

REVIEW



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£200,000 Lotto grant for play facilities in South Staffordshire

Big Lottery windfall for OUR youngsters

South Staffordshire's numbers came up with a £200,000 grant from the Big Lottery to improve play opportunities for the District's children.

The money will be used to pay for four projects, spread over the next three years.

The schemes to be funded are:

- the **Perton Multi-Use Games Area**;
- a **Play Ranger** project providing five play rangers operating in a range of localities across the District;
- a **Children's Play Area** in Brook Lane, Great Wyrley, which will renovate an old play area with new suitable equipment for small children;
- support for South Staffordshire Housing Association to provide a **Play Area**, at the Giggetty, Wombourne, where there are currently no play facilities for children.

Over the next three years the projects will benefit more than 11,300 children and young people between the ages of 3 and 18.

Cllr. Robert Marshall, Deputy Leader (Community Services) for South Staffordshire Council said: "This is wonderful, long awaited news for South Staffordshire. There have been tremendous efforts across

the District for over 12 months to complete this application and I am extremely happy to hear the announcement of the award today. It means that the District of South Staffordshire will have new play areas and many new play opportunities created. I can see a very bright future for children's play in South Staffordshire!"

This award coincides with the recently published Play Strategy for South Staffordshire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), which involved consultation with many children and young people about how they would like to use their free time and how facilities and opportunities could be improved in the future.

Over the next three years the projects will benefit more than 11,300 children and young people between the ages of 3 – 18.

Debbie Griffiths, Chair of the Partnership, said, "On behalf of the Partnership I am absolutely

delighted that this grant has been awarded for the benefit of youngsters in South Staffordshire. It is testimony to the good work of the Partnership".

South Staffordshire was provisionally awarded the grant in 2006. But to unlock the funding, the Big Lottery expected a detailed application from the LSP identifying priority projects for the District and plans for the next three years on how further improvements

could be made for children and young people.

The application to the Big Lottery Fund, made in September 2007, was the culmination of an open application process to all children's organisations and clubs within the District the previous year.

Over £500,000 worth of projects were applied for and these had to be short listed by the Local Play Partnership, a sub group of the South Staffordshire LSP

to go forward to the main application stage.

South Staffordshire's Play Partnership selected what it considered to be the four projects with the most merit, but is also planning to put training programmes in place to help support the remaining projects fulfill their potential.

For further information contact Katie White, Cultural Services Manager, on 01902 696600 or e-mail k.white@sstaffs.gov.uk

Lotto cash will pay for things like this:



An artist's impression of the Multi-Use Games Area that Perton will be developing with the play funding South Staffordshire Council has received through the Big Lottery Fund



Lake improvements underway



View from the lake inlet across the water to the island

in numbers would be likely. The geese population at Perton is currently recorded at anything up to 160!

Meanwhile, new sustainable techniques, incorporating pre-planted coir rolls, were investigated that would enable marginal plants to become permanently established along the lake edge, together with a more easily maintained re-grading of the land around the lake. The choice of coir rolls was key to the plan, as coir is a waste product from the coconut industry, traditionally used for doorstep mats etc. and forms a good growing medium for the marginal plants. The plants arrived on site well established with the roots ready to penetrate the

embankment and lake bed and obtain a sound foothold.

The scheme proposals, including addressing pedestrian access leading from Anders Square into the open space, were presented for public consultation at two exhibitions in the Community Centre and local library in June 2007. As a result, the Council agreed a revised series of initiatives that offered a permanent solution to the lake edge, the adjacent footpath network and accompanying muddy grassland.

Therefore, for the current works a simple, sustainable solution utilising not only coir rolls but also rock rolls, where planting would not thrive due to overhanging trees or a strong underlying current, have been successfully installed.

Floating reed beds secured around the existing island have also been installed to protect the island from further erosion, deter geese access to potential nest sites and provide an excellent habitat for our native species of wild fowl, insects and aquatic life. The work has been overseen by the local Kingfisher that appears to have kept an interest in all the changes to its new improved home!

Further work, including new macadam paving (in partnership with Staffordshire County Council) and shrub and tree planting will be undertaken in the spring.

In addition, the area around the lake edge where the ground has been disturbed has been sown with native wild flower seed. The Council intends to develop these areas as wild flower meadows with cropping once or twice a year to increase biodiversity further, enhance the visual quality of the lake area and deter geese.

Council's Commitment

Cllr Mrs Joan Williams, Deputy Leader (Environmental Services) said: "The works around the lake demonstrate the Council's commitment to improving the physical environment in South Staffordshire for the benefit of local residents, visitors and future generations. The great thing about this particular project is the innovative use of environmentally friendly sustainable materials supporting wildlife and celebrating local distinctiveness."

The Council is continuing to monitor the improved area and will record the environmental changes as they develop. This work will be aided by the work kindly undertaken by a number of dedicated local residents who have formed the now established Perton Friends Group, known locally as 'Wild About Perton'.

The friends group work with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Perton Parish Council and South Staffordshire Council to protect and enhance Perton's green spaces for wildlife and the community. Their policies, plans and activities are agreed collectively by a steering committee that meets at Perton library on a monthly basis. The group organises regular events that the public are encouraged to attend.



The same planting mix on another scheme to show what Perton will look like in late summer 2008

They ensure that the events are welcoming, safe, interesting, educational and above all, fun!

For more information on the Wild About Perton Friends Group, visit their own website at www.wildaboutperton.org.uk. Alternatively, call the Friend's Group Chairman, Keith Elder, on 01902 754245 or e-mail k.elder@mind.org.uk.

For more information about the improvement project contact Hayden Baugh-Jones, Landscape Planning Manager, on 01902 696511, e-mail h.baugh-jones@sstaffs.gov.uk or Pat Davies, Senior Landscape Officer, on 01902 696411, e-mail pat.davies@sstaffs.gov.uk or visit the Council's website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk.



Waterside planting and edge stabilisation under construction



Placing the coir rolls of established marginal plants into position around the lake



Backfilling behind the new planting with dredged material from lake bottom prior to sowing with wild flower mix

Technology, ecology and artistic design have come together to save Perton's Upper Lake from the threat of erosion.

Progressive damage has occurred at the western side of the lake caused by underlying ground conditions, water currents and the resident Canada Geese population.

Normal maintenance work was proving ineffective, leaving South Staffordshire Council with a real headache.

A five-year restoration programme to the opposite side of the lake, completed in 1999, proved that the problems could be solved. But local people complained that it was at the expense of a public amenity, with views of the lake being restricted by dense vegetation.

As a result, the project's Landscape Architect, from the Council's Architectural and Landscape Services, decided from the outset that this engineering problem required an environmental solution to stabilise the lake edge, offer extensive views onto the water throughout the year, contribute to biodiversity and utilise, wherever possible, sustainable construction methods in order to protect this unique feature in the heart of the village.



The eroded embankment before works started

The design had to address the soil-eroding water currents and the make up of the existing ground conditions, but also had to make the area less agreeable to the Canada Geese without being detrimental to the other native species that have made the lake their home.

Scientific guidance indicated that if Canada Geese cannot walk easily from water onto short grass for grazing, a drop

“War Memorial can now take pride of place”, says Councillor

A WAR MEMORIAL FIT FOR HEROES



Councillor Mrs Joan Williams, Deputy Leader (Environmental Services) and Chairman of South Staffordshire Council, Cllr Mrs Pat Griffin, celebrate the opening of the environmental improvements scheme

Cheslyn Hay's War Memorial is once again the focal point of the village following the completion of road and environmental improvements.

The memorial, erected in 1921, has been a local landmark and commemorates service personnel from the village who lost their lives in both World Wars.

For years it was treated as a traffic roundabout which, many people felt, did not give the memorial the true respect it deserved.

As a result, and because the area needed better traffic management, the County Council, in partnership with South Staffordshire Council, came up with a plan for improvements.

A public exhibition of the plans was set up and subsequent discussions between local residents, South Staffordshire Council, Cheslyn Hay Parish Council, Staffordshire County Council and the Royal British Legion, led to over £90,000 being invested to help transform the street environment surrounding the memorial.

The new road layout in the centre of the village has been designed by the County Council's Highway engineers to slow down traffic around the junction of Rosemary Road and High Street.

With the design expertise of South Staffordshire Council's Architectural and Landscape Services, not only was the road layout transformed, but also a much improved open space was created for the benefit of local residents and visitors to the village.

The adjacent Chapel Square open space was also improved and enlarged to create a safer area to sit in and walk through. Its new green boundary has been pushed out into Station Street to not only help the engineers reduce traffic speeds but also to bring the park character right into the street scene. This is illustrated particularly well in the accompanying 'before' and 'after' photographs below.

