

REVIEW



Summer 2005

Issue No. 31

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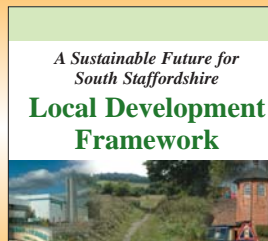
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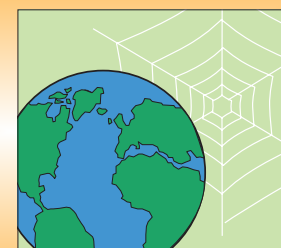
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As the Council launches new recycling & green waste collection services ...

South Staffordshire joins the recycling revolution

South Staffordshire's recycling and waste collection services are set to go 'green' as they enter a new, environment-friendly era.

The Council has completely reorganised the way household waste is dealt with, separating reusable materials from genuine refuse in a three-stage collection service.

Under the new scheme, all households in the District will have recyclable material and garden waste collected in one week and residual waste collected the following week, using different coloured bins and recycling boxes or sacks, all provided by the Council.

In Week One:

- Garden waste in GREEN bins.
- Paper collection in a sack or box.
- Cans, glass and plastic bottles in boxes.

In Week Two:

- Any residual waste in GREY bins.

A successful trial of the scheme has been held over the last few months and it is now being extended across the whole District.

Providing the additional collection services will cost an extra £500,000 bringing the Council's budget for Waste Management to over £2 million in 2005/6. But it will be money well spent.

Landfilling and Climate Change

Landfill sites produce large amounts of methane which is a major

contributor to the problems of global warming and climate change.

Weight for weight, methane is 21 times more powerful than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas. One tonne of biodegradable waste produces between 200 and 400 cubic metres of landfill gas.

Landfill gas methane emissions contributed around 15% of total UK methane emissions in 2001 and about 2% of the UK total greenhouse gas emissions. The EU has issued a Directive requiring member states to reduce dramatically the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill. This is contrary to the recent trend for municipal waste which is increasing at 3% per year, which in 15 years time would result in doubling the amount of waste we produce.

South Staffordshire's new recycling and composting services will make a significant contribution in reversing this unsustainable trend.

Saving Natural Resources

There will be a doubling in the amount of waste that the Council recycles and composts each year. This has huge environmental benefits, by reducing the use of natural resources, such as oil, metal ores and peat.

Central Government Targets

Central Government has set statutory targets for all local authorities and has a national target of recycling and composting 25% of household waste in 2005/6. Based on the amount of material recycled in the kerbside box collection trial, South Staffordshire expects to achieve a rate of nearly 30% in 2005/6 and 35% in 2006/7.

Timetable for New Services

The District has been divided into three zones for introducing the new style service. Residents will be kept fully informed and given advance information about what's happening, including the frequencies of collections.

The first phase covered most of the parishes in the north of the District.

Phase Two covering the parishes of Kinver, Enville, Bobbington, Swindon and mid and south Wombourne is scheduled for August and September.

The third and final phase is scheduled for later in the autumn and covers the remaining parishes of Blymhill and Weston-under-Lizard, Brewood (remainder), Billbrook, Codsall, Perton, Pattingham and Patshull, Lower Penn, Trysull and Seisdon, Himley and the north of Wombourne.

For more information turn to page 5 or visit our website:

www.sstaffs.gov.uk

Drop in and visit us - anytime!



Bevan Craddock, Penkridge Town Crier, and Niki Taylor, 'Tourism and Events Officer' for South Staffordshire Council, launched the Council's new visitor guide 'Visit South Staffordshire' at Weston Park.

Turn to the back page for further details



AT YOUR LEISURE



South Staffordshire Youngsters bring home Olympic style titles

On Saturday 18th June over 1,500 potential London 2012 athletes took part in the 2005 Staffordshire Youth Games. The Games commenced with an Olympic Style opening ceremony hosted by Centre FM, with supporters looking on as the athletes paraded around the track.

South Staffordshire took over 200 participants to represent the District at the annual youth games. Not only did South Staffordshire win the swimming for the third year running, but they also scooped the netball title, and the fair play awards for both tennis and badminton.

The atmosphere on the day was as bright as the weather as athletes from 9 other Districts within Staffordshire, aged between ten and sixteen, took part in athletics, aquathlon, badminton, girls cricket, girls football, hockey, netball, girls tag rugby, mixed tag rugby, swimming and tennis. Over 200 volunteers, coaches and officials were also involved, aiming to develop the skills of the young people taking part.

Councillor Mike Hampson, Chairman of South Staffordshire Council said "The youth

games are a wonderful opportunity to see the youngsters giving their all, proving that we have far greater potential in youngsters than we even realise."

The event was a success due to the continued funding from the Lottery through Sport England, and other sponsors, along with support from a host of volunteers, coaches and officials. The results can be seen by logging onto www.sportacrossstaffordshire.co.uk



South Staffordshire's winning swimming team. All the members of the team were from Phoenix Swimming Club and Wombourne Swimming Club.



The winning netball team from Codsall Middle School

Creative Business

Creative Business has been set up to support creative industries and artists in the District, through networking, training and showcasing opportunities. Five network evenings have taken place to date, and a three-year Action Plan has been developed, which started in April.

The term 'Creative Industries' is often confused with the 'arts' - so what does it actually mean?

It's been defined by the Department of Culture, Media and Support (DCMS) as: "Those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent which have the potential for wealth and job creation, through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property".

These are some examples, but by no means an exhaustive list:

- crafts,
- photography,
- architecture,
- design,
- graphic design,
- jewellery making,
- music production,
- website design,
- publishing,
- film



What does all this mean for you?

- Is your company involved with a creative industry in South Staffordshire?
- Do you make jewellery, or greetings cards?
- Are you a web-designer or graphic designer?
- Maybe you take wedding & family photographs?

If the answer is 'yes' to any of these questions, you could benefit from training, networking, or simply having the opportunity to show your work, all through Creative Business.

To be included on the mailing list, please contact Richard Heighway on 01902 696532.

If you want to discuss your business and requirements further to see if Creative Business could be useful to you, contact the Arts Development Officer on 01902 696534.



Codsall	01902 844032
Cheslyn Hay	01922 417790
Penkridge	01785 714152
Wombourne	01902 898202
Kinver	01384 873950

or visit our website: www.sstaffs.gov.uk/sussed



Codsall fitness suite opens its doors

Codsall Leisure Centre's newly refurbished fitness suite is now open.



Codsall Leisure Centre's newly refurbished fitness suite

The suite, which includes all the latest equipment in a modern setting, is the showpiece of a complete refurbishment for the leisure centre.

South Staffordshire Council and Lifestyle Fitness have been working together on the project, which is almost complete.

For further information about the leisure centre or fitness suite, call 01902 844032 or e-mail leisure@sstaffs.gov.uk

South Staffordshire Council's Leisure and Tourism are looking forward to another successful summer of SUSSED activities at all of their leisure centres for children aged 5 to 13 years.

