collection
(Properties on a wheeled bin service will have side waste taken)

Normal daily working resumes from Monday 10th January, 2005.

Properties on a sack collection service not receiving collections from 27th December to the 31st December, 2004, will be left double sack issues.

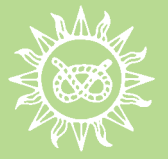
GREEN WASTE:

There will be no green waste collection from :
Monday 27th December, 2004 to Friday 7th January, 2005.
The service will re-commence from Monday 10th January, 2005.

For more details on refuse collection contact Jim Siviter on (01902) 696200 or email j.siviter@sstaffs.gov.uk



A-Z DIRECTORY OF SERVICES



Service Telephone Number

A

Abandoned Vehicles	696314
Acupuncture Licences	696665
ACCESS FOR DISABLED	
• Grants for Facilities	696212
• Public/Parking	696506
Accidents at Work	696204
Accidents in Council Buildings	696105
Accountancy Services	696607
Aggregates	County Council (01785) 223121
Air Quality	696217
Allotments	See under Parish Councils
Amusements with Prizes Licences	696119
Animal Boarding Licences	696665
Animal found dead on Highway	696203
Animal Health & Welfare	County Council (01785) 223121
Archaeological Sites	696428
Architectural and Landscape Services	696408
Arts Development General	696534
Arts Grants	696534
Asbestos - inspection/advice on removal	696204
Atmospheric Pollution	696216
Attractions	696425
Audit	696611

B

Baggeridge Country Park	882605
Bedbugs (Pest Control)	696204
BENEFITS	
Working age customers:	
• Council Tax	696669
• Rent	696669
• Discretionary Housing Payments	696669
• Benefit Fraud Hotline	Freephone 0500 658008
Pension age customers:	
• Council Tax	696668
• Rent	696668
• Discretionary Housing Payments	696668
• Benefit Fraud Hotline	Freephone 0500 658008
Best Value	696537

BINS

• Litter Bins	696203
• Missed Collections	696203
• New Bins	696203
Bonfires	696313
Bottle Banks	696315
Building Control	696440
Building Preservation Notices	696428
Burial of the Dead	696212
Bus Shelters	See under Parish Councils
Bus Tokens / Passes	696122/4
Business Information	696117
Business Rates - Enquiries	696667
Butchers Shops Licences	696665
Bye-laws	696108

C

Car Parking	696506
Caravan Sites Licensing & Conditions	696665
CCTV	696503
Cemeteries	See under Parish Councils
Census Statistics	696423
Cesspool Emptying Service	696541
Chairman's Secretary	696139
Charity Collection Licences	696120
Chemical Spillage / Pollution	696217
Cheslyn Hay Leisure Centre	(01922) 417790

The Council has a full complaints procedure. If you wish to find out about it, ask for an explanatory leaflet at our Solutions reception, leisure centres, or parish council offices. Your local councillor will also be able to supply you with more information.

Children's Activity Programmes	696532
Children's Play Areas	See under Parish Councils
Cinema, Video and Film Show Licences	696665
Civil Emergencies	696119
Cleaning & Draining of Ponds	See under Parish Councils
Clinical Waste	696200
Cockroaches (Pest Control)	696204
Codsall Leisure Centre	844032
Commercial Development	696117
Committee Services	696109
Community Centres	See under Parish Councils
Complaints about the Council	696147/696529
Compulsory Purchases	696110
Conference Facilities	696142
Conservation Areas	696428
Concessionary Travel Enquiries	696122/4
Committee Meetings	696529/696147
Comprehensive Performance Assessments (CPA)	696521
Corporate Policy Team	696521
Council Elections	696119
Council Executive	696110
Council Meetings	696147/696529

COUNCIL OWNED PROPERTY

• Commercial Management	696117
• Ownership Records	696109
Council Tax	696664

COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT

• Working age customers:	696669
• Pension age customers:	696668
• Benefit Fraud Hotline	Freephone 0500 658008
Councillors	696515
Country Park - Baggeridge	882605
Countryside Management	696408
Countryside Rangers	882605
Court Cases	696115
Crime & Disorder	696530
Customer Services	696320

