

Annual Report



April 2020
Version 1

This report has been compiled by Abbots Bromley Parish Council using input from a number of different sources. Any views expressed are those of the original authors and do not necessarily coincide with those of the Parish Council.

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Introduction

The annual report

The purpose of this annual report is to make freely available information about the work of the parish council and other community organisations. The council hopes that you will find the information useful and understandable.

This report aims to bring together in one place key details about the activities of the parish council.

Summary to all homes

A summary of this annual report from the parish council is to be included in the July 2020 ***Bromley Bulletin*** distributed to all households in the parish.

Also available on-line

An electronic copy of this report is available on the village website where you can view it or print your own copy – www.abbotsbromley.com.

Council Members and Officer – 2019/20

Council Members

- Mr K Baker
- Mr P Freeman
- Mrs K Haywood
- Rev M Lockey
- Mr R Love
- Mr N Taylor-Brown **VICE CHAIR**
- Dr C Whorwood **CHAIR**

Officer:-

Mrs Sarah Meads 01283 840891

Clerk to the Parish Council

Marsh Farm, Uttoxeter Road, Abbots Bromley, Staffs, WS15 3EJ

Email: parish.council@abbotsbromley.com

WORKING GROUPS AND REPRESENTATIVES

The chairman and vice chairman are entitled to serve ex officio, on all groups

Working Group	Member(s)
Competitions	The Clerk, Cllr N Taylor-Brown
Finance/Grants	Cllrs K Baker, R Love
Newsletter	Cllr K Baker The Clerk(Editor) Cllr Mrs K Haywood (Distribution)
Planning	All Councillors
Recreation	Cllr Whorwood
Traffic & Parking	Cllrs K Haywood, K Baker
Village Property	Cllr P Freeman
Neighbourhood Planning Group	Cllrs K Baker, P Freeman and R Love

Representatives

Almhouses	Mr R Jarman
Finance Officer	TBC
Schools	Cllr Mrs K Haywood
United Charities	Mr P Charles and Cllr N Taylor-Brown
Village Hall	Cllr K Baker
ABSA	Cllr N Taylor-Brown

Introduction:

We have a number of written statements which would normally be available for the Parish Assembly, however, due to Covid-19 the Assembly has not been possible. The Parish Council has still compiled the document to keep the residents informed of the work by organisations in the village.

Contents:

Parish Council Report	Cllr Dr C Whorwood
Parish Council Finance	The Clerk
Village Hall Report	Mr Simon Wilson
Community First Responders	Mr R Stevenson
Neighbourhood Development Plan	Mr T Wheeldon
Abbots Bromley Sports Association	Mr C Woods
Richard Clarke First School	Mr John Hough
Abbots Bromley Hospital	Mrs M Tonking
Staffordshire County Councillor's Report	Cllr Philip Atkins
East Staffordshire Borough Councillor's Report	Not available at time of going to print.
Parish Council Financial Statement	The Clerk
Minutes of the Parish Assembly 2019	The Clerk

Issue Details:

Version 1 27th June 2020

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Members of The Parish Council – After many years of hard work and commitment to the Abbots Bromley community all nine parish councillors decided not to stand for election last May. This saw the election of just three new parish councillors followed by the co-option of a further two councillors. The Parish Council continued with just over half its usual number for several months very ably supported and guided by The Parish Clerk, Sarah Meads, to whom I should like to offer huge thanks both as Chairman and on behalf of the other members of the council. In the past few months a further four councillors have been co-opted but unfortunately two of these have been unable to continue. I should like to also thank both these new councillors and the two outgoing councillors for their hard work and commitment of time, energy, talent and experience. The Parish Council continues to look to attract two new councillors and we have received expressions of interest from several individuals. Unfortunately, the Covid19 crisis and lockdown have meant that we have been unable to meet since the end of February and thereby progress this matter and others as much as we should have liked. We have done our best to continue with the key business of the council by other means and will now be using Microsoft Teams to hold virtual meetings to which members of the public may sign up and contribute.

Best Kept Village Competition – After a lot of effort and hard work by parish councillors, their partners, community groups, the Rainbows and school children clearing the village of weeds, cleaning play and gym equipment, making and displaying ‘*Keep Abbots Bromley Tidy*’ posters all over the village and also the hard work of parishioners keeping their door steps and front gardens looking immaculate, Abbots Bromley once again came first in the East Staffordshire area Large Village category. We also won the trophy for the Best Overall Village in the area for the third year in succession. This is a whole village achievement and we should be very proud of how we have worked together. Entries to our village competitions for the Best kept Front Door Step and Best Kept Front Garden grew in numbers. Judges were again particularly impressed with how younger members of our community got involved especially with the fantastic displays of the posters throughout the village and the herb garden once again provided and maintained by the Rainbows. The Parish Council would like to thank everyone that helped us to win the trophy again including the companies that donated prize money for our competitions. Community initiatives such as the Guides and Brownies putting bird boxes and bug hotels in public areas to encourage wildlife and the Rainbows creating pots of bee friendly flowers continue to be in place. While it is pleasing to report that dropping of litter was minimal during the competition period there have been accumulations of litter since then in certain areas. These have included the carpark belonging to what is now the Infiniti restaurant and also along Paget Rise. We urge everyone to ensure that Abbots Bromley is not just a best kept village in name but is maintained as such throughout the year. It was great to see some young people and older parishioners in the village going out with bin bags and picking up litter at different times during the year. Particular thanks go to the

'AB Wombles' who have been helping clear up the reservoir area during lockdown. We owe them huge thanks for their efforts.

Unfortunately, BKV2020 has been hindered by the Covid19 crisis and government lockdown measures but we hope to achieve our fourth consecutive victory in this competition in 2021. In the meantime, at the time of writing this report, there are plans for an alternative BKV poster competition with the entries being displayed throughout the village to raise spirits and inject more positivity.

Planning – During the past year Abbots Bromley Parish Council has been consulted on 68 planning applications (compared with 65 during the previous year). These comprised the usual range varying between tree works, house extensions to agricultural barn conversions. The Parish Council may only raise concerns and objections to an application in accordance with current planning legislation and The East Staffordshire Borough Council (ESBC) Local Plan. We have been mindful to adopt an objective critical appraisal with each case. The Parish Clerk has continued to monitor reporting of our objections on the ESBC website to ensure transparency in these matters and this appears to have prevented subsequent inconsistencies in this regard. Regrettably one of the planning permissions for which The Parish Council and a number of residents raised objections with ESBC was very recently successfully appealed; the application for the erection of dwellings on the existing car park of The Coach and Horses public house. We are pleased to report that the increased numbers in applications for removal of trees within the conservation area, some of which have Tree Preservation Orders, reported in the previous year has not been evident during this year. Nevertheless, The Parish Council has consistently challenged applicants' justifications for these actions and we have been successful in objecting to some applications.