In addition to the greener looking village centre, a new set of poppy themed railings was also unveiled in the lead up to Remembrance Sunday. The railings and tree guard were commissioned by South Staffordshire Council and designed by Chris Brammall, a nationally-acclaimed artist/blacksmith, following an open design tender. New two-tier steel plant boxes, developed by one of the District Council's Landscape Architects, were also produced by Chris. These allow for permanent planting and spring bulbs in the lower level together with space to place commemorative crosses in the upper level on Remembrance Sunday. Seasonal bedding plants during the summer to complement the Parish Council's hanging basket displays, will replace the crosses each year.



Poppy themed railings

Local residents, representatives of the Royal British Legion along with County, District and Parish Councillors were joined at the opening ceremony by the jazz band from Cheslyn Hay Sport and Community High School who provided music and entertainment as well as paying their respects to the village's fallen heroes. The band played on, despite a sudden torrential downpour!

Cllr Mrs Joan Williams, Deputy Leader (Environmental Services) for South Staffordshire Council, who headed the opening ceremony said:

Before and after views of the area around Cheslyn Hay's War Memorial showing its new respectful setting



The rain didn't dampen the spirits of the school Jazz Band

"This environmental improvement scheme has significantly enhanced the physical environment within the village centre and the unique features of the scheme help to celebrate local distinctiveness. There have also been major improvements to road safety. The work is testament to what can be achieved when organisations pool their knowledge and resources and work closely together on projects such as this. This has created a wonderful new setting for the war memorial which can now take pride of place at the heart of the village."

For further details please contact Pat Davies, Senior Landscape Officer, on 01902 696411, e-mail pat.davies@sstaffs.gov.uk or Hayden Baugh-Jones, Landscape Planning Manager, on 01902 696511, e-mail h.baugh-jones@sstaffs.gov.uk or visit the Council's website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk.



Before



After



LESSON IN LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Democracy came to the classroom for over five hundred pupils across South Staffordshire who went to the ballot box in their own special election.

South Staffordshire's third annual Local Democracy Week, held last October, gave pupils from three local high schools an insight into how the electoral system works, what it's like to run for public office and how young people can help shape their communities.

Taking part were Codsall Community High School, Edgecliff High School, and Ounsdale High School in an initiative designed to engage young people with local politics.

Visit

Pupils visited the Council Offices in Codsall over the course of a week to take part in a series of democracy-based activities including budget setting, hustings, an election and the chance to grill their local councillors.

The students also had the opportunity to have their say on 'free-time' opportunities for children and young people across the District.

The event was organised by the Staffordshire Partnership and South Staffordshire Council.

Cllr Brian Edwards, Leader of South Staffordshire Council said: "These events are about

engaging youngsters in politics and the importance of getting involved in our local communities.

"Voting isn't just about Westminster, it's about how we shape our local communities and I hope these activities will inspire younger people to get involved and make sure their voices are heard."



Emma Crump and Naomi Francis, Year 10 pupils at Codsall Community High School, taking part in Local Democracy Week

IF YOU WANT TO GET ON, GET CONNECTED

Teenagers and young people wondering which path to take with their lives can turn to Connexions Staffordshire for free and friendly advice and support.

Connexions Staffordshire is an organisation funded through a government contract.

Connexions Staffordshire - what do we do?

Connexions provides a support service for all 13-19 year olds and for people up to 25 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs) offer young people information, advice and practical support on any issues that may affect them.

It could be making decisions about jobs, careers, lifestyle, family or personal problems.

They have the low-down on courses, training placements and careers, part-time jobs, accessing personal development opportunities (e.g. volunteering, sports or arts) or dealing with family or relationship problems.

PAs work in schools and colleges and also within the community, providing support for young people not currently in education or training. PAs also offer information and advice to parents and carers at

parents' evenings, careers events and via the Connexions Centres.

Connexions works closely with employers in South Staffordshire to locate jobs for young people, then helping them apply for posts and prepare for interviews. Connexions has also been working with Jobcentre Plus in Wolverhampton to identify jobs for young people who live in Codsall, Featherstone and Perton.

Connexions can be contacted directly on:

Freephone **0808 1000 434**

or e-mail: info@cxstaffs.co.uk

Personal Adviser Dee Hawkins works at various locations across the Featherstone, Great Wyrley, Kinver, Perton and Wombourne areas. To find out more details or to make an appointment to see her in a venue local to you, call Dee on **07870 697574** or e-mail her at dee.hawkins@cxstaffs.co.uk

In addition, Connexions has Centres in Cannock and Stafford. Call **01543 510270** (Cannock) and **01785 356656** (Stafford).

Finally, you can find out more about Connexions on the website: www.cxstaffs.co.uk



Young people have their say

Youngsters from across South Staffordshire got the chance to put their views - and some thought provoking questions - directly to district councillors and parish council members.

They were invited, as representatives of the South Staffordshire District Youth Council, to deliver a workshop at the Parish Council Summit, held in November.

It was designed by the Youth Council to encourage Parish Councils to consider how to engage young people.

The young people asked those attending to discuss a series of thought provoking questions and then, using the comments and feedback, to come up with a model for listening to and taking note of young people's views within their parishes.

The workshop was well attended - apparently the busiest workshop of the day - an indication of how seriously it was taken.

Participants were asked to discuss questions such as; what are the barriers to young people attending parish council meetings? What value is there in having young people as parish council members? Why there are not many young people that are members of parish councils and how can that culture be changed? How can parish councils make themselves more approachable to young people? The discussions that followed were interesting and useful.

Afterwards, the young people were given some excellent feedback from participants in the workshop; some said it was the best workshop of the day.

The Youth Council members themselves felt the workshop was very well received and that participants were interested in their thoughts and opinions. They felt they had been listened to and had made some positive links for future work with parish councils.

Parish Summit Success

Attempts to forge closer links between the District Council and Parish Councils were deemed a huge success following the inaugural 'Parish Summit' in South Staffordshire last month.

The event, which was hosted by South Staffordshire Council, is the first of its kind in the District and was designed to help inform the parishes in South Staffordshire about how their roles in the community will change following the ascendancy of the new Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act.

Representatives from over 20 of the local parishes, as well as the Community Council of Staffordshire and the Staffordshire Parish Council Association packed the Council Chamber for the day-long event which included a series of specially designed workshops and an array of guest speakers.

The workshops allowed delegates to discuss, in-depth, finance issues for Parish Councils as well as sharing best practice and picking up new handy tips as to how local parishes can help engage young people and take a leading community role in tackling climate change. Parish representatives also received an easy guide training session for the revised Section 17 duty of the Crime & Disorder Act.

The Leader of South Staffordshire Council, Councillor Brian Edwards said: "Parish Councils continue to play a central role in our communities. With the potential for more and more decisions to be made at a local level, the more important it is for us to have vibrant and affective

Parish Councils".

"Younger people make a real difference to our communities which is why grass roots engagement is so important. I think everyone, both at District and Parish level, took something positive away from the Summit".

Guest speaker, Andrew Jones from the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) addressed the delegates and discussed the various implications of the new Local Government Act on Parish Councils.

Andrew Jones was joined on stage by Dave Mahon, Development Officer with the National Association of Local Councils, who spoke at length on how local Parishes can meet the challenges posed by the Act and build on the opportunities the new legislation presents.

Innovative

Steve Winterflood, Deputy Chief Executive at South Staffordshire Council, hailed the event as a great success:

"The Parish Summit is the first of its kind and a really innovative way of bringing the District and the local parishes together. The new Local Government Act means big changes for us all but this event has really helped cement our working relationship to promote strong and prosperous local communities."

"We're hoping this will become an annual event where we can all come to the table to discuss new and exciting ways of working together to meet the needs of residents and families across the whole of South Staffordshire."

FRIENDS OF ESSINGTON

Activities for the last Year 2006-7

The last 12 months has been a busy time for the Friends of Essington.

The group was set up two years ago with the aim of improving the environment in and around the village. All ages are represented and members can choose how much, or how little, they want to be involved.

During the past year, one of the first projects was to tidy up the area around the Willenhall Rugby Club.

This proved to be a larger drain on resources than had been first envisaged.

Group members originally started cutting back the hedge and clearing the weeds that had encroached on to the path opposite the entrance to Swynnerton Drive. This is where the project got its name - Adrian's Wall, from one of the members, Adrian Nicklin.

Work then progressed to the other side of the road to clear some of the overgrown trees and weeds that made the area down from the Swynnerton Drive entrance such an eyesore. It was this part of the project that had been vastly underestimated. It took a lot of effort to clear away the bank and then plant various shrubbery.

Continuing with the theme of improving the gateways to the village, it was decided that the island between the Cannock Road (A460) and Bognop Road (leading up Windmill Hill) was in need of some beautifying. For this project, the help of Richard Simkin of Essington Fruit Farm was enlisted. It was agreed that the group would supply the labour and he would supply the plants. The result is an eye-catching improvement as you travel up Windmill Hill heading for the village.