This summer we have some really exciting activities taking place such as UK Athletics Star:Track at Codsall leisure centre, circus skills at Wombourne, and the all important cycle safety course at Cheslyn Hay.

For the second year, a series of activities have been organised throughout the District as part of the Summer Sussed 'Out and About' Scheme. Hosted and funded by local parish councils, these activities are offered free of charge to children who live in the parish.

This year children who come to the activities will have the chance to enter the SUSSED competition and will be in with a chance of winning loads of brilliant prizes - anything from a day out at the West Midlands Safari Park to tickets to watch Aston Villa play.

For more information contact Leisure and Tourism on 01902 696532 or your local leisure centre:

RED HOT SUMMER

Running throughout June and July 2005

It's time to get that beach body ready! If you take out an annual cash membership during June and July you will automatically receive three months membership for FREE! Plus, our two participating leisure centres have 'red letter days' to give away. All you have to do is exercise to enter!

Red Hot Summer promotion is running at Codsall and Cheslyn Hay leisure centres.

For further information please contact the leisure centres or Leisure and Tourism on (01902) 696525 or by e-mailing leisure@sstaffs.gov.uk

Codsall Leisure Centre 01902 844032
Cheslyn Hay Leisure Centre 01922 417790

This way for a Healthy Walk

Did you know a brisk healthy walk burns as many calories as running the equivalent distance?

A 'Healthy Walk' is a short urban walk lasting around 30-40 minutes. The walks are aimed at those people who do not participate in traditional forms of exercise.

The walks are a great way to start exercising, improving your health as well as meeting new people.

A regular short walk is held from Perton Clinic on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every month at 11am and more walks are planned around the District in the coming months.

South Staffordshire Council is also interested to hear from people who would like to train as volunteer leaders on these short walks as the scheme grows. The training consists of a one day informal course and is free.



For more information contact Marc Neeld, Healthy Lifestyles

Co-ordinator on 01902 696802 or e-mail m.neeld@sstaffs.gov.uk

Bring on the Band at Baggeridge

The music will be ringing out Loud and Clear this summer from Baggeridge Country Park's new bandstand.

The park's summer concert series will be the first to be performed from the bandstand, which was officially opened by Councillor Bill Brownhill on Wednesday 29th June.

This great new asset will allow the Summer Concert Series to be developed, giving everyone more opportunities to enjoy some superb music in the Park.

This year's summer series is planned for every Sunday throughout August, 4pm - 6pm (an ideal location to enjoy a picnic tea!)

Further concerts at Baggeridge include the 3 day Folk Festival taking place on Friday 2nd September, Saturday 3rd September and Sunday 4th September.

Summer Concert Series 2005

Sunday 7th August 2005 4pm

LISA MILLS
A talented solo blues guitarist and singer who is currently touring the UK and Europe. Hand picked to support his USA and European tours by none other than former Led Zeppelin lead singer Robert Plant, who said of her: "You should all check her out, she has a wonderful voice".

Sunday 14th August 2005 4pm

PHOENIX BRASS
Formed in 2000, Phoenix WM Brass are an award winning brass band from the Midlands.

Sunday 21st August 2005 4pm

NC BIG BAND
They're back performing at the park for the 3rd year - by popular demand. This enthusiastic group of musicians are dedicated to the live performance of the 'big band' sound. Their repertoire includes the music of Miller, Goodman and Basie and the vocals of Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald.

Sunday 28th August 2005 4pm

GIGGETTY
This traditional Black Country band have entertained across the length and breadth of the UK and have over 40 TV appearances to their credit. A unique blend of music, anecdote and humour.

For further details of Baggeridge Country Park or the summer concerts contact Leisure and Tourism Services on 01902 696540 or the ranger on 01902 882605, or e-mail Baggeridge.sstaffs@virgin.net

HYPE

HYPE is an initiative led by South Staffordshire Council Leisure and Tourism, in partnership with agencies from the South Staffordshire Crime Reduction Partnership who fund the project. HYPE has developed over the past four years and now offers young people aged 13 - 17 years a comprehensive package of diversionary and educational activities throughout the year.

This year HYPE has three main strands; HYPE club nights, Hype festivals and HYPE workshops. HYPE club night is a popular night where a local centre is decked out by a professional club decor company, transforming it from its day to day practical use to an under 18's club venue. This summer's club night will be on Friday 22nd July at Perton Civic Centre, where professional acts such as Fundamental, the Kookie Girls, and HYPE's resident DJ Paul Edginton will be performing alongside break dancers, walkabout entertainers and much more.

Partner agencies also attend the event, with the youth service providing a youth room where the young people can relax and get information on the misuse of illegal substances, alcohol free cocktails provided by Trading Standards, and health education from the Primary Care Trust.

The club night this year kicks off a festival of activities over





Website means the Council is always open for business

South Staffordshire Council is now just the click of a mouse away on the authority's massively revamped website.

If you have internet access - and nowadays that means most people - logging on to the site will put all the Council's services at your fingertips, 24-hours a day, 365 days a year.

But there is much more besides, whether you are in business, a resident of the District, or just someone wanting to know more about South Staffordshire.

The website should be a first 'port of call' for information, advice and instructions on just about everything from arboriculture to youth services.

The Council has invested heavily in the redevelopment of its web facilities, because it is clear that on-line communication is the future, leading to the ultimate goal of electronic government.

People using the site will find it easy to locate what they are looking for: there is a comprehensive search facility, a directory of services, an A-Z of services and a site map.

It has also been designed with access for disabled users as a priority, complying with the guidelines laid down by the Internet's standards organisations.

As an example, there is a text-only version for those with poor eyesight and keyboard shortcuts for people unable to use a mouse.

Alongside the wealth of information, there are many interactive elements. The new 'Public Access' system provides information relating to planning applications in the District and includes access to the Council's interactive mapping facilities to show the exact location of the property.

The diary of meetings provides access to all agendas, minutes and reports of Council and committee meetings, copies of which can be downloaded for printing or off-line reading. There is even a special section for the promotion of community events.

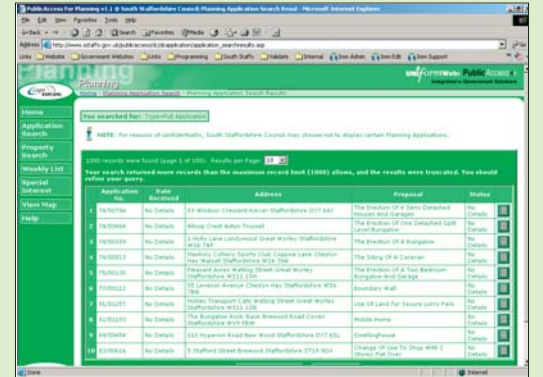
Development of the website is far from complete, in fact what you will see now is only the first version. By the end of

this year you will see facilities for accessing Council tax billing information, submitting planning applications, paying for many of the Council's services, accessing information on leisure facilities, applying for licenses and applying for jobs within the Council.