Abbots Bromley School – We are pleased to report that following the closure of the school last year with the boarding up of windows and installation of gates and temporary security fencing, ongoing discussions and negotiations have continued to endeavour to re-open as a school. At time of going to print with this report the announcement had recently been made that the school has been bought by an overseas educational consortium and granted a UK government licence to operate as an educational establishment. It is hoped that the school will re-open in 2021. Many groups, including The Parish Council, lent their support to the campaign to keep the school open and lobbied long and hard to achieve this goal. It is fantastic news for the whole community, which should also have a positive impact on the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), which will be reported on separately by the Chairman of The Neighbourhood Development Plan Group (NDPG). We await further specific details regarding the buildings and grounds comprising the school site but importantly some are protected by having listed status. Furthermore, parishioners should be reassured that buildings close to a listed building and in the Conservation Area also enjoy some degree of legal protection from development and the NDP, in compliance with The Local Plan may also apply protected status to some buildings and land.

Abbots Bromley Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) – Following the Parish Assembly of 2018 a new NDP group (NDPG) was established to deliver the plan. This

has required major changes to the original group's draft plan in response to considerable concerns raised by parishioners and subsequent significant changes in government guidelines regarding the process of constructing a plan. This has involved The Parish Council successfully securing significant grant funding from government to be used in this process and involved the contracting the support and professional advice of a neighbourhood development planning consultant. We are pleased to report that the NDP is now in an advanced state with a draft plan almost at completion ahead of initial submission to The Parish Council. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of The NDPG for all their hard work and consistent commitment to meeting the tremendous challenge of achieving this vitally important goal especially against the backdrop of the current Covid19 crisis that has prevented the frequent regular meetings the NDPG has held during the year.

Highways and Parking – The Parish Council has continued to have discussions with Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and repeatedly raised concerns and actions required ranging from cutting back of hedges and verges to improve visibility and signage display, re-marking of white zig-zag lines at zebra crossings and 30mph speed signage on the road and pot hole repairs and re-surfacing to clearance of drainage holes and gullies along some lanes. There have been considerable delays to take action by SCC but we are pleased to report progress in areas such as road markings and road repairs and in other areas we are continuing to report and re-report problems requiring action such as hedge overgrowth obscuring signage of speed limit and vehicle priority signage on Lichfield Road. Following concerns raised by some residents regarding the surface of the footpath between the Village Hall field and School House Lane, the Parish Council is pleased to report that improvement works have been carried out.

A recent meeting with SCC Highways discussed ongoing concerns and also the possibility of designation of some lanes as Quiet Lanes to protect the rights of use and enjoyment of all users ranging from those walking and riding horses to passenger and commercial vehicles. SCC suggested that we undertake some preparatory work to try and improve some lanes for use by walkers, horse-riders and cyclists, e.g., identify more opportunities for passing places and also standing areas for such users to move into when vehicles pass by.

The Parish Council also raised concerns over the state of verges and damage being done by larger vehicles such as tractors with ensuing erosion and resulting adverse impact on drainage. The lack of signage for passing places along Hobb Lane resulting in their use by hikers as laybys was also raised again with requests for this signage made. The need for repairs to Narrow Lane, which we have been requesting for over two years, was made. The Parish Council continues to regularly report issues such as blocked gullies and potholes and has had some success using the on-line system. We would ask that residents also use the County Council on-line system to report the issues as the greater the number of reports the more likely it is that work will be scheduled. The Parish Council has reported gulley lids that can't be lifted as faulty to SCC and this has been remedied in some cases but there is still work to do.

Unfortunately, cars have continued to park on School House Lane near the surgery causing obstructions to farm, delivery and emergency vehicles. The council agreed to place a 'No Parking!' sign to remind drivers of their impact on others and traffic cones are now being temporarily placed to deter parking when farmers need clear access. We ask that those using the surgery park in the car park or other areas well away from the surgery. Many thanks to Councillor Keith Baker for being 'cone monitor'.

Regarding environmental concerns, the Parish Council has agreed that the twice-yearly mowing of grass verges will continue along all highways (with more frequent mowing at road junctions for safety reasons) with the exception of Radmorewood Lane which, for purposes of investigating the impact of only one end of year mowing on promoting habitat preservation and bio-diversity, will only be cut in the autumn this year. Signage to this effect will be appropriately placed and this will be reviewed. We have also discussed other environmental issues including the seeding of wild flowers along some verges to improve numbers and diversity of pollinating insects and the potential for Electric Vehicle charging points within the village. The Parish Council has also made available to The Scouts grant funding, arising from prize money received for winning the Best Kept Village competition, for the purchase of trees for planting. It is hoped that the trees will be planted this summer. These initiatives are in keeping with both the Parish Council's mission statement and Staffordshire County Council's declaration of an 'environmental emergency'.

The Community Speed Watch Group – from the start of the year the group has continued to regularly monitor and report speeding vehicles and driver behaviour that adversely impacts on road safety, such as using a handheld phone while driving or driving in an apparently reckless manner. This has been carried out at different sites designated by the police and has been successful in reducing vehicle speeds in the majority of cases.

A grant application for a mobile digital Speed Indicator Device was written and submitted for consideration but unfortunately we were unsuccessful. However, 30mph speed limit stickers ordered by the Parish Council have been distributed throughout target areas of the village and have been successfully stuck on bins and elsewhere to re-inforce the speed limit within the village. We would like to thank Peter Male for his leadership and coordination of the Community Speedwatch Group and all the Speed Watch volunteers for all their efforts that often involved standing out in icy cold winds and sometimes unfortunately having to put up with verbal and online abuse from a minority of individuals who are ignorant of the importance of this work to the safety of everyone. Unfortunately, Peter has not been able to continue leading the group and other volunteers have stepped down in the past few months. We are, therefore looking for new volunteers to re-establish the group and carry on this important community work.

HS2- The Parish Council had formed a working group with representatives from Newborough and Hoar Cross Parish Councils and local residents to review the potential adverse impact of proposed power lines from Park Gate to the rail line at Colton. The group petitioned parliament and the outcomes were reported last year. Unfortunately, the petition for installing electric cables underground rather than by above ground pylons was unsuccessful and there has been no further developments to report this year. The Parish

Council, however, remains vigilant towards this issue of such importance to us all and has continued to maintain HS2 on the agenda at most meetings.

Parish Council Surgeries – Our regular bi-monthly Saturday morning surgeries (10.00am to 11.00am) in Church House have continued to provide access to Parish Councillors. They have created a useful means of communication and while these have not been possible in recent weeks due to the Covid19 crisis and government lockdown measures, we would encourage much greater public use of these opportunities to raise concerns in the future when these measures are no longer in place.