The group was asked to provide a flower bed to enhance the rear garden of Park House Sheltered Housing - with all the experience previously gained, the job went smoothly and was very much appreciated by the residents.

Later in the year, group member John Hanson went back to Park House to give a slide show on his travels to some spectacular parts of the world. These included the Scottish Highlands, the Alps, Pyrenees and to the further flung places such as Kenya, India, Nepal, Australia and New Zealand.

The social side of the group has also flourished and among its functions was a Rockabilly Night at the Willenhall Rugby Club in the village. The last social event of the year, also at the Willenhall Rugby Club, was a Bavarian Evening, once again enjoyed by all who attended.

A dilapidated black and white 'finger post sign' used to stick out, for all the wrong reasons, on a triangle of land at the junction between the Wolverhampton Road and Brownshore Lane. The 'finger post' was



A good turn out for the Winter Walk

desperately in need of repair. After consulting the Council, approval was obtained to replace the 'finger post' with a new one made from English Oak. In addition, the lamp post on the triangle was painted and a shrub bed planted.

The Friends also strive to get the local community involved with some of the projects - the 'tree rescue' from Shoal Hill Common near Cannock being one. This was deemed necessary as Shoal Hill (which is a lowland heath) was being managed in order to restore it to its natural beauty. Lowland heath is in decline nationally and work was being carried out to help to protect it from invasive species of plants that could eradicate the heathland habitat.

The group contacted the local school, St John's, to provide children to help with this project. Suitable tree species were selected and then transported to be replanted in Essington.

In the summer the Friends were honoured

to be invited to hold a stall at the school fete in order to promote past and future work in and around the village. Dodging the bad weather to provide a stall, a steady stream of people found their way to it and a great deal of interest was shown. It is nice to know that so many villagers were interested in their local environment. They were told stories of rare birds and other wildlife spotted around the village and offered advice and encouragement. In total, 170 coloured pencils embossed with 'Friends of Essington' were given to children attending the stall.

The walks organised by the group are very popular events, ranging from Spring and Summer walks, (the bluebell walk being particularly lovely), to a walk in December around the village that had spectacular views with a wonderful 'Haw Frost'.

Anyone who would like to get involved with the Friends of Essington can contact Paul on 07803 253558 or Colin on 01902 722789.



Swynnerton Drive before the work



Swynnerton Drive after the work

South Staffordshire Walking Festival

Get your walking boots on - the third annual South Staffordshire Walking Festival is just around the corner!

The walks, organised by South Staffordshire Council, aim to highlight the beauty, diversity and heritage of our lovely District.

This year, a wide range of walks have been arranged, from short HealthWatch Walks to an 11-mile ramble around Codsall. The walks, of varying distances, are planned all around the District.

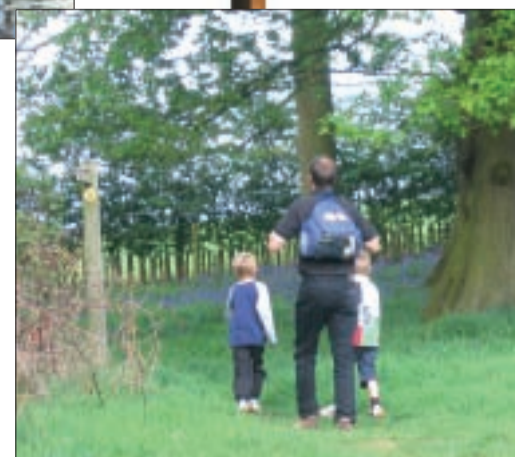
The walks are led by local people who have a store of local knowledge and interesting stories to make the miles fly by.

If you want to learn about the Pit Mound at Huntington, or take a walk around the ancient village of Enville, get your boots on! It is also hoped to have guided walks around the gardens of local stately homes.

As well as taking in the scenery, walking provides a great way to increase your physical activity with all the benefits this can provide.

With most of the walks free of charge, come on out and enjoy fresh air in picturesque South Staffordshire.

To pre-order your Walking Festival brochure ring 01902 696531.



AT YOUR LEISURE

Easter holidays are SUSSED!

Youngsters in South Staffordshire can look forward to an action-packed Easter holiday with the Council's SUSSED programme in full swing.

Activities aimed at 5-12 year olds will be taking place at all South Staffordshire Council Leisure Centres this Easter.

They will be revving up for Go Karting, stepping out for Street Dance, pulling on their football boots and tipping their hats for Easter bonnet-making, plus much more.

The Council's Leisure Services SUSSED programme is bound to have something for everyone.

As well as utilising the leisure centres, SUSSED will once more be going out and about, taking children's activities all around the District.

This Easter, SUSSED will be visiting Perton, Pattingham, Codsall, Brewood, Coven, Bishops Wood and Essington.



To get a copy of the SUSSED brochure which will give you all the information about times and places, call in at your local leisure centre or phone Leisure Services on 01902 696531.

The programme is also available to view on line at www.sstaffs.gov.uk/sussed.

NEW FACILITIES ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE

Cheslyn Hay Leisure Centre recently held an open day to attract members of the public along to view the great new facilities on offer at the centre.

New facilities include a state of the art new gym containing a wide range of pulse fitness equipment, including individual viewing screens enabling users to watch their



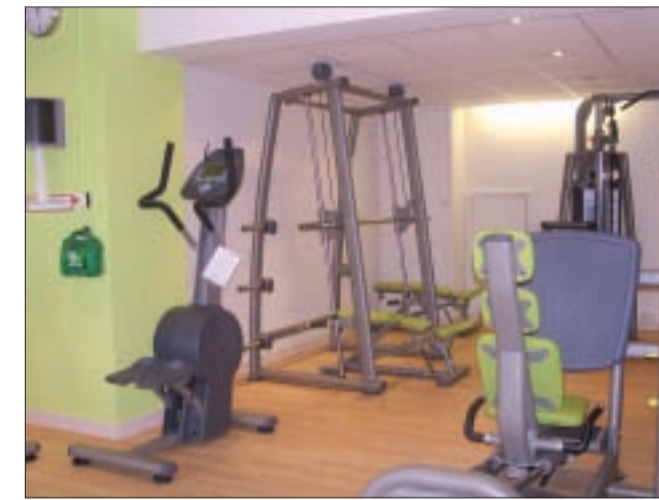
favourite TV programmes whilst exercising. It is also the second of South Staffordshire's Energise fitness suites to have a Vibraxis machine, providing exercise using vibration technology to improve muscle strength and help reduce body fat.

The centre has also benefited from newly refurbished



changing rooms which boast, hair drying and straightening facilities, a new multi-purpose room which a variety of fitness classes which are currently taking place in and new cricket nets in the sports hall.

The open day was attended by the Chairman of South Staffordshire Council, Cllr Patricia Griffin who was able to view all the fantastic facilities on offer.



ART GALLERY FOR LEISURE CENTRES

Work by talented arts students from Ounsdale High School in Wombourne and Cheslyn Hay High School is to go on display at South Staffordshire leisure centres.

The Council has bought a set of frames specifically for the purpose and leisure chiefs believe the students' paintings, drawings and other artwork will enhance the centres.

The exhibits will be changed every couple of months to give as many students as possible the opportunity to display their efforts.



Spring Concerts

South Staffordshire's hugely popular series of Spring Concerts is about to enter its ninth year.

The concerts, produced by the Council in partnership with South Staffordshire Housing Association, were originally developed in order to give local people the opportunity to see live and professional music performances.

But under the auspices of Live Music Now!, they have become highly successful entertainment that is eagerly anticipated by local people.

Live Music Now! consistently provides very talented and accomplished musicians that result in high quality concerts.

Last year, the Council introduced an Autumn Concert programme in the hope that it would follow on from the success of the Spring series.

That has proved to be the case - the Autumn Concerts were extremely popular and attracted larger audiences than anticipated, with all participating venues requesting contracts for this Spring.

A total of 13 concerts is now planned to take place throughout March and April.

They will be held in a variety of venues across the District, including residential homes, sheltered housing and day centres and will see a variety of musicians



performing music to suit every taste.

South Staffordshire Council and South Staffordshire Housing Association fund all of the concerts, so all the participating hosts have to do is provide an available venue and offer light refreshments at the event. Any musically inspired groups or individuals are encouraged to take part.

The concerts last for about an hour with flexible performances in the morning, afternoon and evening. Since not every type of music is suitable for every venue or audience, the host of the concert is given the opportunity to choose from a selection of available musicians in order to ensure that the appropriate musician performs at their venue.

For more information on the Spring and Autumn concerts contact Sam O'Toole in Community Services at South Staffordshire Council on 01902 696525.



Flicks in the Sticks - Coming Soon to a Place near You

Hollywood will be coming to your neighbourhood with an innovative arts project launched by South Staffordshire Council.

