

News You Can Use on the Doorstep

Leader's Monthly E-Newsletter for August 2019

From the Leader of the Council

The Prime Minister has unveiled his Cabinet for Modern Britain, appointing Ministers who will get Brexit done by 31st October and ensure our NHS, schools and police get the attention they deserve.

The change in Cabinet is the first step towards delivering the change Boris Johnson [wants to see](#) for the country. Boris has appointed a record number of ethnic minority politicians around the Cabinet table and increased the number of women attending as full Cabinet members. Using talent from across the party, the Cabinet looks more like the country it serves.

The Cabinet will come together today and get to work – getting a grip on the decisions we need to take to leave the EU on 31st October, energising our public services, and defeating Jeremy Corbyn.

Boris and the Conservatives' plan to bring the change people voted for.

We will realise the benefits of Brexit and get our country back on the road to a brighter future by:

- Getting Brexit done by 31st October, with a great new deal for Britain.
- Making sure Britain is prepared for a no deal, as the best way to get a great new deal.
- Making sure people start seeing the £20 billion in new NHS funding in their GP surgeries and local hospitals.
- Hiring 20,000 new police officers and giving them the powers to keep our streets safe.
- Properly funding our schools so that every child gets more guaranteed minimum funding, regardless of where they live.

Underpinning this is delivering a strong economy to fund the public services we all rely on. We want to leave with a great new deal, that abolishes the undemocratic backstop. But we need to plan for no deal in case the EU's leaders will not change their approach.

All the necessary funding to prepare for no deal is being put in place, including 500 new Border Force officers and support for Brits living abroad and to get our businesses ready. The Government machine is being retooled for the task so that civil servants know delivering Brexit on time is the most pressing task before all of us. A new, unified Whitehall structure has been created to coordinate action across different departments and speed up decision-making.

The Prime Minister has set out a domestic agenda to level up regional growth and opportunities in every corner of the UK, delivering the change the people voted for.



Back to Staffordshire and how will this help us. There are pledges of a £3.6 billion Towns Fund to improve transport and broadband connectivity for communities across the country. Decentralisation of powers so more people and communities can have a greater say over transport, housing, public services and infrastructure, meaning every part of the country can realise the opportunity of Brexit.

And the Prime Minister has also outlined his major domestic agenda, including plans to invest more in education, tackle crime with 20,000 more police, boost connectivity and improve technology across the country.

For too long Staffordshire has suffered from lower education funding than almost anywhere else, and with Gavin Williamson as the new Education Secretary of State we have as good a chance as we will ever have.

Local Staffordshire News

The Queen's birthday honours this month recognised the contribution of so many people in Staffordshire. Librarian Sue Ball received an MBE for her work nationally to promote children's reading. There were MBEs too for the aptly named Jean and Bill Foster who have fostered more than 100 Staffordshire children, plus honours for Staffordshire University Vice-Chancellor Liz Barnes and Burton Albion Chairman Ben Robinson, plus a British Empire Medal for Wilf Burt from Staffordshire County Scouts. They have all made a huge difference to people in Staffordshire and beyond and I am sure you will agree richly deserve this recognition.



A big part of what we do at the county council is supporting individuals and organisations who want to improve our county. To make it a better place to live, to work, to study or to visit.



While there is much that we as a county council do, more and more of our resources are spent caring for the elderly or vulnerable children. That is why we are working to help and inspire people to do a little more for themselves, their family or their community through our #DoingOurBit campaign which you will be seeing more of in the coming months.

We have also launched a new People Helping People Fund, which gives every county councillor a total of £2,500 to invest in new projects that make a difference to local communities. Each county councillor will be looking to invest in local projects that are match funded and support people's health and wellbeing, or on children and families who need a little extra support.

The county council has also launched Staffordshire Warmer Homes, working in partnership with E.ON and our district and borough councils to install central heating systems in homes across the county. The scheme launched in Tamworth and has already seen huge interest, and will be rolled out across the rest of the county over the next two years to help lift people out of fuel poverty, cut utility bills and make sure Staffordshire residents young and old can afford to heat their homes. Find out more at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/warmerhomes

Our annual report on the county council's finances in 2018-19, a challenging year for authority with huge financial pressures from the cost of social care, showed an underspend, which at £3.6 million sounds a lot, but is just enough to cover 4 days of social care. In the

past decade spending on both vulnerable adults and children in our care has risen by £100m. These pressures will continue to increase until a national solution is found.

Nevertheless, through careful financial planning and management, we continue to invest in the things that matter to Staffordshire people – infrastructure, schools, roads and the foundations for job creation.