Mobile Post Office – The service has continued through the year although it has been reported several times that the van has not appeared at the times advertised and now is only attending on a Thursday afternoon. It seems that it is a case of ‘use it or lose it’.

Bromley Bulletin – This past year we published The Bromley Bulletin in February, July and November and this was hand delivered throughout the year by councillors. We agreed that to ensure consistent timely distribution of bulletins that those residing further out from the village centre would receive their copy by post and further copies would be available at The Top Shop.

Christmas Tree – This year the Parish Council were able to display many more mains powered lights on the Christmas tree. Our thanks go to Rob Peters for providing power to the Christmas tree and to Councillors Nigel Taylor-Griffiths, Paul Freeman, Keith Baker and Chris Whorwood for getting the lights onto the tree. The Parish Council plans to add additional lights next Christmas in other locations around the village where a mains power supply is available and where statutory and practical considerations allow.

Village Gateways - Village gateways create an attractive display for signage on the entry to a village and help with traffic calming as they alert road users to the reason for the speed change so they can slow down. The Parish Council has now almost completed the programme of erecting these gateways on two of the access routes to the village by having gateways installed for Uttoxeter Road and Ashbrook Lane along with signage celebrating Best Kept Village status. We aim to purchase gateways for Lichfield Road when the work has been completed on the entrance to the Sports Field.

Outdoor Gym - During this year the Parish Council has successfully installed six pieces of Outdoor Gym equipment adjacent to the tennis courts at the Village Hall. These should be a great asset to the community in their efforts to keep fit while enjoying fresh air, sunshine and even a tennis match! There was a considerable amount of work involved to progressing this from receipt of The National Lottery grant to the actual planning and installation of the equipment in consultation with the Village Hall Committee. Sadly, it has not been possible to use the equipment during the Covid19 crisis but when lockdown measures allow we would encourage much greater use of an asset that many villages do not have.

Notice Boards - The village notice boards remain in need of repair and, in some cases, replace at considerable expense. As such the Parish Council continues to plan to replace them over the next few years as funds allow and to install one near the Top Shop to

provide a focus of communication at that side of the village where there has not been one. The Parish Council has committed £1,500 to replace one of the notice boards and that we agreed to do one a year until all were replaced. This remains a target for the coming year.

Playgrounds – Over the past two years the Parish Council has undertaken some refurbishment and repair work to both The Nuttery under 5s playground and also Millennium Green. This has included several repairs to the Wetspour and to swings and the climbing frame and, following requests from local residents, a safety latch to prevent young children easily exiting the site has been placed on the gate at the Nuttery. The Parish Council has also sought planning permission to prune trees and cut back overhanging branches to mitigate risks of falling branches and high levels of leaf litter later in the year that make it difficult to maintain clean and safe surfaces for children to play on. This work is planned for the summer.

The Parish Council is grateful to Graham McCullough for his hard work in clearing and cleaning the Wetspour and grounds maintenance at The Nuttery.

At the Millennium Green despite some replacement of the wood chip there remains a need to further top this up. A damaged climbing post was unrepairable and so was removed. Further repairs are still required including further replacement or repair of the wooden retaining posts. There is also more work required to improve The Nuttery in the coming years including the possible need to replace the entire Wetspour surface across the playground as it comes to the end of its life. This will be an expensive task and with uncertainties surrounding Abbots Bromley School, the owners of which lease The Nuttery to the Parish Council, it has not been possible to commit to such a large expense at this time. We hope we will be in a position to undertake an ambitious programme of improvements from 2021 onwards.

An external inspection of safety at both play areas was carried out and report received for discussion at the July meeting of the Parish Council. The main concerns raised were in keeping with the Parish Council's own frequent and regular inspections, e.g., progressive disrepair to the Wetspour surface at The Nuttery. Sadly there has been some damage to the entrance gate to the Millennium Green due to someone trying to gain access during lock down and breaking off the post. This will need to be repaired at a cost to the village.

War Memorial – The Parish Council would again like to thank everyone who has made a donation towards the repairs to the surface surrounding the War Memorial. These donations raised a total of £2193 towards these improvements. The Parish Council had previously set aside an additional £2000 on top of that provided for the wooden posts. It is hoped the work will be undertaken this summer and further attempts have been made to contact the contractor to discuss the works and arrange a start date. The Parish Council continues to be very grateful to Tom Wheeldon for his continued hard work and support with this project. It is also grateful to Mr Wheeldon and Mr Slater for organising the wonderful D Day commemoration last year.

Crime – At the Parish Council meeting in November 2019 Staffordshire Police reported crime statistics for the Policing Area incorporating Abbots Bromley, The Blythe, Kingstone

and Newton for the previous twelve months. While reported incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour remained broadly similar to the previous year there were significant reductions in burglary and motor vehicle theft. Reported levels of violence against the person were relatively low and of a domestic nature but they were increased from the previous year. Overall crime has decreased except in areas of criminal damage and theft relating to agricultural settings.

Finance – As this report has been written during the Covid19 crisis and the significant government lockdown measures and so before it has been possible for the Parish Council to meet and discuss the end of the financial year, I cannot give details of any small donations given to village groups. Applications have been received and will be considered and decided by Parish Councillors at the next Parish Council meeting. As reported under the appropriate section of this report total grants of £9000 were received for professional consultations in the drafting of the NDP. The external audit with no actions required and published on the Parish Council website last year.

Jubilee Cup 2018/19 – Last year's worthy recipient was Simon Wilson for all his work over the years in the village with the fire service the Village Hall Committee and Scouts.

The Horn Dance – The Horn Dance last year was not as successful as in previous years in terms of attendance by those that had booked stalls and by the general public. The Parish Council would like to express its thanks to Sarah and Dan Meads and Graham McCulloch for helping to set up the stalls. At time of going to print this year's Horn Dance is still to be confirmed but we are all keeping our fingers crossed.

The Covid19 Crisis – The Parish Council has been playing a key role in coordinating volunteers to collect and deliver food, prescriptions and medicines. A great deal of thanks go to all the volunteers who came forward and offered help and to those that rallied round to deliver prescriptions to those shielding. The Parish Council is aware of a great deal of community spirit at work in the village shown by other volunteers and the owners of Top Shop to support the most vulnerable parishioners.

Parish Council Aims and Objectives – In line with many other parish councils we have agreed upon a mission statement which encompasses the overarching strategic aims of the Parish Council. This is Abbots Bromley Parish council will do all it can to protect Abbots Bromley's heritage and village status and seek to advance the well-being of the community by moving towards a greener and more sustainable environment. Many thanks go to Councillor Keith Baker for consolidating ideas and discussions on this to draft the agreed statement. We aim to ensure that all decisions made by the Parish Council are mindful of, and consistent with, this statement.