Called, appropriately enough, Flicks in the Sticks, it aims to bring current blockbuster and quality cinema releases to local community centres, village halls and parish meeting places throughout the District.

It's part of the Council's own "bigger picture" of reducing the isolation often felt by smaller communities in rural areas.

The Council has, for several years, worked with different partners to promote concerts bringing live & local professional performances of music and theatre to local venues.

The new Flicks in the Sticks scheme will add to the music and theatre.

The Flicks in the Sticks scheme set up by Arts Alive, has been developed in order to provide professional cinema showings in rural and isolated communities that will not only have a positive impact on village life, it will also help to boost the confidence, skills and experience of the volunteer promoters.

South Staffordshire Council is piloting the scheme in two parishes within the District, which have been carefully chosen based on the level of access the communities have to nearby cinema facilities.

Flicks in the Sticks operates in much the same way as the Spring and Autumn Concerts - the Council funds the cost of the



Cllr Joan Burton MBE, Sam O'Toole, Community Development Officer Arts, and Rachel Taylor, Children and Young Peoples Partnership Manager

pilot events and the host provides an available venue. Tickets to the Flicks will be sold for a small charge with all of the profit being reinvested into the scheme for the following year. Eventually as the scheme grows in popularity and becomes established, the profit from the tickets sold should cover the cost of providing the events, therefore parishes should be able to sustain the project themselves.

The pilot scheme is in Pattingham and Wheaton Aston, with hopefully, three film showings in each parish planned before the end of March.

Although there is every reason to expect it will be a great success, a formal review will take place in April 2008, and if expectations are realised, Flicks in the Sticks will be coming to many other parishes in 2008.

Pattingham opened the pilot scheme with their first film showing of Miss Potter, which took place at Pattingham Village Hall, in December. This was followed in February by the second film - Atonement. The third film, Amazing Grace, is taking place on Friday 14th March at 7.30 p.m. For tickets, call 01902 700586.

Wheaton Aston has also had film showings of Atonement in January, which was a sell out, and the film Elizabeth. For information about Wheaton Aston's third film, please call 01785 840826.

For more information on Flicks in the Sticks, please contact Sam O'Toole at South Staffordshire Council on 01902 696525.

YOU COULD BE A WINNER WITH GET SET POINTS

More than 2,000 youngsters have now signed up for South Staffordshire Council Leisure Services Get Set Points Card.

The card is similar to the loyalty cards issued by the big high street stores, but this one rewards under 14's for participating in sport and physical activity.

Each time a Get Set Points Card member takes part in activities through an approved provider, points are added to their card. Children can be rewarded for collecting points with free sports or physical activity coaching at their school and with prizes such as free entry to local attractions.

Those who have joined are beginning to see the benefits of being part of this scheme.

Here's an example: Sophie, a Get Set Points Card prize winner, recently enjoyed a free visit to the Black Country Living Museum. She won the prize through high participation levels in sports such as swimming and SUSSED children's holiday activities.

The project aims to motivate children to take part in sport and physical activity throughout the District. The support provided by South Staffordshire School Sports Partnership, local sports clubs and local attractions is instrumental in this.

For more information about the Get Set Points Scheme, contact Lee Booth on 01902 696499 or e-mail l.booth@sstaffs.gov.uk



South Staffordshire Children's Centres and Community and Learning Partnerships

CHILDREN'S CENTRE FIRST
OFF THE MARK

Landywood has chalked up a 'first' for South Staffordshire with the opening of the village's new Children's Centre.

It's the first of seven potential centres in the District, which are at the heart of the Government's commitment to improving children's health and welfare and alleviating child poverty.

The centres will enable families with young children to access a whole range of better, localized facilities and services to support their needs.

The Government has pledged to provide a Children's Centre in every community by 2010 and South Staffordshire is well on the way to achieving this target.

Great Wyrley was identified as a community that would benefit from a range of services all on one site. Landywood Children's Centre, which opened in September, is the first for South Staffordshire and will be a welcome resource for local families and children.

Kate Sharratt, Community and Learning Partnership co-ordinator for Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley said: "This is the first of several sites identified in South Staffordshire where families of young children can access a whole range of services to support their needs. We are very proud to have been instrumental in achieving this Children's Centre, the first for South Staffordshire."



The sites that have already been selected for children's centres are:

- **Landywood Primary School**, in Great Wyrley, opened in September 2007.
- **Whitgreave Primary School**, in Featherstone, due for completion September 2008
- **Glenthorpe Primary School**, in Cheslyn Hay, as a link site for Featherstone, opening January 2008
- **Wombourne Library** in Wombourne, opening April 2008
- **Edgecliff High School**, in Kinver, opening March 2008.

A further two sites will be earmarked in the Penkrudge and Codsall areas.

For further information about what's being offered in your community please call Kate Sharratt on 01922 417256.

WORKING TOGETHER
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Parents and their children in South Staffordshire are benefitting from a new initiative called Community & Learning Partnerships.

They focus on bringing access to a wide variety of activities, affordable childcare, specialist services, training & job opportunities and health care.

The partnerships have been set up by the County Council and in South Staffordshire there are six of them, each based around clusters of local schools (high schools and all of their feeder schools).

They involve public, private, voluntary and community sector groups who have responsibilities for the welfare and education of youngsters from the moment they are born, up to the age of 18. Their remit also includes the families of young people.

The South Staffordshire Community and Learning Partnerships are based at:

- Codsall (including Codsall, Bilbrook, Perton and Pattingham)
- Wombourne (including Wombourne, Lower Penn, Trysull and Seisdon)

- Kinver (including Kinver, Enville, Bobbington, Gospel End, Swindon and Himley)

- Great Wyrley (including Great Wyrley and Landywood),

- Cheslyn Hay (including Cheslyn Hay, Essington, Featherstone, Shareshill and Saredon)

- Penkrudge (including Penkrudge, Wheaton Aston, Gailey, Brewood, Bishop's Wood and Coven).

Although still a fairly young initiative itself, the partnerships have already been involved with: childcare places, parenting programmes, improved community access to facilities, physical activities, Bayleaf project, establishment of Youth Action Councils.

To help join up the threads of the various agencies, each partnership has a part-time co-ordinator.

If you are interested in finding out more information about providing services in the District, or the services that are available for your family, please contact Rachel Taylor, who will direct you to the appropriate area, on 01902 696534.

INFORMATION
TREASURE TROVE

If you are 50-plus and live in South Staffordshire, there's a wealth of useful contacts and information for you in the Council's FREE Older Persons' Directory.

Now in its third year, the directory lists local, national and voluntary sector organisations and charities, offering services that may be useful to residents in the over-50 age bracket.

The directories are FREE and are available from any library or leisure centre in the District, as well as from the reception desk in Solutions at the main Council Offices at Codsall. The 2008

directory will be printed in May.

For further information about the Directory, or if you would like to advertise your community group or organisation in the 2008 edition, please contact Matt Boyce on (01902) 696456.

Driving down the barriers
for the vulnerable

A dedicated bunch of volunteers is bringing hope to vulnerable South Staffordshire residents often left stranded in rural outposts of the District.

The drivers and backup support of the local voluntary car schemes provide a vital link with the outside world for many elderly, disabled and lonely people whose lives would be otherwise just an existence.

For example - when you are in your eighties, with mobility difficulties, don't have a car and live half a mile from the nearest tarmac road down a muddy track, even a visit to the shops can be a trauma, often an impossibility.

This particular lady spent most of her days alone in her cottage, her only outside contact, the visit of one of the drivers from the voluntary car scheme who would take her to a local village community social session.

Over time, the extent of her isolation and vulnerability became apparent to the team of drivers. Through their joint concern and after lengthy negotiations, the Council

agreed to re-house her into single storey accommodation adjacent to the basic facilities she had been denied for so many years.

The convenor of the local voluntary car scheme responsible for identifying this particular lifeline feels that this example is only the tip of the iceberg.

Several voluntary car schemes across the County provide invaluable access, especially for citizens of rural communities who often have limited mobility, to the basic facilities and services the rest of us take for granted.

The schemes operate entirely through the voluntary contributions of a network of drivers and organisers who donate not only their time, but also the use of their vehicles throughout their local communities.

Effectiveness

Unfortunately, because of limited resources and negligible levels of external support, the schemes' operational capacity often falls short of an ever-increasing demand.

In an effort to boost the

effectiveness of the volunteer drivers, the Community Council of Staffordshire has won backing for a network partnership providing advice, guidance and support for the benefit of schemes' voluntary trustees, organisers and drivers.

In addition, each Parish Council in the County currently without a car volunteer scheme, has been invited to consider developing one in their community. So far, 24 additional parishes have expressed an interest.