All of it will be available through the new website. To log onto the website go to: www.sstaffs.gov.uk.

For any comments or suggestions about South Staffordshire Council's website, use the feedback form on the site itself.

Alternatively, e-mail the Council's E-Services Manager - Charles Lee on: c.d.lee@sstaffs.gov.uk



Residents' Panel reality check for Council

The Council is aiming to keep its 'finger on the pulse' of local opinion in South Staffordshire by regularly consulting a thousand-strong panel of residents.

A firm of external consultants was appointed in December to recruit and support the panel.

BMG Research, who have a number of years experience in this line of work for local authorities, have just completed the recruitment stage and work has begun on the panel's first survey.

It will be made up of 1,000 residents in the District area, a statistically representative cross-section of the population of the District as a whole.

The Council has made a commitment to consult the entire panel four times a year, with the option of conducting smaller surveys with sections of the panel, for example, older people, younger people, those with disabilities etc. as needed.

It will also be possible to hold various focus groups with very small sections of the panel.

If you would like to know more about the panel, call Lucy Coogan on (01902) 696512, or e-mail her at l.coogan@sstaffs.gov.uk

NEW CABINET FOR SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

- Back row:
Cllr Robert Reade, Cllr Robert Marshall, Cllr Paddy Kelly
- Front row:
Cllr Roy Wright, Cllr Brian Edwards, Cllr Mrs Joan Williams

Due to ill health, Councillor Bill Brownhill has stood down as Leader of the Council after 23 years service and Councillor Brian Edwards has been elected the new Leader of the Council.

Councillor Edwards was first elected as a Councillor in 1983 and was Deputy Leader for Support Services. On being elected Leader, Councillor Edwards said, "I wish to say thank you for putting your confidence in me as your Leader. I will do my best to continue to uphold the good name and reputation of South Staffordshire Council and serve it to the best of my ability.

Also, we must not let this moment pass without paying tribute to the huge contribution and service made to this Council by Councillor Bill Brownhill. He has been our Leader for the past 23 years. He has led the Council through many changes, especially in the last few years, and he must be justly proud of the reputation and standing he hands to us."

We must continue our goal to become an Excellent Council.

The new Member of the Cabinet is Councillor Robert Reade who is the new Deputy Leader (Support Services).



Your guide to South Staffordshire's new recycling & waste service

South Staffordshire Council's new recycling, composting and waste collection services will be good news all round.

Apart from the environmental benefits and the tough recycling targets set by the Government, local Council Tax payers will be saving on landfill charges.

Central Government is proposing to increase the tax on each tonne of rubbish that is landfilled by £3 per year from 2005. Last year the Council collected nearly 45,000 tonnes from its residents' homes.

For more information contact Environmental Health (General) Services on our Recycling & Waste Helpline 01902 696225/696203.



Spreading the message and getting people on board!

Gardeners Get Going:

Reduced price compost bins from only £15.00 inc. delivery for South Staffordshire residents. Phone 0845 130 60 90 or log onto www.getcomposting.com/sstaffs

Kids get in on the act!

Free Children's Activity packs for South Staffordshire residents.

Bottom line for Mums and Dads

Used disposable nappies make up about 4% of total household waste, which would fill about 1,500 refuse trucks a year, so use Real Nappies and get up to £30 cashback.

Schools teach the Four R's

Interactive recycling education workshops designed to link into the National Curriculum.

Call 01902 696225/ 696203 for more information or log onto our website www.watchyourwaste.co.uk

These promotions are for South Staffordshire residents only.



The winning Advert in the Council's 'Design an Ad' competition by Hannah Keeling, age 11, from St Thomas More R.C. Primary School, Great Wyrley.

Special arrangements for families

The Council recognises that some households may have problems with the new arrangements and so has agreed a comprehensive set of policies to help. Residents who are genuinely recycling can request the following:

- Households with 5 in the family may be provided with a 360 litre (as opposed to the normal 240 litre) bin.
- Households with 6 or more persons may be provided with a second 240 litre bin.
- Households with a baby in nappies may be provided with an additional 140 litre bin, until the child is out of nappies.
- Other large households (normally 4 persons) may be given a 360 litre bin on payment of a charge of £25 to cover the additional purchase cost.
- Any household will be allowed to hire an additional 240 litre bin for a charge of £20 per annum to cover the emptying cost.

A change for the better

South Staffordshire's Rubbish Revolution

You can tell a lot about people by what they throw away.

Archaeologists have been able to rewrite history by examining the rubbish pits of our ancestors.

Future historians looking into our present landfill sites would be stunned and no doubt shocked by what they find.

They will conclude from all the metal, glass, plastic and paper that we became a truly throwaway society.

It wasn't always like that. Over the years what we discard has changed considerably -



South Staffordshire's refuse collection in 1970's

and so have the methods for dealing with it.

In the last 50 years, household waste has mushroomed until it has become a major environmental issue.

The time has come to change the way we deal with society's waste

and South Staffordshire Council has grasped the nettle by introducing its new collection services.

The Council accepts that the measures might be unpopular in the short term. It won't be the first complaint about refuse collection.

In the early 1900s Councils started to provide the first dustbins for people's waste. Initially many householders were unhappy because they now had to carry ash out to their dustbins instead of using an ash pit in their back gardens.

In the 1970s plastic sacks were introduced to line dustbins, but this also wasn't without its critics. Many residents felt that the sacks were not suitable for the coal ashes that were produced.

In 1990, South Staffordshire Council changed from a plastic sack service to a wheeled bin service. The new bin was able to hold over twice as much as the old dustbin. Yet again some residents were unhappy about the change, saying at the time that they preferred sacks as they were concerned that the bins would smell.

However the wheeled bin made the life of a refuse collector safer, with less heavy lifting. Also, the risk of injury or cuts by needles



New kerbside collections

and broken glass sticking out of bags was eliminated.

The wheeled bin service also made a large impact on the mountains of plastic sacks piled in the street on collection days.

Today what we throw away in the bin is changing again. The majority is garden waste, metal, plastic and paper packaging, instead of ash, and unfortunately the amount is increasing every year. This is why the service needs to change!

Recycling rates through the trial kerbside collection doubled to 20%

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

A Sustainable Future for South Staffordshire

Big challenge lies ahead for the Council Planning South Staffordshire's future is a balancing act

Every District Council has to prepare a plan that sets out the ground rules for new development, including where new houses and factories will be built, how development will be controlled and how the environment will be improved.

The way these plans are prepared is changing and in the case of South Staffordshire we have started work on the new planning system which will be known as a Local Development Framework (LDF).

Work on the old plan (Local Plan) will be transferred to the new framework.

The move is in response to changes in planning law introduced by the Government in September 2004.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Brian Edwards, said: "My Council had a difficult decision to make on whether to continue with the Local Plan but with the recent changes to the planning system it was felt that it was right to move over to the new system as quickly as possible. I believe that in the best interests of South Staffordshire now is the time to transfer to the new system".