D

Dangerous Buildings and Structures	696506
Dangerous Wild Animal Licences	696665
Data Protection	696521
Deeds	696109
Demolition	696503
Derelict Land	696408
DEVELOPMENT & BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES	
• Building Control	696440
• Development Control - North	696412
• Development Control - South	696417
• Enforcement	696420
Development Plans	696426
DISABLED FACILITIES	
• Grants for Facilities	696212
District-wide Local Plan	696426
Dog Breeding Licences	696665
Dog Fouling	696204
Dog Wardens	696204
Drainage Enquiries & Drain Clearing Service	696541
Dumping, removal of dumped refuse	696203
Dustbins (unemptied)	696203

E

Ear Piercing Licences	696665
Economic Development	696117
Election Enquiries	696119
Electoral Registration	696121
Electrolysis Licensing	696665
Emergencies (24hrs.) - after office hours only	(01384) 215863
Emergency Planning Enquiries	696119
Energy Advice Centre	0800 512012
Energy Efficiency - Advice & Grants	0800 512012
Engineering Services	696503
Entertainment Licences	696665
Environmental Action Groups	696213
Environmental Improvements	696411
Environmental Health (Commercial) Services	696204
Environmental Health (General) Services	696203
Equal Opportunities	696107
Events	696539
EXTENSIONS TO HOMES	
• North	696412
• South	696417

Everything you need to know - at a glance

This A-Z Directory of Services contains a description of the service and a direct telephone number. All telephone numbers have the code **(01902)** unless otherwise stated. Main Switchboard **(01902) 696000**

F

Film Show Licences	696665
Finances - The Council's	696607
Financial Services	696615
Fleas (Pest Control)	696204
Flooding	696541
Food Hygiene and Safety	696665
Football Pitch bookings	See under Parish Councils
Footpaths - Rights of Way	696109
Food Hotline	Freephone 0500 658008
Freedom of Information	696521

G

Garden Refuse Disposal	696203
GRANTS	
• Arts Scholarships / Arts Group Grants	696534
• Community/Leisure Projects	696110
• Disabled Facilities	696212
• Economic Development	696117
• Home Renovation	696213
• Listed Buildings	696428
• Sponsorship - Individuals	696406
• Sports Scholarships	696540
• Sports Club Grant Aid	696540
Grass Cutting	696406
Green Belt	696426
Grounds maintenance	696405
Gypsies	696202

H

Hazardous Waste Disposal	County Council (01785) 277686
Health and Safety at Work	696665
High Hedges	696422
Highways Matters	0800 232323
Hinksford Park	(01384) 295874
Home Renovation Grants	696213
Home & Leisure Safety Quiz	696665
Homelessness Problems	696436
Homes in Multiple Occupation	696214
House to House Collecting	696142
Housing Advice	696509
Housing Benefits	
• Working age customers:	696669
• Pension age customers:	696668
• Benefit Fraud Hotline	Freephone 0500 658008
Housing Disrepair (Non Housing Association)	696214
Housing Strategy	696438

I

Income	696639
Industrial and Commercial Sites available	696117
Industrial Property - Rents	696117
Insects (Pest Control)	696204
Insurance Claims	696657
Inter Parish Games	696519

J

Job Applications - General Enquiries	696107
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K

Kinver Leisure Centre	(01384) 873950
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L

Land - Council Ownership	696109
Land Drainage	696506
Land for Sale, To Let	696117
Landfill Gas	696217
Landscape Design	696411
Late Night Refreshment House Licences	696665
Legal Services	696115

LEISURE CENTRES

• Cheslyn Hay	(01922) 417790
• Codsall	844032
• Kinver	(01384) 873950
• Penkridge	(01785) 714152
• Wombourne	898202
Leisure Services	696540

LICENSING

A new service unit is being set up to deal with licence applications (ask for Licensing Unit) 696000

Until January 2005 use the following contacts:

• Acupuncture Licences	696665
• Animal Boarding Licences	696665
• Amusements with Prizes Licences	696119
• Butchers Shops Licences	696665
• Caravan Sites Licensing & Conditions	696665
• Charity Collection Licences	696120
• Cinema, Video and Film Show Licences	696665
• Dangerous Wild Animal Licences	696665
• Dog Breeding Licence	696665
• Ear Piercing Licences	696665
• Electrolysis Licensing	696665
• Film Show Licences	696665
• House to House Collection Licences	696142
• Late Night Refreshment House Licences	696665
• Mobile Home Parks Licensing and Conditions	696665
• Motor Salvage Operations	696119
• Pet Shop Licences	696665
• Private Entertainment Licences	696665
• Public Entertainment Licences	696665
• Skin Piercing Licences	696665
• Street Collection Licences	696142
• Tattooist Licences	696665
• Taxi Licensing	696121
• Theatre Licences	696665

Listed Buildings	696428
Litter Control	696314
Local Agenda 21	696213
Local Plans and Policies	696426
Local Strategic Partnership - South Staffordshire	696512

M

Manhole Covers	696541
Mice (Pest Control)	696204
Minerals Planning	County Council (01785) 223121
Mobile Home Parks Licensing and Conditions	696665
Mobile Homes Park - Hinksford Park	696118

Mortgages - Existing Council	696639
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N

Noise Nuisance	696216
Non-domestic Rates	696667

O

Odour Nuisances	696313
Open Spaces	696405

P

PARISH COUNCILS

• Acton Trussell, Bednall & Teddesley Hay	(01785) 712128
• Bilbrook	845555
• Blynhill & Weston-Under-Lizard	(01952) 850534
• Bobbington	(01384) 221373
• Brewood & Coven	850809
• Cheslyn Hay	410483
• Codsall	842426
• Dunston with Coppenhall	(01785) 243978
• Enville	(01384) 872635
• Essington	(01922) 711608
• Featherstone and Brinsford	(01827) 707944
• Great Wyrley	(01922) 414768
• Hatherton	755709
• Hilton	790564
• Himley	880672
• Huntington	(01785) 252406
• Kinver	(01384) 873878
• Lapley, Stretton & Wheaton Aston	(01785) 840761
• Lower Penn	332289
• Pattingham & Patshull	700269
• Penkridge	(01785) 714157
• Perton	745971
• Saredon	755709
• Shareshill	755709
• Swindon	(01384) 271195
• Trysull & Seisdon	894609
• Wombourne	896300

PARKS

• Baggeridge	882605
• South Staffordshire Railway Walk	882605
Payments - by the Council	696657
Payments - to the Council - enquiries	696618
Penkridge Leisure Centre	(01785) 714152
Personnel Matters	696107
Pest Control	696204
Pet Shop Licences	696665

PLANNING APPEALS

• North	696412
• South	696417

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

• North	696412
• South	696417
Planning Enforcement	696420
Pollution of Watercourses	696203
Postal Voting	696120
Private Entertainment Licences	696665
Procurement	696119
Proxy Votes	696120
Public Entertainment Licences	696665

R

Rail Card Enquiries	696120
Rats	696204
REBATES - RENT ALLOWANCES	
• Working age customers:	696669
• Pension age customers:	696668
• Benefit Fraud Hotline	Freephone 0500 658008
Recycling	696315
Refuse Collection	696203
Register of Electors	696120
Renewable Energy - Advice	0800 512012
Rent Collection - Commercial Properties	696117

S

SATELLITE DISHES	
• North	696412
• South	696417
Schools Liaison	696704
Searches of Local Land Charges Register	696138
Septic Tank Emptying Service	696541
Sewers and Drains	696541
Shoal Hill Common	696702 / 696406

Skip Service	696541
Skin Piercing Licences	696665
Smoke Nuisance	696216
South Staffordshire Railway Walk	882605
Sports Development	696528
Sports Council	696540
Squirrels (Pest Control)	696204
Stray Dogs	696204
Street Cleansing	696314
Street Collection Licences	696142
Street Lighting	0800 232323
Street Naming and Numbering	696421
Street Nameplates	696506
Sundry Debtors	696639

T

Tattooist Licences	696665
Taxi Licensing	696121
Theatre Licences	696665
Tourism	696425
Trading Standards	County Council (01785) 277888
Training (Personnel)	696704
Trees - Preservation, Advice	696422
Tree Wardens	696422