Cllr Dr Chris Whorwood

Parish Council Chairman

PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES

The parish council has its own Financial Regulations, which set down the rules by which the finances of the council are managed. The council employs an independent internal auditor who reviews the financial records. At the end of the year an audit return is completed and submitted to the Audit Commission for the purposes of external audit. The council's financial regulations can be viewed on the website or via arrangements with the clerk.

The unapproved financial statements for the council for the year to 31st March, 2020 will be attached as an appendix to this document. The internal audit and unaudited accounts are available to view on line at parish.council@abbotsbromley.com

Sarah Meads
Parish Clerk

ABBOTS BROMLEY VILLAGE HALL

The year to the end of March has once again been a static year for the hall in terms of its finances in that we are no better or worse off than last year.

We have continued to replace items in the building which is now 20 years old, in the past few weeks we have had much of the lighting renewed. However much remains to be done as regards new heating, plumbing and some kitchen fittings.

We are hopeful that Gallimore's field will continue to be available for us and we will see if any of the wildflower seeds scattered last manage to germinate. Yet again I will appeal for some new younger people to join the committee bringing some fresh ideas to the hall.

Simon Wilson, Chairman
Abbots Bromley Village Hall Committee

Abbots Bromley Community First Responders



Fellow village members below is information about what your village Community First Responders (CFR) have been getting up to over the last few years, with your family's health in mind. The village CFR team will have its fifteen-year anniversary on the **21st February 2020**. In that time the team has changed greatly in size, but its passion to serve the village has not. As a team we have attended **4592, 999** emergency calls in and

around our local community.

After fifteen years of service a major update of all equipment was required, so after several years of fund raising and donations, the teams largest upgrade has taken place. A special thanks to all members of the community for participating in all the quiz's, cake bakes, and the Wild West night.

A thank you to the following companies for their generous donation:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 1, Henry Foundation Trust | 2, The National Lottery | 3, Tesco's |
| 4, The Help Appeal | 5, JCB | |

A New Response Vehicle has been purchased through the help of **Volvo UK**, New storage solutions and emergency equipment have been installed along with a New Emergency Navigation system.

The village now has a state of the art emergency response vehicle.

NEW RECURITS West Midlands Ambulance Services have been holding a review and developing a NEW training programme for all potential new CFR's. This process is drawing to a close and dates for new training course are due to be released within the next few months. WWW.jobs.nhs.uk

If you are interested and have thought about joining our team, please get in touch on the detail below to register your interest with me and on jobs.nhs

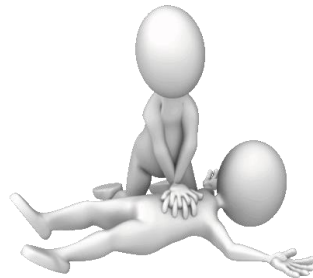
Heart Attacks

As a team of volunteers, we cannot be on duty all the time, so we have installed around the village a number of Public Access Defibrillators, Six in total, + 1 at the Fire Station. You should know where your closest is located and know what to do,

“Every Second Counts”

To learn how to perform CPR, follow these simple steps:

- Step 1: Shake and shout
- Step 2: Check for normal breathing
- Step 3: Call 999
 - Ask someone for a **public access defibrillator** (PAD), AED.
- Step 4: Give 30 chest compressions
- Step 5: Give two rescue breaths
- Step 6: Repeat until an ambulance arrives



<https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life/how-to-do-cpr>

LOCATION of Public Access Defibrillators

Top Shop, Richard Clark First School, Village Hall, Uttoxeter Road Bus Stop, Yeatsall Lane, Seven Trent Water Building and Fire Station

If you need one ALWAYS CALL 999 First,



E-Mail: Stevenson20@btinternet.com

Home: 01283 840437

Mobile: 07800849237

Abbots Bromley Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is very much a reflection of the wishes of the community about how it sees future development in the parish. However, these wishes have to be in general conformity with the government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and ESBC's planning policy (The Local Plan). Compromise has therefore been necessary in order to create the Abbots Bromley Neighbourhood Plan policies.

The community was first consulted about production of a parish Neighbourhood Plan in November 2015. As a result, a Neighbourhood Plan Development Group (NDPG) was set up by the parish council. An initial parish-wide questionnaire followed in March 2016. Since then the gathering of public opinion has regularly continued, culminating in a series of open meetings in 2019. Upon gathering all of the evidence, in September 2019 a parish wide distribution of an information pack/questionnaire was sent out informing about proposed policies and proposed designation of Local Green Spaces (LGS).

Based on the community's feedback, and with the guidance of a professional consultant, the NDPG started to develop the required policies for production of a Draft NP in the autumn of 2019.

At this time the submission process of the Draft NP to ESBC, and ultimate call for a referendum on acceptance of the Draft Plan, has been suspended due to the current pandemic. The earliest opportunity to carry out a referendum is now May 2021. However, the government has advised that Draft Neighbourhood Plans should carry weight in the authority's planning decisions once the local authority (ESBC) has issued a Decision Statement. (see 'Local Government and Police and Crime Commissions (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020').

The NDPG are continuing to work towards completion of the Draft NP with all public information/feedback at its core, in order for it to be presented to the Parish Council and onward passage to ESBC in the very near future. This should ensure that the wishes of our community are taken fully into account in any development decisions, whilst awaiting the democratic process to be resumed in 2021.

Abbots Bromley Sports Association (ABSA)

Current Overview

As you may expect, along with the rest of the country, indeed the world, there has been minimal activity surrounding the new sports facility on the Lichfield Road due to the spread of Covid19.

Our last Board meeting was held on January 19th. I have not called a subsequent meeting as there has been little substance to require a full discussion with the extended Board, however, we have established groups to progress the project in whatever means we have been able.

As Trustees we have had resignations over the last 12 months from Mark Hurst, Christine Gilchrist and Phil Ryan.

I have extended the Board to include representatives of ABTC as well as volunteers to create and manage fund raising events in the future. I am also grateful for ABPC for the good offices of Nigel Taylor-Brown on the Board.

Phase I – Cricket

ABCC were scheduled to commence their 2020 season at the Lichfield Road ground which may well not happen at all, or at best in August/September. The last remnants of cricket at the Angelsea was moved in January with our thanks to local farmers and others from the community for their help

The temporary cabins have been fully renovated by Trustees and volunteers in the community with services connected, showers, kitchen, changing rooms. This facility will be the de-facto base for sports in the short to medium term and will have to suffice until the clubhouse is built. The contribution by those who have done this work cannot be underestimated.