The Council has pledged that any representations made by the public and others in response to the Draft

(Deposit) Local Plan will be taken into account in the Local Development Framework process.

Cllr Paddy Kelly, Deputy Leader (Strategic Services), said: "The new development planning system is the most significant change to the planning system for many years and it is important that we face the challenges that lie ahead.

The documents that will be prepared under the new system will take into account the future needs of local communities and the environment of the District and will be based on sound planning principles. Furthermore, the principles of sustainable development and sustainable communities will be at the forefront of our considerations".

The Council will ensure the public and local communities continue to be involved in the preparation of the new Local Development Framework. Opportunities to participate in developing the new plan will be available at every stage.

For more information about the new planning system, contact Paul Collings on (01902) 696426, e-mail developmentplans@sstaffs.gov.uk or visit the Council's website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk.

New Local Development Framework: The What? When? Why? Where? and How?

What is the new planning system & Why introduce it?

Last September, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 came into force, signalling the start of a new planning system.

It will see Local Plans being replaced by Local Development Frameworks. South Staffordshire's Local Plan, adopted in 1996, will, in due course, be replaced by the South Staffordshire Local Development Framework.

Under the new system, Structure Plans will be abolished and at the regional level a Regional Spatial Strategy has been prepared by the West Midlands Regional Assembly and issued by the Government.

The Regional Spatial Strategy contains policies and proposals to guide the future development of the West Midlands Region up to 2021 with the South Staffordshire Local Development Framework looking at issues at the local level.

What will be in the Local Development Framework?

The Local Development Framework (LDF) will consist of a number of documents known as Local Development Documents - LDDs.

The first document produced by South Staffordshire Council is the Local Development Scheme (LDS). This outlines the programme and timescales for the production of LDF documents for a three-year period and sets out the links to other strategies and programmes, such as the Community Strategy.

Next, a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will show how the Council intends to consult local communities and those with an interest in planning.

The LDF will also contain Development Plan Documents (DPDs), including a Core Strategy, which will set out the Council's vision, objectives and policies for the future development of the District.

Other documents will be produced to cover Development Control Policies, Wolverhampton Airport, housing issues and plans for specific sites and areas. There will also be supporting documents

(Supplementary Planning Documents) to give detailed guidance on policies and proposals in the Local Development Documents.

As each document is produced for the Local Development Framework, the plan for South Staffordshire (Proposals Map) will be updated.

The documents prepared in the LDF must take account of the future needs of local communities and the environment of the District. Consequently, they will be assessed, via a "Sustainability Appraisal", to determine whether they contribute towards the principles of Sustainable Development. The LDF is also required to undergo regular monitoring and review to ensure that all targets outlined in the Local Development Scheme are being met. The Council is now required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report.

What will happen to the policies in the existing Local Plan?

Under the new system the existing adopted South Staffordshire Local Plan 1996 is "saved" for 3 years from September 2004. The saved policies will remain in force until superseded by the production of Local Development Documents. The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 will also be saved for 3 years.

How can I get involved?

You will have the opportunity to be involved at various stages in the production of LDF documents. The statutory requirements and Council's standards and approach to public consultation will be set out in the Statement of Community Involvement and this will clearly show you how and when you will be involved.

Further Information

We recognise that the new planning system looks complicated and may deter some people from participating in the planning process. However, if you would like to be involved in the production of LDF documents or would like more information on the new system please visit www.sstaffs.gov.uk. Alternatively if you need help or information on the South Staffordshire Local Development Framework and the future programme of Local Development Document preparation,

you can write to us at:

Development Plans Team,
Council Offices,
Wolverhampton Road,
Codsall,
South Staffordshire,
WV8 1PX

Or phone us: 01902 696426/
696423 / 696317

By fax: 01902 696403

By email:
developmentplans@sstaffs.gov.uk



We want YOUR views on Community Involvement

Community involvement is a key issue in the new development planning system and your views as residents on how we can ensure you are fully involved in the process are very important.

One of the first documents to be prepared under the Local Development Framework is the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which will outline how the Council intends to carry out its consultation.

The SCI, when finalised, will show how, when and by what method you will be consulted on the production of development documents and in

determining planning applications.

A draft SCI is scheduled for consultation in September and we will be asking for your comments and suggestions on this document when it is published.

To be involved at this very early stage please take the time to complete the questionnaire below and let the Council know how you wish to be consulted on the documents prepared for the LDF.

The questionnaire has also been posted on the website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk and will be sent out by post to those who responded to consultations on the Local Plan.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK QUESTIONNAIRE

What should be in the Statement of Community Involvement?

- Have you been involved in the planning process before - if yes, how?
 - What methods should be used to involve the "community"?
 - How should we advertise the production of Local Development Documents?
 - Where should the documents that we intend to produce be made available?
 - Who are the key groups, businesses or other organisations that we should involve? We particularly wish to identify who are the "hard to reach" groups.
 - How should the Council publicise any planning applications?
 - How should the Council involve interested parties in the determination of planning applications?
 - How do you wish to be kept informed? e.g. press releases, letters, web updates.
- If you wish to be contacted about the Local Development Framework process, please fill in your name and address below. Alternatively, you can e-mail your contact details to developmentplans@sstaffs.gov.uk
- Name:
 Organisation (if applicable):
 Address:

 Postcode
 Telephone: Fax:
 E-mail:
- Please return to
 Development Plans Team
 South Staffordshire Council
 FREEPOST MID 21881
 Codsall
 Nr Wolverhampton
 South Staffordshire
 WV8 1BR

Your views are welcome!

A Sustainable Future for South Staffordshire



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Swindon canal setting is a cut above the rest

The canalside location of Swindon is now second to none after a £26,000 regeneration package along a stretch of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal.

The finished project includes improvements to the access, the towpath, moorings and other environmental enhancements, which look set to attract more visitors and boost the local economy.

The scheme was funded by South Staffordshire Council and British Waterways, who jointly contributed over £26,000, after Swindon Parish Council put forward the proposal.

The work, carried out by British Waterways' Canal Regeneration Team, was centred upon Swindon Lock.

Access from Swindon High Street to the towpath has been made easier, cycle barriers were installed along with fences, gates, bollards and mooring rings.

Pathways have been resurfaced, block paving laid, brickwork repaired, oak benches installed and lock furniture spruced up with a coat of paint. Materials used were chosen for their sustainability and included recycled crushed brick for the pathway surfacing and benches constructed in unseasoned 'green' oak, sourced from English managed woodland.

Gaps in the old hedgerow have been replanted and native trees have been planted to improve the biodiversity of this part of the canal at the same time as improving the view from the canal tow path.

The team also renovated the Split Bridge and some of the paving



between Swindon and Marsh Locks. In addition, interpretation and information panels have been installed along the towpath. These show local footpaths, information about Swindon's industrial past and the natural fauna that can be seen along the canal.