Over the past 12 months, we have stuck by our pledge to live within our means and deliver real value for money for people and businesses in Staffordshire

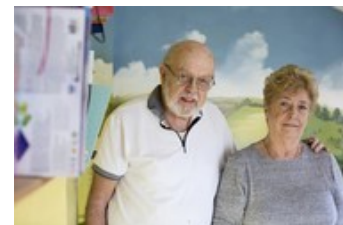
Philip Atkins

Leader Staffordshire County Council

Queen’s honours for Staffordshire people

A county librarian, foster family, university principal and football chairman were amongst the Staffordshire residents recognised in the Queen’s Birthday Honours.

Philip Atkins paid tribute to the recipients saying the county was blessed to have so many people quietly excelling in their area of expertise.



Thousands turn out for IRONMAN 70.3 Staffordshire

The highly anticipated IRONMAN 70.3 Staffordshire saw crowds flock to watch the spectacle.

Alan White managed to complete the course in just ten seconds slower than the last time he took part.

Over 2,400 people took part in the race which started at Chasewater Country Park and ended in Stafford town centre.



Mark Winnington handed out medals to the athletes and thanked the volunteers for helping to make the event a success yet again.

Next phase of £15m highways scheme

News of the next phase in a major £15m road scheme and the improvement work at the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet in Cannock will create easy road access to the site which is set to be completed in 2020.

Helen Fisher has explained that there would be some disruption to motorists, but this was unavoidable for the work to be carried out safely and on time.



Heavy rain causes flooding in Burton

The torrential rain the county experienced early June brought some surface flooding and difficult driving conditions for motorists.

Businesses and residents in parts of Burton town centre complained that surface flooding outside their properties was putting customers off and damaging their homes.

Local press covered the stories in depth, quoting Helen Fisher who assured people that gullies were routinely maintained and additional work had also been scheduled in.



County urged to get Air Aware

News stations have covered the county council's launch in June of a campaign to help improve air quality through greener travel.

School children, businesses and local communities will be involved in the Air Aware campaign which aims to reduce pollution.

So far, 15 schools, 6,500 pupils and 1,000 parents in priority areas are already involved in the process learning about the issues and working to reduce car journeys to school, as well as persuading drivers not to leave their engines running while parked.



Helen Fisher said this was a simple campaign to raise awareness of small and easy things everyone can do to reduce air pollution and help people to breathe easier.

Council plans to build new care homes

As the number of nursing homes reduces, together with rising placement costs, cabinet have agreed to open a new facility in Burton with a £1.2m investment.

Two further homes could then be built in other areas. Alan White said this would increase capacity and offer good quality placements.



'Tram trains' could help regenerate Burton

A joint report commissioned by the County and East Staffordshire Borough council to regenerate Burton says 'tram trains' could reduce pressure on roads and boost growth.

The light rail trains would run on the existing rail network and provide a tourist route through the National Forest.

The report is part of the Burton upon Trent Regeneration Strategy which looks at how the town could be improved for its shoppers, employees and visitors up to 2030 and beyond. It also suggests turning the A38 in a widened expressway. The report has been approved by East Staffordshire Borough's full council and the county council's cabinet.



Staffordshire joins fight against scams

National Scams Awareness fortnight ends today and the county council has been raising awareness on the issue.

People have been urged to spot the signs of scams, report them and look out for those who may become victims.

Gill Heath said people should look out for family members, friends or neighbours who may be more vulnerable to this type of crime. She added that if something appears too good to be true, then it usually is.



Field of Gold remembered

July 5th was the 10th anniversary of the discovery of the treasure trove of Anglo-Saxon gold, silver and jewellery that became known as the Staffordshire Hoard. Some of those involved in the remarkable find were reunited by the county council and their story was reported in print, online and on TV.



Philip Atkins said: "It certainly doesn't feel like 10 years ago since the discovery and I can still remember how magical it was, not just for the immediate team, but for everyone in Staffordshire and even across the globe.

"During the time of its discovery all eyes were on Staffordshire, even garnering interest from as far as China. Not to mention a phone call from the Vatican.

"Even to this day, it remains the largest find of its kind in the world and still has people talking. And, with designs of the objects being linked to many regions across Europe, it's now part of our fascinating history and giving people another great reason to visit Staffordshire."

Warm weather helps road crews

The warm weather has been a Godsend for highways teams who had tackled 300 potholes in a week. Helen Fisher said that the work was part of a £30m package of investment in the region's roads. We have invested £50 million extra in our roads and highway repair in the first 8 years of being in control and an additional £5 million for three years of this administration, to get on top of the state of roads we inherited and despite the pressures of social care.



Bus changes draw criticism

Changes to the regulations regarding free bus passes means people with disabilities can still travel for free before 9.30am but other senior pass holders are restricted to the national scheme.

Helen Fisher said there was still plenty of choice for travellers and cheap early fares were also available from the commercial providers.



Renovation of Burton station forecourt begins

A scheme to revitalise the forecourt at Burton railway station and improve access for pedestrians and vehicles has started.

The county council will lead the scheme working closely with partners East Midlands Trains, Network Rail and East Staffordshire Borough Council.