Phase II – Football, Access and Parking

Clearly this has been an enormous frustration as although we have the grant from the Football Foundation, (286k) to deliver Phase II, our timetable was completely disrupted by the weather from October to February, and then similarly by the Coronavirus outbreak. The work will now begin on May 18th, with ground levelling, drainage, and the laying of both the Junior and Senior Football pitches. In addition there will be a tarmac secure access from the Lichfield Road, a driveway and parking for 50+ vehicles. It is our assessment that this work will now be completed by the end of the summer.

Phase III – Club House and Activity Hub, Tennis, Netball and all Weather courts

The design and planning for the building has been completed and approved. We are actively seeking funds to commence the building and have some hopeful early signs of an award from Severn Trent. However, with a full cost circa 400k for the build and a further 100k for the all-weather courts for tennis and netball, this will require significant collaboration and possibly commercial arrangements.

Community Support

ABSA continues to receive donations from local residents as well as non-financial support from skilled workers and tradespersons locally and in the wider community. We continue to actively seek commercial sponsors as well as funding bodies to progress the project. Clearly, we are unable to raise funds through events, hence our cash flow is stagnant.

In recent weeks we have applied to Severn Trent Community Fund for £250,000 to commence the build phase, as well as loans from the ECB, and grants from Staffordshire FA and Football Foundation for equipment to maintain the new grounds and pitches out into the future.

Policies and Governance

ABSA has met with cricket, football, junior football, tennis and netball and agreed upon the working principles and the financial arrangements for Clubs utilising the ground in the future. In addition there are now policies in place to underpin those arrangements.

Lease Update

I am awaiting more details once they emerge of whether our landlord has changed in line with the new ownership of ABS. I am assuming that it has done so, but until I have confirmation of that, and details of who now holds the lease to the Lichfield ground facility, I cannot be certain or confident of that statement. Clearly, we will hope to engage positively with any new landlord, and also continue to work collaboratively with the school and its students over our community facility, and the charities purpose of inclusiveness.

If you want to get involved contact Chris Wood on chris_wood53@live.co.uk or 07770488975

This is obviously a very difficult time for everyone during the corona virus pandemic which has resulted in the closure of the school, along with many other community activities. At the time of writing this report it is unclear how things will unfold over the next few months and so I will concentrate on the activities which are currently underway and our plans for the next few weeks.

Covid-19: The school is open each weekday for vulnerable children and those of key workers. At the moment this is a group of up to five pupils, all of them the children of key workers. We have one member of the teaching staff who engages the children in a range of activities and a member of the Leadership Team doing the front office, admin and caretaker roles. Children who presently have to stay at home are being provided with pre-planned learning material on-line. All of the RCFS staff have worked hard to produce the best virtual lessons for the children and, of course, the parents, many of whom will be discovering the joys of teaching for the first time. We do not police the diligence with which the home learning is being pursued but e-mails and parental contact lead us to believe that the majority of children and parents are impressed by the material and are making use of it. Recently the government has announced that it wishes schools to begin to return on June 1st and RCFS have put plans in place to support this, with some important caveats. We intend to open to children in Reception and Year 1 and, of course, vulnerable children and those of key workers. However, as I write this, the ULT schools in Uttroter have chosen to delay the opening date to June 15th, based on the most recent evidence from SAGE. A full risk assessment and operational plan have already been completed, based on the June 1st date, and these will form the basis of any restart. However, the final decision to send a child to school or keep them at home has to be made by the parent or carer, who are free to change their mind either way. We will respect this decision. The school has communicated with all parents and carers, comprehensively explaining our reasoning and our plans, based upon the latest developments. This is published in full on the school website.

[\(www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk\)](http://www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk)

Despite the pandemic and the school closure and its future impacts, there is other news to report.

Financial: We have just set our budget for 2020/2021 and, whilst quite demanding, it is not as bad as it could have been. The budget is manageable, with our usual prudence, and we are getting excellent advice from a bursar from the Uttroter Learning Trust (ULT). We are managing to maintain the infrastructure of the school and have invested in more computing equipment for pupils and staff. The Covid-19 crisis will have a major impact on costs, revenues and attitudes to funding education. We do not know if these changes will be beneficial or detrimental or when they will happen, but the 'new normal' will certainly be different. At some time within the next six or seven months we will become a full member of the ULT and our funding will no longer come from the Local Authority but will be from a direct Government grant to the ULT. We do not believe that this is any cause for concern, any more than it was when we relied on the LA to provide finance.

Our PTFA continues to raise money for RCFS projects and, of course, they could not be as effective as they are without the support of our parents. Finally, as in every Annual Report, I offer thanks to our eponymous benefactor whose Endowment Fund is a source of considerable joy.

Number of Pupils: We are expecting a slight increase in the size of Reception Class in September 2020 but when the large cohort currently in Year 4 leave us, our overall numbers on roll will reduce. We are planning for 118 pupils for 2020/2021. However, there are always additions and subtractions over the school year and so this number will probably change. It is also certain that Covid-19 will have an effect, possibly as parents discover the compelling delights of teaching their children at home.

Staffing: We continue to have a full-time teacher in every class, well-supported by teaching assistants and, in many cases, parent helpers. Support of children with special needs is very labour intensive but thoroughly rewarding and requires highly-skilled and dedicated staff. Feedback from parents suggests that they appreciate and support our efforts.

During the school closure, but unconnected to it, we have lost two members of the teaching staff. These are experienced teachers who have moved on to the next step of their career ladder and they leave with our good wishes as well as a little sadness. If you have great skill at identifying potential in young graduate teachers, as our head-teacher has, and then provide them with mentoring, guidance and opportunities to excel, it is inevitable that they will eventually deserve more than a small school like RCFS can provide. They will then leave, to be replaced by the next generation of young hopefuls with high potential. This is how things work in a small school, but it demonstrates that the system performs and to prove it we have recruited two excellent newly-qualified teachers to replace them. The entire recruitment process was executed on-line, from virtual tours of the school to the interview and assessment of lesson plans. We received around 40 applications from which an excellent short-list of five was created and two offers were made and accepted. This whole process was carried out without breaching any social distancing rules and demonstrated the leadership's dedication, organisation and grasp of technology.

School Performance: We are not expecting an OfSTED inspection until the ramifications of Covid-19 have been resolved, our previous one being in 2017. We were informed by the LA in October 2019 that we had been evaluated as Category 1 (No concern). This is encouraging but doesn't quite create the same adrenaline rush as an OfSTED inspection. Recently published OfSTED guidelines stress the importance of a linear, coherent curriculum. Hence, our Key Priorities for 2020 are: -

- To review the rationale and aims for the curriculum design to ensure that it is clear, coherent and understood by everyone.
- To ensure that reading is prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offered.
- To ensure that Subject Leaders (especially of foundation subjects) can develop their roles and responsibilities in order to better satisfy curriculum design and delivery.
- To ensure that all new staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities with regards to Keeping Children Safe in Education - KCSIE (2019)

We also have on-going priorities, all of which have to be addressed – Teaching and Learning in Maths, Standards of Phonics and Spelling, Health and Well-being of pupils and staff, Data Protection following GDPR legislation. The list goes on.