The Canal Regeneration Team was set up in 2003 in partnership with Groundwork Black Country and British Waterways. Its aim is to train and develop unemployed people within construction and landscaping using temporary six-month contracts. Two of the trainees who worked on the Swindon project are now in full time employment.

Cllr Joan Williams, Deputy Leader (Environmental Services) of the Council said: "This project has been a good example of partnership working, enabling the environment within the Canal Conservation Area at Swindon to be improved economically and creating safer access for all, including canal boat users wanting to visit the village and visitors walking along the canal to the wider countryside."

Grounds Maintenance Contract won by Enterprise

The contract for maintaining public open spaces in South Staffordshire has been retained by Enterprise Managed Services plc.

The company will be responsible for keeping Council-managed parklands, playgrounds and amenity areas in a clean, green and safe condition for the next five years.

There was stiff competition for the contract, but Enterprise came through the rigorous assessment process with flying colours to win the Council's approval.

Cllr Joan Williams, Deputy Leader (Environmental Services) said: "There are many new challenges facing grounds maintenance, not least of all climatic change which has significant effect on growth rates and ground conditions.

We are committed to managing our open spaces sensitively taking account of the needs of the local communities. Enterprise Managed Services plc have given us their commitment and we look forward to a further five years in partnership with them."

Paul Colbourne, Regional Operations Director for Enterprise said: "South Staffordshire District is an attractive area which requires detailed knowledge of each of the locations in order to deliver a consistent quality service. Good working relationships with South Staffordshire have always been conducive to a robust and effective contract. We look forward to a further five years maintenance operations using local employees, many of whom live in the District and pride themselves in the work they carry out."

The new contract started in April and will run until March 2010, when there will then be an option for the Council to extend it for a further five years.



Pictured (left to right) are Ray Fyvie, Operations Director and Paul Colbourne, Regional Manager (both from Enterprise Managed Services) with Cllr Joan Williams, Deputy Leader (Environmental Services) and Barbara Juniper, Head of Architectural and Landscape Services.

Beautiful brookside walk saved

Conservation work on Wom Brook in South Staffordshire has saved a stretch of a popular bankside walk from collapse and secured a home for one of our threatened species of mammals - the Water Vole.



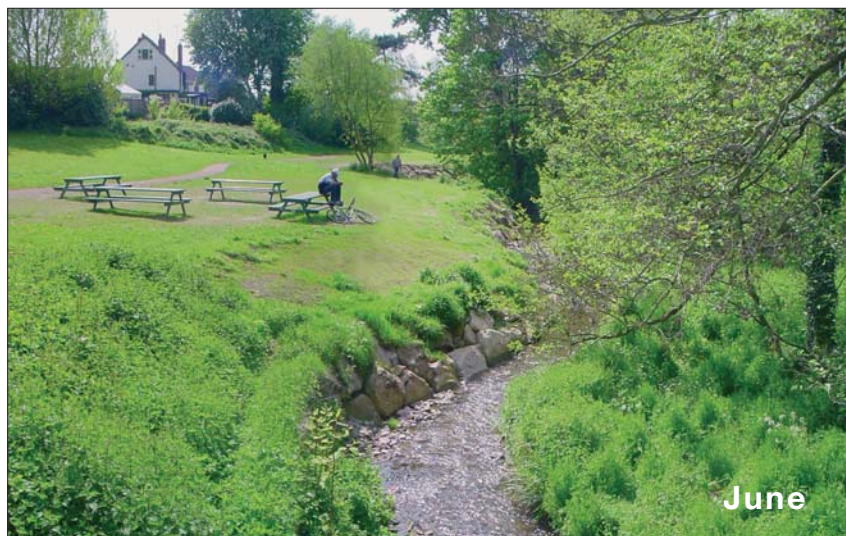
February - before work started

The repair job was ordered after severe erosion was identified in the Gravel Bridge area in Wombourne last summer.

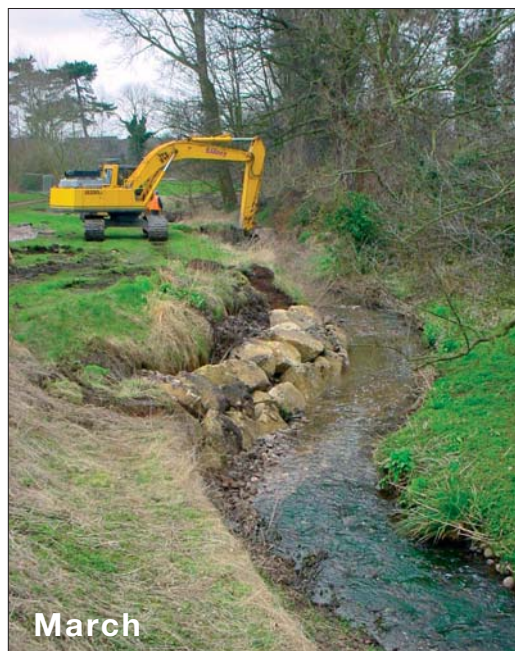
Specialist contractors were brought in to carry out the work, while consultation was carried out with the Environment Agency and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to ensure that long-term damage to the environment was avoided.

Since the area is home to the nationally scarce Water Vole, care was taken to minimize the disturbance during the work and to leave an enhanced habitat for the Voles. A backwater channel was created to accommodate a rest area for migrating fish and other aquatic creatures when the brook is in full flood. Excavated soil, carrying annual weed seed and perennial weed root systems, was re-spread so that the natural vegetation will re-grow during the summer.

Wom Brook goes from this to this in just a few months



June



March

After initial excavation and regrading of the banks, large grit stones (a by-product of quarrying) were placed and moulded into the banks. The small cavities around the stones were then packed with smaller stones and soil to stabilise the bank and to improve the habitat for the Voles.

Cllr Joan Williams, Deputy Leader (Environmental Services) said: "A sensitive solution had to be sought for this engineering application. I am delighted with the project and have received many pleasing comments from local people, including the Friends of Wombrook Walk. Further sections along the Brook will need similar treatment and officers at the Council are carrying out evaluation works."

The work was carried out by S and J Webster in partnership with Shoreline Developments.

For further information on the above schemes please contact Barbara Juniper, Head of Architectural and Landscape Services on 01902 696408 or e-mail archland@sstaffs.gov.uk

Exam success for our Customer Service officers



Cllr Pam Bromley, former Chairman of the Council, presents certificates to the Customer Service Officers (left to right) Stella Law, Claire Peek, Caroline Pugh and Sue Gilbert.

Staff at South Staffordshire Solutions, the Council's customer contact centre based in Codsall, have been celebrating achieving their official vocational qualifications.

The Customer Service Officers and their Supervisor have been working hard since July last year for accreditation through a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).

All the candidates have now achieved the standard and Cllr Pam Bromley, former Chairman of the Council, recently presented certificates to the Customer Service Officers and congratulated them on their achievement.