The eight-week scheme will complement other regeneration projects taking place across the town and enhance one of the main visitor gateways into Burton.

Mark Winnington said there had been careful planning and effective partnership working on the project, which is taking place during the school holidays to minimise disruption. The Burton Mail and Derby Telegraph ran the story.



Friary leisure facilities 'should not be lost'

District councillors in Lichfield say leisure facilities at a city school should not be lost to the community when it converts to an academy.

The Friary Leisure Centre contains a swimming pool though the school is not planning to retain it, despite taking on a sports pitch and sports hall. Lichfield District Council runs leisure facilities but says taking on the pool alone would not be sustainable.

The building is currently owned by the county council. The county council is working with the school and Lichfield DC to provide the community with a suitable solution.



Chasewater swimming warning reaffirmed

Warnings about the dangers of swimming in Chasewater were reaffirmed at this week's meeting of the full county council.

It follows the death of a 21-year-old at the reservoir last month. Sue Woodward was among the councillors to offer their sympathies to the man's family. Alan White, who swam in Chasewater as part of the recent Ironman Staffordshire event, said the cold temperature of the water could prove fatal.

Philip Atkins issued a plea to parents to ensure their children knew the dangers of swimming in open water.



Castle House function rooms closed due to mould

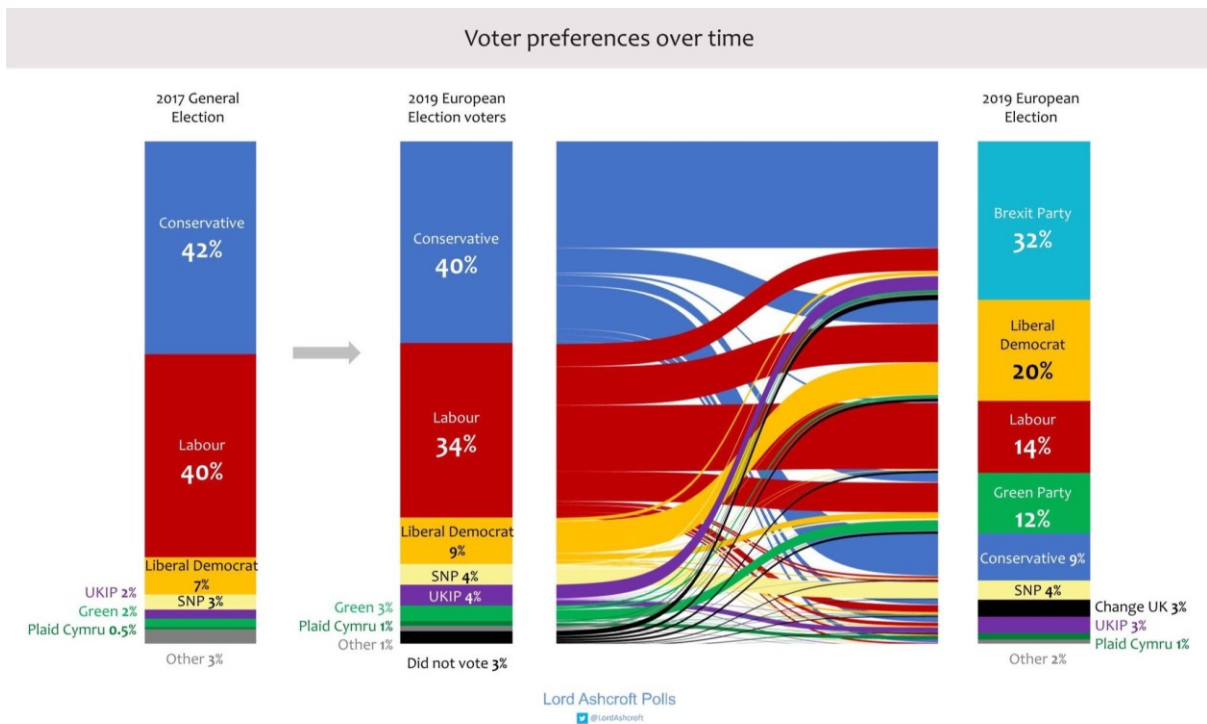
Weddings scheduled to take place at Castle House in Newcastle had to be moved after mould was found on walls in two rooms.

It is business as usual for the rest of the building, including the town's library. A water leak is reported to have caused the problem. When concentrated in the air, this type of mould can exacerbate conditions such as asthma.

Mark Deaville said the safety and well-being of the people who visit or work at Castle House was the primary concern, no matter how small the risk.



Lord Ashcroft's survey of 10,000 and where votes were cast at the European Election





**BREXIT BY
OCTOBER 31.**
**THE NHS.
SCHOOLS.
POLICE.
THE ECONOMY.**

 Conservatives



**We're turbocharging
preparations for No Deal.**