Uttoxeter Learning Trust (ULT): The ULT has continued to prosper and has now developed a set of policies and offerings for its members in and around Uttoxeter. It has also been accepted as the approved MAT for the new Uttoxeter school in Bramshall Meadows, due to open in 2021. RCFS has been an associate member of the ULT for the last year and has derived many practical benefits. We have been provided with excellent computing support and considerable assistance with managing the financial systems. This is not about supervising our financial probity but providing crucial help and advice in navigating the new financial control software. The governors and staff have had many discussions in-house and with the ULT and it has now been decided that we will apply to become a full ULT member. The proposed date would have been September 2020 and we would have used the Summer Term to consult with parents. The Covid-19 lock-down has made this extremely difficult and so we plan to join the ULT in January 2021 and use the Autumn Term for parent consultations, if Covid-19 allows it. Parents have been regularly informed of our deliberations and none have raised any objections to date, but a consultation is mandated in MAT legislation.

Summary: RCFS continues to deliver on all of the key attributes which support its continuing success; leadership, classroom skills, financial management and governance. We constantly evaluate the learning experience of the children and how well they are developing their life skills, as well as their command of the curriculum. We expect our full membership of the ULT will only enhance these. We have seemingly dealt with the financial challenges for another year, but who knows what the future will bring. The Covid-19 crisis is having a major effect on what we can do in the short term and one can only hope that the longer-term impact on the children's education will be minimised. I know that RCFS will do everything it can to try and make this true. Finally, I wish to offer my grateful thanks to the RCFS leadership and the classroom staff; to the parents who support and encourage them; to the governors whose skilled and dedicated efforts are crucial; and of course, to the children who make it all worthwhile.

The latest news about The Richard Clarke First School can be found on our web-site (www.richardclarke.staffs.sch.uk) together with further RCFS details, photographs, staff and governor profiles, OfSTED reports and statistics and other performance information. I would encourage you to visit it.

John Hough
Chair of Governors, Richard Clarke First School

Abbots Bromley Hospital, Bagot Street
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Some may not be aware of Abbots Bromley Hospital – not an actual hospital but an ancient name for the almshouses which sit on the corner of Church Lane, opposite Church House. The Hospital is administered by a charitable trust with a trustee body of 6 local people and provides social housing for people of limited means, and who have a connection to Abbots Bromley, or to Dunstall, Newborough and Yoxall.

Originally providing 7 single person dwellings, the listed portion of the property was completely remodeled in 2013 to provide 4 single person dwellings and 2 two-bedroom dwellings, which can accommodate couples or even a small family, increasing capacity to a potential 12 residents. The charity built two bungalows for people of limited mobility in 1995 on part of its site and these are due to undergo a major remodel towards the end of

2020 so that they can be made more energy efficient and comfortable to live in, as well as providing larger bedrooms so that, if needed, a couple could be accommodated.

During the last financial year, the trustees have continued to maintain the properties and support the residents. The charity has been converted from an unincorporated trust to a Charitable Incorporated Institution. This form of charity has the main benefit that the charity has legal personality (the ability to enter contracts, sue and be sued, and to hold property in its own name, rather than in the name of its individual trustees), and its members have limited liability (their liability in the event the charity becomes insolvent is limited or nil). Considerable work has been undertaken to develop and arrange finance for the Bungalows Project. Planning permission has been given and contractors engaged. The charity is financing the project through its own saved funds, a grant from Homes England, two grants from other charitable trusts and a loan from the Almshouse Association. In these uncertain times it is a considerable challenge but the Trustees believe that, with the completion of the project, the charity should be fit for the future and its residents.

STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR UTTOXETER RURAL DIVISION – REPORT 2020

Utttoxeter Rural Division Annual Report May 2020

March and April have been months like no other.

The county council is at the forefront of efforts to stem the coronavirus pandemic in Staffordshire. Together with partners, our priority is to keep people safe, protect the most vulnerable and ease the pressure on the NHS and on social care. Rest assured we will do everything we can and spend every pound needed to help Staffordshire through this. The last couple of months has seen urgent responses from councils to local communities helping one another.

I continue as the Leader of the County Council with other roles on the council's behalf such as the Local Government Pension Scheme, Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Board, Midlands Engine Strategic Board and Midlands Connects. I am a Member of the Local Government Association Resources Board and the Cabinet Office's National Growth Board. A busy life as I still farm at Abbey Fields in Rocester, on South Staffordshire College Board and Rocester Parish Council.

Preparing for the next financial year 2020/21 felt easy after last year and then we have had the pandemic of Coronavirus when all plans were put on one side. The work on the budget along with many other policies, plans and actions will serve us well in the recovery and renewal stages as we come out of the lockdown and pandemic. Included in this is the Plan on a Page:

The Staffordshire Vision: A county where big ambitions, great connections and greener living give everyone the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy

Outcomes

Everyone in Staffordshire will:

- Have access to more good jobs and share the benefits of economic growth
- Be healthier and independent for longer
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in their community

Our Priorities



Help Staffordshire's economy to grow and generate more good jobs



Invest in infrastructure for growing communities



Improve education and training so that life-long learning offers everyone the opportunity to succeed



Inspire healthy, independent living



Ensure families and children can manage their own problems, stay safe and well

Working Principles



Encourage citizens and communities to help themselves and one another



Our workforce will be ambitious for Staffordshire, and make a difference for our people



Be digital, using technology and data to connect, inform and support our citizens



Think climate change in all we do to limit our impact on the planet

Our Pledge: Deliver value for money for residents and businesses and live within our means

MTFS Financial Strategy



Creating the right conditions for our economy to grow will increase Business Rates Income



Changing the way we use technology and data combined with closer working with communities, in a new offer to Staffordshire citizens



As we encourage housebuilding to meet growing demand, more homes will generate more Council Tax



Using council assets such as land, buildings or money held in reserve to generate income



Lobbying Government to secure greater funding and responsibility to act on the issues that matter most to Staffordshire people



Continuing to reduce costs by finding new and more efficient ways of working, for instance through greater use of technology

Across this great county we are seeing and hearing incredible acts of generosity and courage, in particular the dedication of our incredible NHS staff and social care workforce in caring for the sick and vulnerable in the toughest of times. Then there are the volunteers, communities, neighbours and businesses, stepping up and doing their bit to keep people safe, fed, and healthy. Robert Jenrick, the Secretary of State for Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government has written an open letter praising our staff's efforts.