Phil Hardy, who is responsible for Customer Services, said, "The work that was done towards the NVQ has helped to improve the service provided by the Council. There have been suggestions made by the candidates that I have been happy to implement. The qualification is customer focused and great importance is given to customer needs and feedback."

Opening times for South Staffordshire Solutions are:

8.45am to 5.00pm* - Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday

8.45am to 8.00pm* - Tuesday

9.30am to 1.00pm* - Saturday

* Payments can be made until fifteen minutes before the facility closes.

South Staffordshire Council Chairman 2005 - 2006



Councillor Michael Hampson

The new Chairman of South Staffordshire Council for the coming year is Cllr Michael Hampson, from Brewood.

He was selected by fellow Council members at their meeting on May 17th and one of his first tasks was to nominate the charity which will benefit from his fund raising during his year of office - ACORNS CHILDREN'S HOSPICE.

Cllr Hampson was first elected to the District Council in 1999 and currently serves on several committees, including the Regulatory, Scrutiny and Standards Committee.

He has lived in South Staffordshire for over 35 years and was elected to Brewood Parish Council in 1983 serving for four years. He is involved in numerous organisations within the village of Brewood including: Member of the Rotary, Member of the Music Festival Committee, the Christmas Lighting Committee and Civic Society. He was also, until this year, Group Chairman of the Scout Group, and in addition serves on the Local Transport Board for the South Staffordshire area and is also a Governor at Rodbaston College.

Married with 2 sons, his wife Sheila will be supporting him in his role as Chairman of the Council.

Accepting his nomination at the meeting, Cllr Hampson said: "I am honoured that my fellow councillors have shown their confidence in me by allowing me to serve as Chairman of South Staffordshire Council.

"I will endeavour to promote South Staffordshire as an area of beauty and tranquillity and a worthwhile District to visit. I will uphold the dignity and pride of this Council whilst carrying out my duties as Chairman."



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PEST CONTROL CHARGES

April 2005 – March 2006

	HOUSEHOLDS	BUSINESSES
RATS, MICE and other public health pests*	Free of Charge	£57.00 Initial call out (1 hour) + £47.00 per hour thereafter, (including re-visits) + cost of materials used, + VAT
WASPS and other nuisance pests**	£40 (including VAT)	As above
SQUIRRELS inside occupied properties only	£80 (including VAT)	As above
RODENT CONTRACTS		Free surveys and quotations will be provided

* Public health pests comprise rats, mice, fleas, bed bugs, cockroaches and flies (where the latter are present in significant numbers inside occupied property)

** Nuisance pests comprise wasps, ants and other insects

The Council waives its charges for the disinfestations of squirrels inside occupied domestic properties and wasps, where householders can show they are in receipt of means tested benefit.

It also waives its charge for disinfestations of public health pests in places of religious worship, registered charities and village halls eligible for non-domestic rate relief.

The Council does not provide disinfestation services in respect of birds, rabbits, foxes, moles, squirrels (other than inside occupied properties), woodworm, lice (or other personal infestations), bats or any other protected species.

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.

- BURGLAR • ALARM • BLENDER
- CAMERA • CAMCORDER • CENTRAL • HEATING
- COMPUTER • GAMES • CONSOLE
- DEEPFAT • FRYER • DOUBLE • GLAZING
- FRIDGE • FREEZER • FITTED • CARPET
- MUSIC • CENTRE • PORTABLE • TELEVISION
- RADIO • STEREO • THREE • PIECE • SUITE
- TOASTER • WASHER • DRIER
- WASHING • MACHINE • VACUUM • CLEANER
- VIDEO • TAPE • RECORDER

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

There is one word in the list that is **NOT** included in the grid.

Write it 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
29th August, 2005,
will win a
£25 Prize

WORDSEARCH WINNER:

Congratulations to
Mrs B Nicklin
from Codsall
who won £25 in the
Word Search
Competition
in the Autumn 2004
Edition of the South
Staffordshire
Review.

Members' Allowances 2004 - 2005

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	Ward	Total £
Ashley L	Huntington & Hatherton	7,500
Billson D	Perton East	5,930
Bird G	Cheslyn Hay South	5,000
Boyle T	Cheslyn Hay North & Saredon	5,000
Brindle J	Featherstone & Shareshill	5,000
Bromley C	Perton Lakeside	5,000
Bromley P	Perton Lakeside	5,300
Brownhill W	Himley & Swindon	15,350
Burton J MBE	Pattingham & Patshull	5,000
Caine N	Perton Lakeside	4,850
Campbell P	Codsall North	5,000
Cartwright D	Penkridge West	5,000
Clay I	Brewood & Coven	5,000
Cliff D	Essington	5,000
Cope R	Featherstone & Shareshill	5,000
Cox B	Wheaton Aston Bishopswood & Lapley	5,590
Craddock W	Cheslyn Hay South	5,000
Edwards B	Kinver	10,000
Edwards S	Wombourne South West	5,000
Evans J	Codsall North	5,000
Ford I	Penkridge North East & Acton Trussell	5,000
Gosling J	Kinver	5,000
Griffin P	Essington	5,000
Hampson M	Brewood & Coven	7,510
Harris M	Cheslyn Hay North & Saredon	5,000
Hinton A	Wombourne North & Lower Penn	5,000
Holmes D	Brewood & Coven	5,000
Holt R	Penkridge South East	5,000
James K	Perton Dippons	5,000
Johnson J	Great Wyrley Town	5,000
Kelly I	Wombourne South West	9,410
Mackie D	Bilbrook	5,000
Mackie K	Bilbrook	5,000
Marshall R	Codsall South	10,000
Mason L	Great Wyrley Town	5,000
McCardle R	Trysull & Seisdon	5,000
Michell J	Codsall South	5,000
Moran A	Great Wyrley Landywood	5,000
Perry K	Great Wyrley Town	6,910
Raven C	Penkridge South East	5,000
Ray E	Kinver	4,700
Reade R	Wombourne North & Lower Penn	5,340
Spandler G	Penkridge North East & Acton Trussell	7,280
Timms P	Wombourne South East	5,000
Williams J	Wombourne South East	10,000
Williams R	Wombourne North & Lower Penn	5,000
Wilson F	Huntington & Hatherton	4,850
Wood B	Great Wyrley Landywood	5,000
Wright R	Wheaton Aston Bishopswood & Lapley	10,000

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

Stamping out 'hate crime'

'Hate crime' is taken very seriously these days and victims in South Staffordshire now have a clear option for reporting it with the launch of a new information pack called True Vision.

The pack not only explains what 'hate crime' is - in essence any offence committed against you due to your race, religion or sexuality - it also includes a form on which to report any incident.

Staffordshire Police treat hate crime as they would any serious incident. The force has a Forum, Chase Against Crimes of Hate (CACH), covering the Districts of South Staffordshire, Stafford and Cannock (known as the Chase Division), where initiatives are discussed on how to reach out to the public and encourage the reporting of hate crime and how to tackle it.