One proposal being discussed is a Countywide Voluntary Car Scheme Partnership, open to all existing and potential schemes.

This Partnership could establish a central register of requirements from its members and provide the focus for attracting the necessary resources.

If your community is interested in finding out more, or feels it can contribute to the development of this service, contact Brian Heathcote at Staffs Community Council 01785 242525 or e-mail brian.heathcote@staffs.org.uk.

Queueing up for FREE Bus Travel

South Staffordshire residents entitled to free bus travel are clamouring for the new All-England bus pass.

From April, they will be entitled to free travel across the country on any local bus service.

The nationwide pass replaces the Staffordshire Advantage bus pass.

During October and November, South Staffordshire Council staff attended village halls throughout the District to take digital photos of current bus pass holders who attended.

The process was well received and was very quick, photos went straight into the computer system and there was no cost to the pass holder.

As a result, around 97% of holders have had their details updated with a digital photograph.

All bus pass holders will now receive their pass and detailed conditions of use direct from the smart card supplier on behalf of the Council, in March.

Anyone who has NOT received their new pass by 27th March 2008, should contact the Council on its Concessionary Travel hotline 01902 696122.

To coincide with the launch of the new pass, from 1st April the Council will be offering a companion pass to those who qualify on specific disability grounds, to help those who cannot travel on public transport unaided. Full details of who can qualify will accompany the pass.

Staffordshire does not apply a time restriction for its current Advantage bus pass and this will continue in Staffordshire under the new bus pass.

Other travel scheme areas may have different rules, e.g. Centro West Midlands,

where you will have to pay if you travel before 9.30am and after 11pm at night.

Bus pass users are advised to check the rules when travelling out of the county.

Anyone who currently has travel tokens or a senior rail card will receive a voucher in early March and will be able to switch to a bus pass after 1st April if they choose. Details on how to do this will be in the covering letter.

Further details, including an application form for concessionary travel, can be obtained from the Council Offices in Codsall or South Staffordshire Council's website www.sstaffs.gov.uk.

Alternatively, call our helpline on 01902 696122.



ELECTORAL REGISTER HITS THE TARGET

South Staffordshire's Electoral Register has set new standards for accuracy and punctuality.

The new register for 2007 contains over 98% of South Staffordshire households, the District Electoral Registration Officer reports.

Use of the internet and personal visits to households who failed to respond to the registration form request, has seen the performance target for this year exceeded.

The final figure was 98.16%, up from 97.73% in 2006, and above the performance target for the second year running.

Credit goes to the District's electoral registration staff, who not only went door knocking at the reminder stage, but also introduced a second reminder for those households who failed to comply with their legal duty to register the names of all those in their household eligible to vote.

In terms of customer satisfaction, South Staffordshire also scored high, with many compliments from people using the on-line system to confirm their status.

"Very quick and easy to complete" and "Excellent system, easy to follow and use" were among the comments made.

This is the first year that the Electoral Registration Officer has had to provide full statistics of his canvass and associated electoral costs to the Electoral Commission for

the establishment of national performance standards. A 98% response rate compares very favorably with local authorities similar to South Staffordshire and with past results nationally.

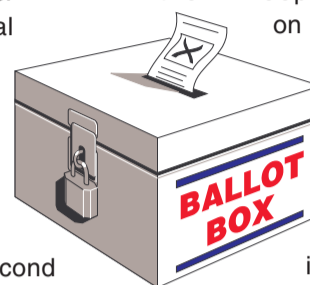
A total of 12,324 registrations were made via the Freephone service and 3,591 on the Internet. In 2006 the figures were 15,144 (Freephone) and 2,632 by web. That gave a 36% increase in web registrations for 2007.

Though there are no scheduled elections in 2008, it is still a legal requirement for each household to make a return during the annual canvass.

The Electoral Registration Officer wants to ensure that the register is as free as possible from errors and up to date. It continues to be important for householders to notify the Electoral Registration Officer of any changes during the year, as the register is a public document and is also used for any by-elections.

A further point to bear in mind is that if your name is not on the electoral register, you may have difficulty in obtaining credit. Credit Reference Agencies legally use electoral registers for checking purposes.

Further information on electoral services can be obtained from our website www.sstaffs.gov.uk or by calling the Electoral Hotline on 01902 696121.



If you're 60 or over, or eligible disabled, your bus pass is changing.

From 1st April 2008 you can enjoy free off-peak travel on local buses anywhere in England.*

Want to find out more?

If you live in South Staffordshire you can contact the Council on 01902 696122 or visit www.sstaffs.gov.uk

* Some authorities choose to fund additional benefits to their residents, e.g. train, tram or peak time bus travel. As a general rule, these additional benefits will only be available to local residents.

*Please note that Staffordshire does not apply a time restriction on using this bus pass which means you can travel for free at anytime. (Time restrictions may apply in other areas).

*This bus pass is not valid for use on trains or trams throughout the country.

Department for Transport

Pass for eligible England residents

Where to go when your drains won't flow

Extreme weather is putting a strain on the country's sewers and drainage systems and South Staffordshire Council's Environmental Health team is taking more and more calls about the problem.

The problem is that many drains and sewers that take away bathroom and kitchen waste water also have to deal with rain water from roofs and yards.

The excessive rainfall has meant that many sewers can't cope, often resulting in raw sewage escaping onto gardens, driveways and into homes. Drains and sewers have also been damaged or blocked.

Worried residents are asking: who's responsible for clearing the drains? What can we do? Who do I call? Unfortunately, regarding who's responsible and who pays, it may well be you!

However, the answers are not straightforward, and it will help to understand what terms are used to describe the sewerage system:

- A Drain** Serves one property
- A Private Sewer** Serves more than one property
- A Public Sewer** Is adopted by the Water Authority (in South Staffordshire this is Severn Trent Water.)

All **drains** and **private sewers** are the legal responsibility of the owners of the properties that have use of them. This can be confusing as they often extend beyond the boundaries of a property, even under footpaths and roads, until they meet the public sewer.

Very simply put, if your waste water passes through the point of the private sewer needing unblocking or repair, then you are jointly responsible, together with any other property owners who share that section of sewer, for the costs of rectifying the problem.

If you rent your property, the responsibility for the drains and sewers is usually your Housing Association or Landlord.

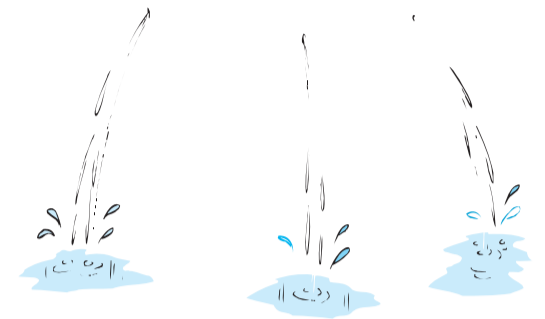
Most blockages are only temporary, often caused by inappropriate use of the drainage system to dispose of sanitary towels, disposable nappies or food waste (particularly oil and fat which solidify and congeal in the system constricting the bore of the pipe). They can be quickly cleared by 'rodding' or 'jetting'.

In some instances, the obstruction can't be cleared and this will need further investigation by excavation or CCTV camera to establish the cause.

What you should do if your drain or sewer is blocked:

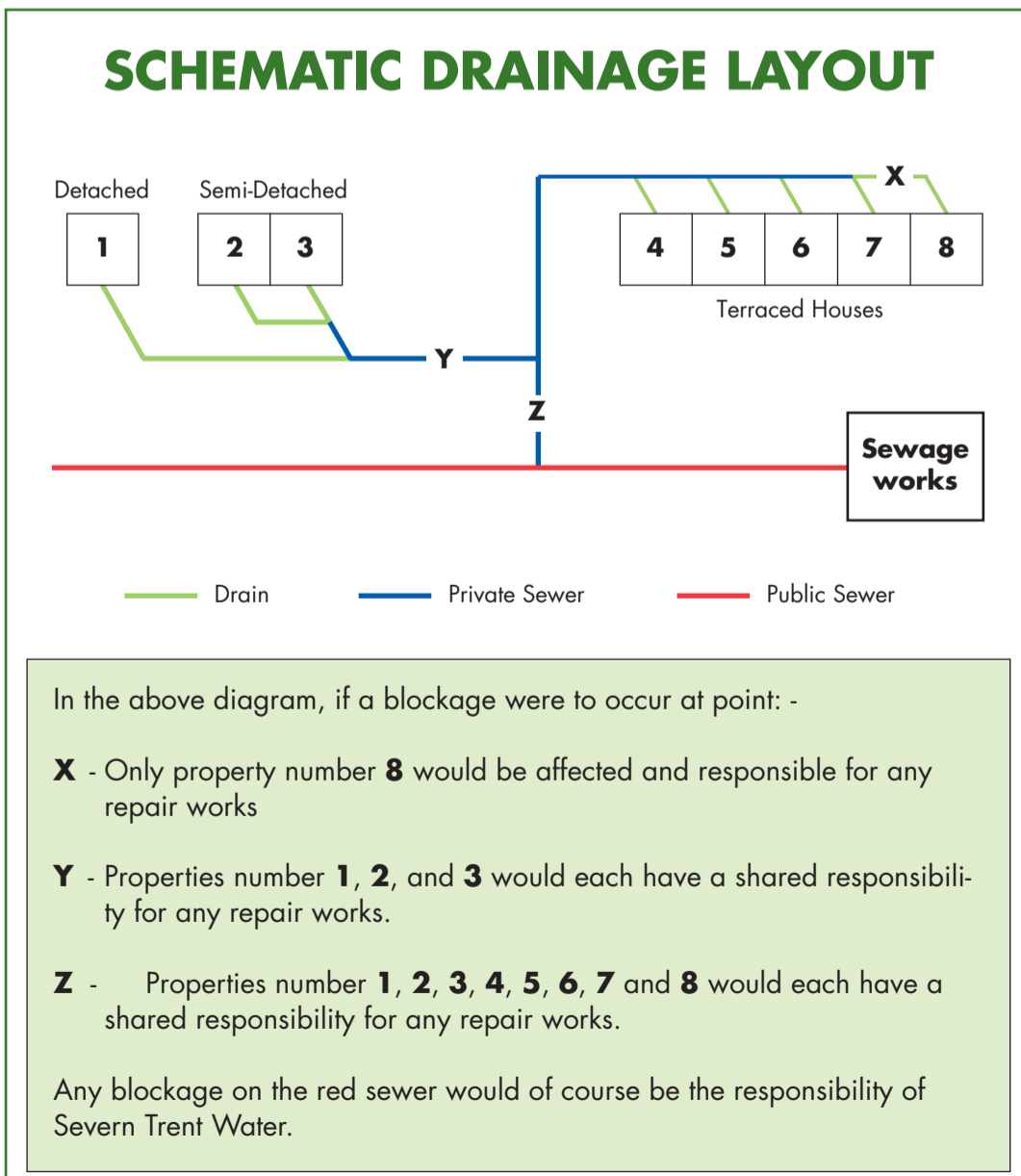
When problems are experienced with your drains/sewers it is important to resolve the problems quickly to prevent flooding and likely risk to public health.

- If the problem is in a **Public Sewer**, notify Severn Trent.



- If the blockage is in your **drain**, call a private contractor to clear the problem. There are many companies listed in Yellow Pages, but shop around as costs vary considerably. If you have specific drainage insurance cover, contact your insurer immediately.
 - If the blockage is in a **Private Sewer**, contact any neighbours who share it and look to share the costs to clear it.
 - If you are a tenant notify your landlord immediately.
- Note: South Staffordshire Council does not have a rodding / drain clearing service.

If you are unable to sort the problem out yourself, the Council's Environmental Health Officers will help. An Officer will investigate and, if necessary, affected homeowners will be served with a formal notice requiring the sewer to be unblocked or repaired within a stipulated period (usually between 48 hours and 21 days, depending on the type of work needed). Once the notices have expired, if the problem has not been resolved, the Council will arrange for contractors to carry out any necessary works and recover all the costs incurred from the owners of the affected properties.



The following contact details may be of use:

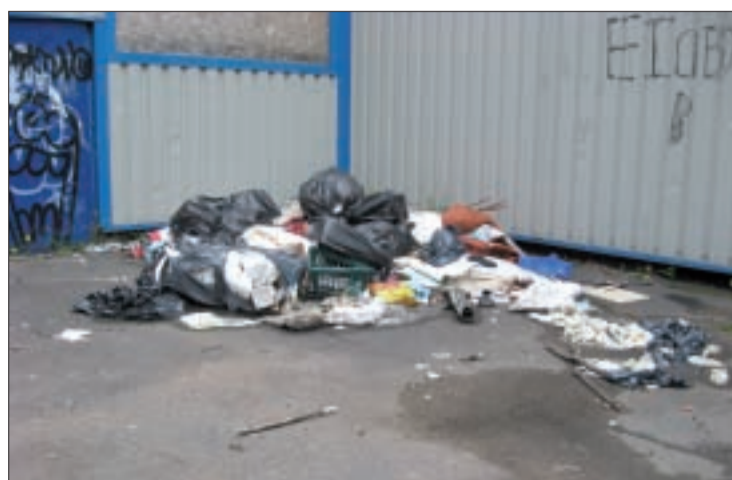
Severn Trent Water Authority	0800 7834444
South Staffordshire Housing Association	01785 312000
Bromford Housing Association	0845 6050603
Midland Heart Housing Association	0870 6070300
South Staffordshire Environmental Health (General) Services	01902 696203

WASTE WARNING FOR HOUSEHOLDERS

Do you know what happens to your waste?

If you think what happens to your waste after it has left your home is not your problem, think again!

The law now says that ordinary householders must take "reasonable measures" to ensure that any waste not collected by their local authority is handled and disposed of by an authorised person.



Who does this apply to?

The law applies to any individual or organisation other than South Staffordshire Council that removes waste from your property. The 'waste' in question could be generated by, for example:

- Builders and allied trades;
- Landscape gardeners;
- Tree fellers;
- House cleaners; and
- Skip hire companies.

As a result of the Waste (Household Waste) Duty of Care (England and Wales) Regulations 2005, operators

must be licensed to dispose of any waste on your behalf and it is the householder's responsibility to check that they are.

The regulations do not apply if you are taking your own waste to a Civic Amenity site.

How will I know if somebody is legally authorised to remove waste from my property?

Authorised collectors must register with the Environment Agency as a waste carrier. When enquiring about a service, request the waste carrier number and note this

down. This information can then be checked with the Environment Agency on 08708 506 506, or by an online search at www2.environment-agency.gov.uk/epr/search.asp.

A licensed waste carrier will provide you with a Waste Transfer Note as evidence of the transfer, which should be retained.

What happens if I do not use a registered waste carrier?

It is your responsibility to ensure that you take

reasonable measures to ensure that your waste is disposed of safely and legally. If you do not use a registered waste carrier and the waste is subsequently disposed of illegally, i.e. it is fly-tipped, you can be fined up to £5,000.

Fly tipping not only causes environmental damage but also costs South Staffordshire Council money to have it removed and disposed of safely. In the last twelve months, South Staffordshire Council has dealt with 661 cases of fly-tipping on public land. The removal and disposal of this rubbish cost in the region of £44,500. Please ensure that your household waste is disposed of properly.

If you witness any fly-tipping in South Staffordshire, please contact South Staffordshire Council's Environmental Health (General) on 01902 696203.



Local businesses for local people

Businesses and residents across southern Staffordshire are being urged: Think Local!



South Staffordshire Council is one of five local authorities that have joined forces with Chambers of Commerce in a campaign to persuade people to think local for goods and services on their doorstep first.

The Think Local project aims to promote inter-trading between businesses and to encourage the public sector, private companies and residents to think and buy local.

A database of nearly 20,000 businesses in southern Staffordshire is available online, giving regularly updated contact details.

It's hoped that by promotion and marketing of the initiative, people and firms really will start to think about sourcing their needs at a local level. In the current climate of rocketing transport costs, thinking local may also be a money saver!

The Think Local site can be accessed via the Council's own website (under Business Directory) or direct at www.think-local.biz



Caring for people with Dementia

A three year project to help sufferers with dementia and their carers in South Staffordshire is getting into full swing.

With cash help from the South Staffordshire Local Strategic Partnership, the project is aimed at increasing awareness of the disease and its effects upon sufferers and their families across the District.

It was launched officially last September, with the appointment of a full time support worker for dementia sufferers. Some of the funds are being used for training on the disease and its impact and a publicity campaign about it.

The funding was secured as part of the Treasury's 'Invest to Save' initiative, designed to encourage partnership working across the public sector.

As a result, the project has received backing from South Staffordshire Council, South Staffordshire PCT, South

Staffordshire Housing Association and the County Council. In return, the Department of Health has made a £30,000 contribution.

Helena Payne, the support worker, is able to give talks to community groups on dementia and its effects. She is also available to have informal chats with individuals.

If you are worried about someone suffering from dementia or have concerns yourself, contact Helena on 01902 851900.