V

Video Juke Box Licences	696665
Visitor Attractions	696425
Voting	696119

W

Walks	696523
Wasps (Pest Control)	696204
Waste Collection	696203
Waste Disposal	County Council (01785) 277686
Water Pollution	696217
Watercourses	696506
Welfare Rights	696669
Wombourne Leisure Centre	898202
Work Experience (Personnel)	696106

Email contacts

Accountancy	accountancy@sstaffs.gov.uk
Admin Licensing	adminlic@sstaffs.gov.uk
Administrative Services	admins@sstaffs.gov.uk
Architectural and Landscape	archland@sstaffs.gov.uk
Audit	audit@sstaffs.gov.uk
Building Control - North	BCNorth@sstaffs.gov.uk
Building Control - South	BCSouth@sstaffs.gov.uk
Benefits Services	benefits@sstaffs.gov.uk
Best Value	

Be Careful & Be Safe

South Staffordshire has one of the lowest crime rates in the Midlands - but residents still need to be on their guard against the villains and conmen who mistakenly think the area is a 'soft touch'.



The District's Crime Reduction Partnership is working hard to reduce crime and disorder locally and has issued some common sense advice, and a couple of warnings, to householders.

The Partnership's aim is to "Make South Staffordshire Safer" and to ensure that any form of crime does not affect your quality of life. Following these guidelines will help achieve that goal:

Sharks in the Water!

Over the past two months we have had reports of bogus Water Board Officials visiting properties in Wombourne attempting to gain entry into properties.

Unfortunately it resulted in six actual burglaries. Two arrests have since been made which has solved the problem but the Crime Reduction Partnership wants all residents of South Staffordshire to be alert to any suspicious individuals, particularly in relation to any vulnerable neighbours.

If you receive a knock at your door, remember the Stop, Chain, Check system.

- **Stop and think** - if you're not expecting a caller and they don't have an appointment - don't let them into your home.
- **Chain** - use the door chain before opening the door.
- **Check** - ask to see identification and double-check this by calling the company they are representing before letting anyone into your home.

If in doubt - call 999 immediately.



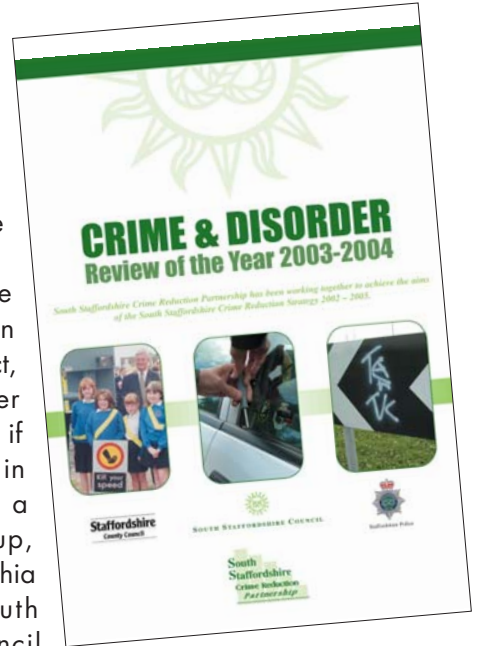
Environmental Action Groups

These are being set up for you, the public, to report to the Crime Reduction Partnership and South Staffordshire Council. We want to hear about issues that are concerning you in your village and in your local area.

Through these groups you have the opportunity to have your say and put your concerns across to the Crime Reduction Partnership and South Staffordshire Council.

There are five Environmental Action Groups in the district, which link together various villages and if you are interested in getting involved in a Local Action Group, please contact Cynthia Walczak at South Staffordshire Council on 01902 696501.

For more information on the Crime Reduction Partnership, please contact the Community Safety Team on 01902 696530 or email: communitysafety@sstaffs.gov.uk



Watch out for Firebugs:

Over 80% of calls attended by the Fire Service last year were for deliberately lit fires. Please be vigilant - if you see anyone acting suspiciously please call 999 immediately.

You can protect your home from a potential arson attack by ensuring you make it as difficult as possible for an offender to target your home.

- Ensure you have at least one working smoke alarm in your home
- Keep windows and doors locked when you are not at home
- Light is a great deterrent - make sure your outside lights are working

If you see anything suspicious contact the police by calling 999 or if you have information about any crimes contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

Driving down car crime:



Vehicle Crime has increased nationally and on a local level we need you to be aware of the consequences of leaving items on view in your vehicle.