True Vision packs are available at libraries in South Staffordshire or at the main reception at South Staffordshire Council where staff have been trained to help those who need it.

Crime Statistics for South Staffordshire

Latest figures show a mixture of good news, and not so good, on the crime front for residents of South Staffordshire.

There has been a clear reduction in the number of burglary offences, one of the principal concerns of local people. Break-ins at people's homes are down by 9% and burglary of other buildings e.g. sheds, outbuildings etc. has been cut by 12%.

The highlight of the figures, however, must surely be that vehicle crime has been slashed by 25%!

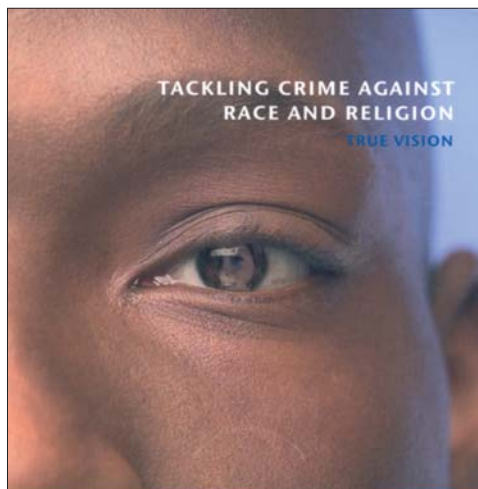
The down side is that increases have been recorded in robbery (8%) and in violence (11%). South Staffordshire Community Safety Partnership is committed to tackling violent

crime over the next three years and has pledged to reduce it by 13% by 2008.

Get involved in tackling crime locally

Environmental Action Groups have been set up to hear the views of parish councils and members of the public in South Staffordshire. The Community Safety Partnership will provide local crime figures to the action groups and a parish council representative from the local area will be there.

If you are interested in joining your local action group, call the Community Safety Team on 01902 696501, send an e-mail to communitysafety@sstaffs.gov.uk or log onto the Council website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk



USEFUL NUMBERS:

Non emergency number for Staffordshire Police
08453 31 20 10

CrimeStoppers to report an incident in confidence
0800 555 111

Problems relating to road defects, street lights, signs, blocked drains on roads and roadside trees report to CLARENCE
0800 23 23 23

South Staffordshire Community Safety Partnership
01902 696501

In an emergency dial
999

Police praise for Cynthia's work



Cynthia Walczak receiving her award from South Staffordshire Council Chief Executive, Rolf Levesley

A key member of South Staffordshire's Community Safety team has been officially praised by the County's police force for the work she does.

Council-employee Cynthia Walczak received a Certificate of Appreciation from the force's Divisional Commander.

In nominating her, Chief Superintendent Nick Howe said: "She has ably assisted the Police, providing support during Council staff leave for a period of some months and ensured that a number of ongoing partnership interventions continued on track and on budget.

"She continues to act as a central liaison point for Staffordshire Police and other partnership organisations and is a keen supporter of community projects."

Congratulating Cynthia on her award, South Staffordshire Council's Chief Executive, Rolf Levesley commented: "It is most gratifying that our Partners recognise the hard work and dedication of our officers at the Council and I am particularly pleased that Cynthia's contribution to Community Safety in South Staffordshire has been recognised."

Alcohol & entertainment licensing

Pub landlords, off-licences and public entertainment venues have been put on alert to get new licences from South Staffordshire Council before an August deadline.

A new licensing system for the sale of alcohol and public entertainment comes into force later this year, which will be administered by the Council.

It is expected that existing licensing schemes will cease to have effect in November.

Before then, there will be an opportunity to convert existing licences to new ones, however, this changeover period ends on 6 August 2005.

After that date, full applications will have to be made for the required licenses,

which may be more difficult to obtain. There is also the possibility of not having the required licence by November, when existing licences expire.

To obtain licence application forms, contact Tracey Burns, Legal and Licensing, South Staffordshire District Council, Council Offices, Codsall, WV8 1PX or e-mail t.burns@sstaffs.gov.uk.

Plug is pulled on drains service

Due to lack of demand and the ability of the private sector to carry out the work at the same cost or lower, the drain blocking service offered by South Staffordshire Council has now been withdrawn.

If you think the public sewer serving your property is blocked then you should report it to Severn Trent Water on **0800 783 4444**

Cut your Council Tax

Some South Staffordshire residents could be missing out on financial help to pay their Council Tax.

Council Tax Benefit either reduces or covers entirely a resident's Council Tax bill, but some people don't bother to claim or don't think they are entitled to it.

ARE YOU MISSING OUT?

Here's some frequently asked questions about Council Tax Benefit:

Who may be entitled to help?

Those on low incomes who pay Council Tax.

How is Council Tax benefit worked out?

The Council will look at the money you and your partner have coming in, as well as your savings. The Council will also look at your other circumstances, such as your age and whether anyone else lives with you. With this information the Council will work out if you qualify for Council Tax Benefit.

I'm not sure whether I qualify, what should I do?

Make a claim right away - Council Tax Benefit is available now.

If you already claim Pension Credit, Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance you will get a form to claim Council Tax Benefit with your application.

If you do not claim one of these, you can get a claim form from the Benefits Services Unit: Call 01902 696668 or 696669. Alternately, call into our Solutions Reception at South Staffordshire Council during the following times:

- 8.45am to 5.00pm - Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday
- 8.45am to 8.00pm - Tuesday
- 9.30am to 1.00pm - Saturday

Rate Relief Scheme boost for South Staffordshire business

Many small businesses in South Staffordshire look set to benefit from a new system of Business Rate Relief introduced in April this year.

For an explanation of how the system works and what businesses have to do to get their bills reduced, REVIEW invited Rob Wolfe, Head of Local Taxation Services, to answer the following important questions.

Who will qualify for Small Business Rate Relief?

The relief is available to ratepayers who occupy:

- only one business property in England, with a Rateable Value below £10,000.

OR

- one main business property and other additional business properties, provided the additional properties have individual rateable values of less than £2,200 and the combined rateable value of all the properties is under £15,000.

How can I check my Rateable Value?

This will be shown on your Business Rates bill, your rateable value is NOT the amount that you pay.

Alternatively, you can check your rateable value by visiting the Valuation Office Agency website at www.voa.gov.uk or by telephoning the Local Taxation Section, at the Council Offices, on 01902 696664.

How much can my Rates Bill be reduced by?

Provided we receive a completed application form, eligible businesses with rateable values below £5,000 will get a 50% reduction on their bill.

This relief will decrease on a sliding scale of 1% for every £100 of rateable value over £5,000, up to £9,999.

In addition, such businesses will have their bill calculated using the small business non-domestic rating multiplier.

What should I do next, if I think that I am eligible?

You MUST complete a form. If you do not do so, the Council will not be able to give you the relief. You will need to fill in a new form each year.

We have sent forms to the businesses that we think are eligible, but further forms are available from our office on 01902 696664. If you have received a form, please deal with it as soon as possible to ensure that you do not pay more than you need to.