Stories of great sadness too, including the deaths of ear, nose and throat consultant Amged El-Hawrani, who worked at Burton Hospital, and care home nurse Eslye Sazuze who worked at the Barton and Needwood House Nursing Homes. Our thoughts and prayers are with their loved ones.

Here at the county council, more than £22m will be spent on a raft of measures as part of our Coronavirus response – with significant further expenditure to come. We must pull together like never before. Together we will get through this and we will rebuild a Staffordshire which will be a testament to those who have given so much.

I gave a thorough report on the County Council's response to Covid-19 to our first virtual Cabinet, how staff are working round the clock to protect the most vulnerable in our communities. In addition, the report set out how the response means that on top of extra spending, it is likely that we will also not deliver £10m savings identified in this year's budget, something we are already lobbying Government on.

We have been overwhelmed by the response to the iCare and iCount campaigns, both from our staff and Staffordshire people. They are ensuring that the most vulnerable in the county can still receive the care they rely on. Though residents are still receiving care, we are planning and know that we need more carers for the most vulnerable to help keep them safe and well and help ease the pressure on the NHS especially during the peak of the virus.

Rest assured that because the county council was in a relatively good position before the virus struck, we will be looking to how we can continue to help residents and business. That is why we will be investing £26 million in Staffordshire's schools, building new schools and upgrading existing classrooms. This will ensure that children and young people in Staffordshire continue to enjoy access to good, local schools.

We will also be investing £42.7m in a package of highways improvements and transport schemes to support the economy, ease congestion and improve road safety.

Key to our future together as a community will be aspiration and isolation, two issues that will be critically important for us as a council as we lead Staffordshire's recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic. In the meantime, we are providing financial support to support the care market through the unprecedented times we are in.

Record Levels of Spending on Care in Staffordshire Backed

Plans to spend a record £320m on protecting increasing numbers of vulnerable adults and children in Staffordshire are in the budget for this year.

This means 65% of the council's budget will be spent on care this year.

The council also planned to reduce its own running costs by £62m between 2019 and 2024 to help manage the funding pressures while county council tax increased by 3.99% for 2020/21. At the time this proactive plan had allowed it to live within its means, deliver a balanced budget and still protect everyone eligible to receive care next year and as a result this puts pressure elsewhere.

Despite this, we have acted swiftly to manage these pressures and continued to bring wider benefits to Staffordshire families by growing the economy, creating better jobs and helping more people lead healthier, independent and rewarding lives. Our call then and now is for the new Government to back the ambitions of well-run councils like Staffordshire for a long-term national solution to how we fund care, support children with special educational needs and disabilities and protect our local roads from further decline.

In 2020/21 the county council's budget was planned to see:

- An extra £8.1m invested in helping to keep more children out of care
- £650,000 invested in climate change and sustainability projects
- Over £120m spent on capital projects, such as schools and business sites
- Savings across services to meet the £62m five-year plan to 2024
- Joint approach with the NHS for an affordable approach to health and care

The present situation is Covid-19 will likely cost the county council £50 Million and the Government has given the council £38 Million to cover expense incurred and a further £9.9 Million for care homes.

Follow coronavirus advice



Everyone is being urged to follow Government advice to help stop the spread of coronavirus and ease the pressure on the NHS. Please carry out your exercise as close to home as possible and do not make unnecessary journeys or gather in large groups. With warmer weather on the way, if you go out, stay two metres (6ft) away from other people at all time and wash your hands as soon as you get home. More advice can be found [on the government website](#).

Show some Coronavirus Kindness



Small actions make a big difference and many people are pulling together to help others as more residents need to stay at home because of coronavirus. If you can offer your support, there is more advice and information on our [Coronavirus Kindness internet page](#).

Many of Staffordshire's voluntary groups already provide everyday support for vulnerable people, but these groups are often staffed by people now being asked to stay at home. Community and voluntary groups can now apply for funding to help support their

local communities through the Coronavirus crisis and beyond.

Be vigilant to scams



People from across Staffordshire are being reminded to watch out for scams relating to Coronavirus, as criminals try to exploit the crisis. The latest warning from our Trading Standards and Information Governance Teams comes after security experts have reported a rise in scams linked to the outbreak.

Scammers often pose as leading health authorities when sending emails claiming to contain important updates. Watch out for fake websites and bogus traders who are taking advantage of supply shortages by offering cheaper items

currently in demand, such as hand sanitisers and face-masks.

People [should report scams to Citizens Advice here](#)

Can you help those in need?



People across Staffordshire are being asked to 'step up and help out' if they can, to take care of the most vulnerable people in the county. Across the county, thousands of elderly and vulnerable people rely on personal care from a social carer—help taking medications, assistance in washing and dressing, and cooking meals. Now, the county council is asking local people to step up and help out with these tasks if needed, to ensure care can continue if the coronavirus pandemic worsens.

People who step up will receive training and support to carry out the tasks needed. [Find out more here.](#)



I hope you enjoyed Staffordshire Day.

A [fantastic programme of online events](#) and activities promoted the county's resilience, kindness and community spirit were planned despite the pandemic.

And to say 'thank you' to the wonderful Staffordshire Angels keeping us safe through the COVID-19 outbreak, people have joined in for a [mass sing-a-long to local lad Robbie Williams' pop anthem 'Angels.'](#)

You can watch the video and see all online activities taking place throughout the day [on the Enjoy Staffordshire website.](#)

Register for help if extremely vulnerable



Extremely vulnerable residents in Staffordshire are being urged to register for help if they need it.

An estimated 20,000 extremely vulnerable residents in Staffordshire, such as those who have had organ transplants or some cancers, have received letters from the NHS asking them to shield themselves at home for at least 12 weeks.

Those who feel they don't have access to support from family, friends, or the community during that isolation should register to make sure they receive

help.

Further information [can be found here.](#)

Plastic Bottles: Recycle One and All



Staffordshire residents can help reduce plastic waste by recycling at least one extra bottle a week. People in the county currently throw out four in every 10 plastic bottles, enough to fill 16 Olympic sized swimming pools each year.

Research shows many people are confused about what plastic bottles can and cannot be recycled.

Take a look at [common myths around plastic bottle packing and recycling](#).

If every person in Staffordshire recycled at least one extra plastic bottle a week in their home recycling bin, together we could save 46 million bottles from waste in a year. More plastic bottle recycling information [can be found here](#).

Skills and apprenticeship drive continues



Working with partners including the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and colleges, the county council is supporting an increase in Staffordshire apprenticeships.

Across the county over the last financial year (2018/19), there were 7,300 apprenticeship starts in Staffordshire – a six% rise on the previous year. In 2018/19 higher level apprenticeships increased by 13% on 2017/18 contributing to an increase in higher skills levels.

Stay prepared for floods



Heavy rainfall has affected a number of communities across the country during the wettest February on record.