Valuables left on view in vehicles such as laptops, mobile phones, CDs, DVDs offer temptation to the passing criminal. This is a preventable crime and with your help we can beat the opportunist thief.

Please remember to:

- Always lock your vehicle
- Always remove any items on view and place them in the boot.
- Activate your alarm or immobilizer.

Members' Allowances 2003 - 2004

The Constitution of South Staffordshire Council provides for the publication of the total sum payable to each member in respect of basic and special responsibility allowances at the end of each year. The information for last year is contained in the table below.

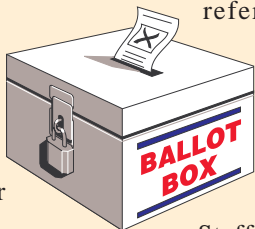
Name	Total £	Name	Total £
Ashley L	7,500	Holt R	4,530
Billson D	4,530	Hood R	470
Bird G	4,530	James K	5,000
Boyle T	4,530	Johnson J	4,530
Brindle J	5,000	Kelly I	5,591
Bromley C	5,000	Kemp M	470
Bromley P	7,204	Light P	470
Brownhill W	15,000	Mackie D	5,000
Bullock G	470	Mackie K	5,000
Burton J MBE	5,000	Marshall R	10,000
Caine N	4,530	Mason L	4,530
Campbell P	5,000	McCardle R	4,530
Cartwright D	5,296	Michell J	5,000
Clay I	5,000	Moran A	5,000
Cliff D	4,530	Murphy D	470
Cope R	5,000	Newsham C	470
Cox B	9,409	Perry K	5,000
Craddock W	5,000	Pugh A	470
Crudgington D	470	Raven C	4,530
Davies M	470	Ray E	4,480
Edwards B	10,000	Reade R	7,500
Edwards S	4,530	Spandler G	5,000
Evans J	5,000	Timms P	5,000
Fletcher B	470	Turton A	470
Ford I	4,530	Wallace A	470
Gosling J	5,000	Wilkinson D	470
Griffin P	5,000	Williams J	10,000
Hampson M	7,500	Williams R	5,000
Harris M	5,000	Wilson F	4,530
Hinton A	4,530	Wood B	5,000
Hipkiss L	470	Wright R	10,000
Holmes D	5,000	Young C	470
Holmes G	470		

For further information please contact Phil Cooper on (01902) 696607 or email p.cooper@sstaffs.gov.uk

YOUR VOTE COUNTS - DON'T LOSE IT!

Choosing not to cast your vote in an election is not a crime. But failing to return the electoral registration form is!

Some people may not be aware that it is a legal requirement for every household to make a return to register the adults (over 18s) on the electoral roll.



You have to register every year. Do not assume that if you voted or registered last time that you will be included again. Even if you are registered for Council Tax purposes, you still cannot vote if you are not on the voters' roll.

Apart from the legal requirement, by not registering you will not be able to vote in the County Council elections to be held on 5th May 2005, which could be combined with a Parliamentary election. It is your democratic right whether you choose to vote or not, but

you will not have this opportunity if you are not registered!

You should also note that the credit reference agencies purchase the electoral register and use this for credit checking purposes. Therefore you will find it difficult to obtain credit if you are not registered!

Every household in South Staffordshire should now have had delivered an electoral registration form as part of this year's annual update of the electoral roll.

The form can now be completed in a number of ways:

BY FREEPHONE OR INTERNET

If there are no changes other than adding or removing household members from the freely available version of the register, known as the edited register, you can call the Freephone number **0800 197 4418**.

Alternatively you can log on to the Internet site

www.registerbyinternet.com/sstaffs

BY POST

Only do this:

- If you want to make any changes; or
- You want to add or remove residents.

The Council will publish a revised register on 1st December and you can see a full copy at the Council offices at Codsall. It is particularly important if you are new to the area to check that your name has been included. If your name is missing you can complete the registration of elector's form, which we use for monthly updates of adding new electors. A copy of the form can be downloaded from the Council's website.

For further information please ring (01902) 696121 or log on to electoral services at www.sstaffs.gov.uk.