Are any other types of Business Rate Relief available?

Yes, various types of non-domestic properties can be given relief. These include:

- Charities and some voluntary organisations.
- Sports Clubs
- Properties which are empty or, for a short period, are only partly occupied.
- Properties which have recently been converted from agricultural use.
- Small food stores, general stores and Post Offices serving small rural villages.

If you believe that you may be eligible for any of these reliefs and have not been given it, please contact the Local Taxation Section on 01902 696664 or by e-mail to taxation@sstaffs.gov.uk

Further general advice on Business Rates can be obtained from a Government funded website at www.mybusinessrates.gov.uk

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL NEWSPAPER QUESTIONNAIRE

The Council produces at least three issues of the South Staffordshire Review each year which is delivered to every household in South Staffordshire.

The main purpose of the Review is to inform residents about the work of South Staffordshire Council. We try to ensure a balanced coverage, including articles about all the villages in South Staffordshire and all the activities of the Council.

By completing and returning this questionnaire you can help us to improve the Review Newspaper.

1. What do you generally think of the South Staffordshire Review?

- a. Excellent
- b. Good
- c. Poor
- d. I don't usually read it

If you answered **a** or **b**, what do you like about the South Staffordshire Review?

If you answered **c** or **d**, what don't you like about the South Staffordshire Review?

2. Do you think we have achieved the correct balance of articles in the Review?

Yes No

If no, what do you think we should change to gain a better balance?

3. Do you think we should encourage articles from residents and other organisations that contribute to life in South Staffordshire?

Yes No

If yes, what sort of articles would you like to see?

4. Do you like the current design of the South Staffordshire Review?

Yes No

If no, how would you like it improved?

5. Have you ever experienced difficulties in receiving the South Staffordshire Review?

Yes No

6. Would you like to receive an electronic version of the newspaper?

Yes No

If yes, what is your email address?

7. In order that we can be sure that the South Staffordshire Review addresses the needs of all the residents of South Staffordshire it would be helpful if you would provide some details about yourself?

- a. Age
- Under 24
- 24 - 50
- 51+

b. Location - what village do you live in?

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire. Please post your form to:

Lucy Coogan
Assistant Corporate Policy Officer
South Staffordshire Council
FREEPOST MID21881
CODSALL
Nr Wolverhampton
South Staffordshire
WV8 1BR

by **30th August, 2005**

No stamp is required.



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE REVIEW



Discovering South Staffordshire...

South Staffordshire is full of wonderful surprises for those willing to get off the well-beaten tourist tracks and explore.

Those who do, never cease to be amazed at what there is to see and experience in Staffordshire's most southerly District, a green and pleasant back garden to the Black Country.

Whatever the time of the year, you will discover beautiful open spaces, ideal for walkers, whether for long distance hiking or short circular walks.

The District is blessed with some of the most picturesque man-made waterways in England, offering an alternative view of our lovely countryside that road users never get to see - a great way to slow down the pace of life and really capture the essence of the area.

For history and heritage enthusiasts, look no further than South Staffordshire! A host of hidden gems nestle within our borders, including five stately homes - Weston Park, Chillington Hall, Patshull Hall, Wightwick Manor and Himley Hall. There is a proud Royalist tradition too, dating back to King Charles II, who hid in the famous Royal Oak at Boscobel House and then at Moseley Old Hall before escaping to France. The weird and wonderful 'cave dwellings' at Kinver are an experience not to be missed.

Glorious gardens abound in South Staffordshire, from award winning garden centres like Ashwoods, Dobbies and the Hollybush through to stately home gardens, a number of which display Capability Brown's influence.

Great events for all ages and tastes are South Staffordshire's speciality. They range from the prestigious V-Festivals featuring world class pop and rock acts, through to folk music festivals, Christmas fairs and celebrations, horse racing point to point meetings to village carnivals, garden centre demonstrations and historic events within the stately homes.

This is just a taste of what South Staffordshire has to offer - if you would like to find out more, a guide called 'Visit South Staffordshire' can be obtained by calling South Staffordshire Council's Leisure and Tourism Services on 01902 696600.

www.visitsouthstaffordshire.co.uk



Bevan Craddock - Penkridge Town Crier, Cllr Pam Bromley - former Chairman of South Staffordshire Council, and Cllr Paddy Kelly - Deputy Leader, Strategic Services.



For your FREE copy of 'Visit South Staffordshire' please call South Staffordshire Council Leisure and Tourism Services on 01902 696600.

New visitor guide is launched

A brand new Visitor Guide to promote South Staffordshire is expected to pull in the visitors and put the District firmly on the tourist map!

The Council-sponsored guide was given an aristocratic launch at Weston Park, the stately home of the Earl of Bradford, and the District's tourism chiefs are confident it will be a boost to the local economy.

The guide, called 'Visit South Staffordshire', highlights a host of fabulous attractions, open spaces, glorious gardens past and present, events and festivals which can be experienced, either on a day out or short break.

For businesses looking for conference facilities, the guide has details of a number of venues. There is also a guide to venues for special occasions, for

example, weddings.

This guide aims to bring people into the area by raising awareness of all South Staffordshire's hidden gems that are just waiting to be explored.

At the launch, Cllr Paddy Kelly, Deputy Leader (Strategic Services) said: "Today is a celebration of the wonderful attractions and facilities we have in South Staffordshire. The guide is an excellent way of offering a taste of the delights visitors can experience when coming into the District."

This event was sponsored by 'Quality at Heart'. Thanks go to Weston Park who kindly hosted the event.



Guests celebrating the launch at Weston Park

Your legal rights to know!

South Staffordshire Council whole-heartedly supports the recent legislation which gives everyone rights of access to most of the information held by the Council.

As a public body, the Council takes its responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 very seriously and has been working hard to ensure it complies with both the spirit and detail of the laws.

These two pieces of legislation give access to almost all information held by the Council, subject to some exemptions such as personal data, which remains protected by the Data Protection Act.

Stage one, in 2002, of the preparation was to list all the information currently made available by the Council and any appropriate fees. (This information is excluded from the Act as it is already available - this publication scheme is available on the website: www.sstaffs.gov.uk).

Under the right of public access you may request information relating to various aspects of the Council's work, among them:

- the policy making process
- how we balance our budget
- service delivery
- issues which affect your quality of life.

Charges may apply to requests for information.

To assist anyone making a request, the Council has a designated officer. Here is her contact address:

Fiona Cozens
Senior Corporate Policy Officer
South Staffordshire Council
Council Offices
Codsall
South Staffordshire
WV8 1PX

You can also e-mail the Council on:

freedomofinformation@sstaffs.gov.uk

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

CONTACTS:

Tel: (01902) 696000
Fax: (01902) 696800
Website: www.sstaffs.gov.uk

OPENING TIMES

8.45am to 5.00pm - Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday

8.45am to 8.00pm - Tuesday

9.30am to 1.00pm - Saturday