Pictured from left to right are: Sonya Senior, Alzheimer's Society; the Chairman of the Council, Cllr Pat Griffin and Helena Payne



South Staffordshire Council

INDUSTRIAL UNITS TO LET

Landywood Enterprise Park, Great Wyrley
Unit 30 - 1,579 sq ft

Heathmill Enterprise Centre, Wombourne

Unit 1 - 1,460 sq ft
Unit 2 - 1,460 sq ft
Unit 3 - 2,350 sq ft

Contact:

Glen Parker, Commercial Development Section, Council Offices, Codsall, South Staffordshire WV8 1PX

Tel: 01902 696117 Fax: 01902 696705

E-mail: g.parker@sstaffs.gov.uk



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE REVIEW



Stepping onto the housing ladder in Huntington



Photograph courtesy of: SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Pictured from left to right are: Debbie Griffiths, Chief Executive SSHA; Ursula Bennion, Group Director of Business Development SSHA; Grant Mitchell, Housing Strategy Manager SSC; Cllr Mrs Pat Griffin, Chairman of SSC and Dr Mary Griffiths, Chair of SSHA.

Affordable homes have been brought within the reach of more local residents with South Staffordshire Housing Association's new shared ownership housing scheme.

In a deal between South Staffordshire Council, South Staffordshire Housing Association and Miller Homes, 94 properties have been set aside in Huntington for a mixture of rented and shared ownership.

The development offers single people, couples and

families the chance to live in a modern property at a much lower cost than could be achieved through outright purchase in today's inflated housing market.

The new shared ownership homes, are specifically targeted at those households on a modest income to enable them to take that first step onto the housing ladder.

People can buy a share of a property and pay a subsidised rent on the rest. As they become more financially confident, they can increase the share they own in the property.

Prices start from £82,500 based on a 50% purchase for a three bedroomed house.

Cllr Mrs Patricia Griffin, Chairman of South Staffordshire Council, recently cut the ribbon at the opening of the show home on the Littleton Green development in Huntington.

She was impressed with the standard of the show home and said: "House price increases have priced many people out of the housing market and I am delighted to see these excellent new homes available to those people struggling to make that first step on the housing ladder."

Local needs

She added: "Increasing the provision of affordable housing is a key Council priority and I am pleased that in partnership with South Staffordshire Housing Association this development is providing a range of rented and shared ownership homes to meet local needs."

Ursula Bennion, Group Director of Business Development for South Staffordshire Housing Association said: "The development at Littleton Green will help to regenerate the area. The homes are finished to a high specification, but being offered as shared ownership purchases, are within the reach of many more people than if they were for sale on the open market.

"In particular, people with strong local links need not now be forced out of the area where they grew up because they cannot afford the normal house prices. The project is a real demonstration of successfully building sustainable, integrated communities in partnership with a private developer and South Staffordshire Council."

Anyone interested in finding out more should contact Jayman Estate Agents on 01542 505566 who are handling sales for South Staffordshire Housing Association.



South Staffordshire Council

CONTACTS:

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

OPENING TIMES

For personal visits to the Council's Customer Contact Centre the opening times are:

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم رابطہ کریں
 یہ ڈکریا میں دستاویز کی نقل کون سے زبانوں میں دستیاب ہے اس کے بارے میں مزید جاننے کے لیے
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If you would like a copy of this document in another language or format (e.g. Braille, audio cassette), please contact:

**South Staffordshire Council,
 Council Offices,
 Codsall,
 South Staffordshire.
 WV8 1PX
 Tel: (01902) 696000**

EASTER CLOSING TIMES

COUNCIL OFFICES

South Staffordshire Council will be closed for Easter from

**Friday 21st March, 2008 to
 Tuesday 25th March, 2008.**

The offices will reopen at 8:45 on

Wednesday 26th March, 2008.

LEISURE CENTRES

All Leisure Centres in South Staffordshire will be closed on:

**Saturday 22nd March,
 Sunday 23rd March, and
 Monday 24th March.**

WASTE & RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

South Staffordshire Council will be providing a full refuse and recycling collection service over the Easter (and Whitsun) period.

Clean-up day makes village Cleaner & Greener

Young people and parents from Featherstone gave the South Staffordshire village a 'green' makeover in a clean up day organised by the Council.

The clean-up marked the start of Featherstone's Community Pride Project, a pilot scheme designed to encourage local residents to improve the quality of life within the village.

As well as helping to clear litter and graffiti, the clean-up offered local young people the opportunity to take part in a series of activities including planting shrubbery around the Community Centre, youth football and a coaching session from a local American Football Team.

For parents there was free fire safety advice from local fire-fighters, while the Police patrolled the village, talking to residents about their concerns, which ranged from litter and graffiti to anti-social behaviour.

South Staffordshire Council provided the workers with litter-picks and deployed their road sweeper vehicle in the village to clean the roads and alley ways surrounding the Community Centre.

The Community Pride Team also donated a new sports equipment container including new footballs to the Parish Council.

Featherstone District and Parish Councillor, Frank Beardsmore said: "It was a delight to see the

community coming together to help make a real difference to our village. I'd like to thank the young people, the parents and all of the residents who turned out to help. The village already looks a lot better and it's well on the way to becoming a greener and cleaner place to live.

Dave Heywood, Director of Community Services at the Council, added: "A lot of energy went into Saturday's clean-up day. We've been working closely with the Parish Council, local residents and other partner agencies to identify how we can improve the village and tackle issues like graffiti and litter.

"Hopefully this success will mark just the first in a series of events to bring the local community together to help improve the village."

For further information, please contact Sherminder Dhillon, Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Co-ordinator, on 01902 696501 or e-mail s.dhillon@sstaffs.gov.uk



Driving home the road safety message

Road safety watchdogs, worried about the number of children killed or seriously injured in Staffordshire, have launched a targeted safety campaign in a bid to cut the toll.

Their main concern is that babies and children aged up to four are as likely to be killed or seriously injured in a car as they are as a pedestrian.

The Government estimates around 2,000 child deaths or injuries would be prevented if children were always restrained correctly when travelling in vehicles.

The law now says that children aged 3 to 12 must use an appropriate child restraint unless they are over 1.35m in height. Children aged 3 and under must use a child restraint appropriate for their height.

The vast majority of parents do restrain their children in car seats but the campaign will remind them to check they are the right size for their child and that they are fitted in the car correctly.

To help parents through the minefield of choosing a car seat, a number of events have been organised throughout the county, aimed at parents of young children, from January to March 2008.

Activity mats for 5 to 11 year olds, and a top tips calendar for parents, will be produced and distributed throughout the county at family orientated venues. Key road safety messages will be plugged on the mat through word searches, spot the difference and other popular puzzles. The calendar will carry important school holiday dates as well as reminders of the green cross code and other ideas to keep children safe.

If you would like further information on the events and activities being organised as part of the Children's Road Safety Campaign please contact Staffordshire County Council Road Safety Unit on (01785) 276617, e-mail roadsafety@staffordshire.gov.uk or visit the websites at: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/roadsafety www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk



Seatbelt Check:
Children, from birth up to the age of 12, must use an appropriate child restraint unless they are over 1.35m in height.

Meeting community needs in South Staffordshire

Delivering a first class service and addressing those issues that matter most to you are top priorities for the police and our partners in Chase division.

With dedicated neighbourhood officers patrolling the villages and rural communities of South Staffordshire - constables, police community support officers (PCSOs) and specials, assisted by officers from the neighbourhood response teams and investigative departments, you can be assured that we are listening to your concerns and focussing on your needs. Throughout Chase, these local officers are on hand to provide support and assistance when you need them most and can be reached through simply and quickly:

Contact your local officer simply and easily:

- All officers have a personal four or five digit collar number and this is useful when trying to contact them direct. Simply telephone the non-emergency number **08453 302010** and speak to the operator, identifying the officer by name and/or collar number.
- Alternatively, contact an officer by calling their Airwave Radio on **08453 303132** and enter the officers collar number (for four digit collar numbers, enter a '0' before the numbers). Collar numbers are the four/five digit numbers that appear before the officers' name.
- Neighbourhood Policing Teams can also be contacted by email on wombournpt@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk or watlingnpt@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

If an officer is on duty and not dealing with victims, witnesses or offenders, you should be able to speak direct with them - however if they are unavailable, an automated service will invite you to leave a message.

In an emergency dial 999

Non emergencies, telephone 08453 302010

Staying safe through crime prevention

Leaving your keys in the ignition could cost you a fortune!

Car... gone
Shopping... gone
House keys... gone
Car insurance... invalid?

Don't invite thieves into your home

'WELCOME'

- Car keys by the door
- Back windows unlocked
- Purse on the table

Guard against car crime

- Always secure your vehicle
- Never leave keys in the ignition
- Remove all valuables

Guard against burglary

- Always secure windows and doors
- Keep valuables and car keys out of sight, away from windows or letterboxes

Meeting community needs in South Staffordshire

Wombourne Neighbourhood Policing Unit

NPU Commander Inspector 3768 Pat Shannaghan Tel 01785 234460

Wombourne Police Station High Street, Wombourne WV5 9EE

Opening times: Monday to Saturday 9am - 4pm

Special Constables
The NPU is supported by a team of ten special constables headed by divisional officer John Bagley

Sergeants
Sgt 4519 Tim Heap

Bilbrook and Codsall (based at Codsall Police Post)
PC 4391 David Allen
PC 4844 David Underhill
PCSO 8864 Claire Clifton
PCSO 8637 David Layton

Kinver, Seiseon and Trysull (based at Kinver Police Post)
PC 3640 Dean Colley
PCSO 8846 Robert Harmon

Lower Penn and Wombourne
PC 4772 Wayne Green
PCSO 8860 Lorraine Syner
PCSO 6635 Paula Wilkes

Himley and Swindon
PC 4086 Andrew Edwards

Kinver (based at Kinver Police Post)
PC 3602 Chris Baker
PCSO 6502 Karleen Salmon

Pattingham and Perton (based at Codsall Police Post)
PC 3537 Frank Hossack
PC 4259 Duncan Lampitt
PCSO 8862 Rachael Street
PCSO 8861 Teresa Wilkes

Wombourne South
PC 0737 Joanne Grundy

Please note, police officers work from police stations 24 hours a day, seven days a week. However enquiry office staff are only available to assist the public between the times shown.

Out of hours visitors to our stations have access to a wall-mounted telephone to be put through to a member of staff who can help. Information correct at time of going to print

Watling Neighbourhood Policing Unit

NPU Commander Inspector 3425 Dave Gains Tel 01785 218840

Operations Centre, The Stable Block, Hilton Park, Essington WV11 2BQ

Special Constables
The NPU is supported by a team of seven special constables headed by divisional officer Simon Smith

Sergeants
Sgt 4921 Paul Cooke
Sgt 0587 Rebecca Cawkwell

Action Trussell, Copenhall, Dunston, Galley, Levedale, Milton, Penkridge, Rodbaston and Teddesley Park
PC 3695 Steve Prince (also covers Calf Heath, Hartherton and Huntington)
PCSO 8851 Del Slater

Calf Heath, Hatherton and Huntington
PCSO 8855 Sam Cole

Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley

PC 4891 Peter Clarke
PC 4298 Terry Foster
PCSO 4280 Sean Hinsley
PCSO 8502 Yvonne Shorto
PCSO 8852 Karen Terry

Blymhill, Great Chatwell, Lapley, Stratton, Waseton Park and Wheaton Aston
PCSO 0694 Ellie Sewell
PCSO 8853 Adrian Price

Brewood, Bishopswood, Coven, Coven Heath, Cross Green, Four Ashes and Slade Heath
PC 0486 Helen Mitchell
PCSO 8858 Charlotte Edwards

Hilton, Featherstone, Saredon, Shareshill and Wedges Mill
PC 4370 Roger Parry-Sargeant
PCSO 6622 Simon Cain

Staffordshire is safe and we want people to feel safe

THANK YOU FOR ENTERING

The correct answer to the word search in Issue 38 of Review was **FIREWORKS**

A big thank you to everyone who entered and well done to those who got the answer correct!

Word Search Competition

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

- BUSINESSES • COMMUNITY CONSULTATION • COOPERATION
- COUNCIL • COUNTRYSIDE DISTRICT • ENGAGEMENT
- ENVIRONMENT • HOME IDENTITY • LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD • PARISH PARTNERSHIPS • RESIDENTS
- SAFETY • TOGETHER VILLAGES • VOLUNTEERS

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

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:

Helen Dye
Word Search Competition,
South Staffordshire Council,
Council Offices, Codsall,
South Staffordshire. WV8 1PX

The first correct entry picked after the closing date of

9th April, 2008,
will win a **£25 Prize**

WORDSEARCH WINNER:

Congratulations to Mrs Susan Dean from Perton who won £25 in the Word Search Competition in the Autumn 2007 Edition of the South Staffordshire Review.

Keeping kids away from the booze

Parents across Staffordshire are being urged to help control the rising problem of under-age binge drinking.

Trading Standards Officers are concerned with the increasing level of young people who are drinking excessively on a regular basis.

Latest research shows that drink problems are surfacing at a much earlier age - children as young as 10 and 11 have admitted to having regular drinking sessions with friends.

Trading Standards Officers try to educate young people in schools across Staffordshire about the dangers of consuming alcohol and the health implications of excessive drinking, however, education alone will not prevent young people from binge drinking.

"We need parents to support our plight and make excessive binge drinking socially unacceptable," said Brandon Cook, Community Safety Manager at Staffordshire County Council Trading Standards.

"Trading Standards can prevent underage sales of alcohol however there is an increasing number of adults who are buying alcohol on behalf of young people - they believe that supplying young people with alcohol is okay and it is not!" he added.

"The community needs to take responsibility and act to prevent children in their area drinking under-age. It is up to all sectors of the community from businesses to parents, grandparents and teachers to help to educate young people and encourage them to behave

responsibly and understand the implications of excessive binge drinking."

Trading Standards are working with other agencies to change the public's attitude to drinking. It's just as important to reduce the high levels of drinking in the home by adults who have wine every night as it is to tackle the issue of binge drinking by youngsters." Brandon continued.

Trading Standards Officers are working closely with the police and district councils to ensure that retailers do not sell alcohol to people under 18 years old. However enforcement can only go so far, educating young people to drink in moderation and making them aware about the health implications of binge drinking is a battle they are faced with.



If you have an issue with young people drinking under-age in your community please contact Trading Standards immediately on 01785 330 356.



South Staffordshire **NHS**
Primary Care Trust



South
Staffordshire
Council



Staffordshire
County Council

WHITE RIBBON SAYS 'NO!' TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Cllr Brian Edwards, Tracy Groom, Cllr Mrs Pat Griffin and Sgt Maurice Annett help to launch the "White Ribbon" campaign

The "White Ribbon" campaign aimed at putting a stop to violence against women is being backed by workers at South Staffordshire Council.

The campaign was started in Canada in 1991 when a handful of men decided they would take responsibility to urge fellow males to speak out against violence to women.

It has since spread worldwide, reaching the UK in 2004 and White Ribbon Day, 25th November, was marked at the Council by Tracy Groom, South Staffordshire's Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, who organised a local campaign.

Pledge

Wearing a white ribbon on 25th November and for the following 16 days, is a personal pledge never to condone, commit or remain silent about violence to women and to send a strong message to perpetrators that abuse in any shape or form is not acceptable.

The campaign was also backed by Councillors in South Staffordshire who were asked to wear a small white ribbon pin for 16 days.

South Staffordshire Council Chairman, Cllr Mrs Pat Griffin was joined by the Leader of the Council, Cllr Brian Edwards, Community Safety Team Manager, Sgt Maurice Annett and the authority's Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, Tracy Groom, to help launch the campaign.

Cllr Mrs Griffin said: "I am pleased that real progress is being made within South Staffordshire regarding the problem of domestic abuse. However, 1 in 4 women in the UK will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, which is totally unacceptable.

Cllr Edwards added: "Violence in the home is never justified which is why I hope this campaign will help raise awareness of the problem and give sufferers and their families the confidence to seek help and support."

All the donations made by Council staff will go to help support one of the local women's refuges in the area.

If you are a victim of domestic abuse or know someone who is, you can contact Staffordshire Police on 08453 30 20 10.

In an emergency, always call 999.

TELL A NEIGHBOUR SCHEME

Is your property fitted with a burglar alarm?

Do your neighbours know who to contact if the alarm goes off while the property is un-occupied?

The problem of misfiring burglar alarms can be extremely annoying to local residents. While everyone wants to keep their properties as secure as possible, many of the occasions an alarm is set off are not due to a burglar trying to break in, but rather due to the alarm misfiring. When this happens at night it can cause severe inconvenience to other residents.

South Staffordshire Council has launched a "Tell a Neighbour" Scheme. Its purpose is to get everyone who has an alarm fitted to their property to "tell their neighbours" who has a key to the property so that they can be contacted in the event that the alarm misfires while they are away.

We want you to either:

- Provide a key to your neighbour(s) with instructions on how to deactivate and reset the alarm if it misfires while you are away.
- Provide contact details to your neighbours of someone who has a key (and the

deactivation instructions for the alarm) and is able to respond* in the event that they are contacted about the alarm misfiring.

* Ideally a response should be made within 20 minutes.

Cllr Joan Williams, Deputy Leader (Environmental Services), who launched the scheme, said: "The nuisance caused by burglar alarms going off for no apparent reason, particularly late at night when people are trying to sleep, continues to be a problem in South Staffordshire.

"It is made even worse when no one is available to switch off the alarm. This can all be avoided if everyone with an intruder alarm makes sure their neighbours either have a key, or the contact details of a responsible person with a key, who can turn off the alarm quickly."

For further information please contact the Council's Environmental Health (General) Service on 01902 696203 or contact us by e-mail at env.general@sstaffs.gov.uk