Flooding is one of the highest risks to people and properties in the UK. Many organisations work together to predict and reduce the risk of flooding in Staffordshire, but when it rains heavily almost anywhere can flood, even if flood defences are in place.

Being prepared is essential.

Visit [Staffordshire Prepared](#) for advice on how to prepare for before, during and after flooding. You can also find information on how to respond to different flood warnings and essential items for a [flood kit grab bag](#).

93% allocated first choice secondary school



More than nine out of 10 parents have been allocated their first-choice secondary school in Staffordshire.

Of the 7,907 applications made for transfer at age 11, ninety-three per cent of parents have been allocated their first choice school, with 97 per cent allocated one of their top three preferred schools.

Since the closing date, the council's admissions team has been working with school and neighbouring authorities to ensure as many parents as possible receive a place at a preferred school. Parents will be receiving emails and letters from today (Monday), informing them of where their child will be attending school in September.

400,000 items of PPE delivered



Almost 400,000 masks, gloves and aprons have been delivered to Staffordshire care homes and other care providers to help them care for the most vulnerable people during the coronavirus pandemic.

Staffordshire County Council has stepped into offer emergency supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to ensure every care provider has what it needs to manage outbreaks.

Care providers should try to source their own PPE and the emergency supplies will be used if they are unable to get any.

The council has considered what PPE supplies are likely to be required over the next 12 weeks and is planning to meet the anticipated demand.

Top three school choice for 99%



Fantastic news for parents of children due to start primary school in Staffordshire after the majority of applicants were allocated their first-choice school.

Ninety-four per cent of parents were offered a place at their top preferred primary school, with nearly 99 per cent being allocated one of their top three.

Figures show that out of a total 8,993 places allocated, 8,465 received their first-choice primary school while 8,963 were offered one of their top three.

The figures came following the county council agreeing a £26million investment in schools over the next academic year.

Where are we?



Many of our staff, alongside those from other County Council teams, have been redeployed to support critical services and are now working to support call centres and food distribution hubs across the county.

Others are collecting and delivering shopping for the most vulnerable members of our community. A new call centre recently opened at Perton Library, run by our Library staff.

We're all #DoingOurBit to help.

Find out more about all our #HiddenHeroes at the [County Council YouTube](#) page.

Grant scheme launched for Staffordshire micro businesses affected by coronavirus outbreak



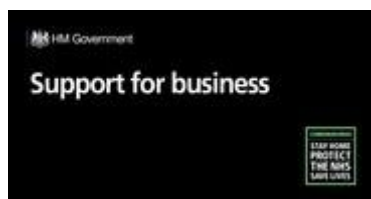
Micro businesses in Staffordshire affected by the coronavirus outbreak could apply for grants of up to £1,000 through a support scheme launched by the county council.

The £500,000 scheme will help businesses with nine employees or less and cannot get support from other Government initiatives.

The emergency fund was allocated on a first come, first serve basis and designed to support up to 500 local businesses. Businesses could apply if they are registered in Staffordshire and have an annual turnover of less than £2million a year.

They could be sole traders such as builders, plumbers and mechanics as well as hairdressers, photographers, cleaners and childminders.

Support available for businesses in Staffordshire whose employees face risk of redundancy as a result of coronavirus outbreak



Businesses across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire can help to support their employees at risk of redundancy through LEP-led scheme.

The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP is working with partners to create a service for businesses and employees experiencing redundancies as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

This is being delivered by the National Careers Service West Midlands, which includes Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

There are redundancies currently being made by businesses in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. At the same time, gaps in the labour market are appearing in key sectors. The service will support employers facing redundancies to ensure a smooth transition for employees into new work opportunities, and also support those who have lost their jobs back into employment.

The service will match those recently made redundant with new work in sectors such as health and care, food retail, wholesale and distribution, which are currently experiencing growth.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Covid-19 testing for essential workers



Essential workers can now book tests for themselves and their household via a new online portal on gov.uk.

This will make the process of getting an appointment quicker and easier, while reducing the burden on business.

You can find out more about the online booking service and who is eligible [here](#).

A letter from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) outlines how every essential worker who needs a test for coronavirus can get one. [You can read it here](#).

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme opens



Employers can now check how much they can claim to cover wages of furloughed staff through the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#), designed to help businesses retain their staff during the current outbreak. The [online portal is now live](#).

The employer can be reimbursed by HMRC for up to 80% of the furloughed employee's salary up to a maximum of £2,500 per month.

Notable recent changes made by HMRC to the CJRS:

- individuals who started working for a new employer after 28 February can be furloughed (providing they meet the other qualifying criteria). You must have: created and started a PAYE payroll scheme on or before 19 March 2020, enrolled for PAYE online and have a UK bank account
- the scheme has been extended to the end of June

HMRC aims to pay within six working days. [Find out more and apply Claim for wages online](#)

Can your furloughed staff help keep people safe in the fight against Covid-19?

Can your furloughed staff help on the care front line as a paid employee or volunteer?

Recent government guidance has been recently clarified - employees can start a new job when furloughed with their employer's permission.

[Please read this letter](#) from Leader of Staffordshire County Council, Philip Atkins, and Chief Executive John Henderson for more detail.

Redundancy and Recruitment Triage Service launches

The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP (SSLEP) has launched a Redundancy and Recruitment Triage Service for businesses and employees experiencing redundancies as a result of the coronavirus.

Whilst the government has created the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#), designed to help businesses retain their staff during the current outbreak by paying 80% of an employee's salary, there are redundancies currently being made by businesses across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. At the same time, gaps in the labour market are appearing in sectors such as health and care, food retail, wholesale, and distribution due to increased demand.

The Redundancy and Recruitment Triage Service, which will be delivered by the National Careers Service West Midlands (including Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent), will match those recently made redundant with new work in these sectors currently experiencing growth. The service will also engage with employers facing redundancies to ensure a smooth transition for employees into new work.

- If you are an employer whose staff are at risk of redundancy, please call 07879 603635
- If you require support to fill urgent vacancies, please call 07879 603635

For general guidance and links to further information on redundancy for both employers and employees, you can read the [DWP Factsheet on Redundancy](#).

[LEARN MORE about how the new triage service can help you on our Business](#)

[Support page](#)

Busting the plastic recycling myths - sign up now

#DoingOurBit is about doing one extra thing to help those around us. Next week, the "Plastic Bottles: Recycle One and All" campaign launches to encourage everyone in Staffordshire to recycle one extra plastic bottle a week.

In Staffordshire, nearly all plastic bottles are recyclable, yet a huge 4 out of 10 of them are thrown away. That's enough to fill 16 Olympic Sized swimming pools!

Most people are enthusiastic about recycling to help protect the planet, but recycling can be confusing and there are many myths out there. For example, did you know

that you can keep the lids on plastic bottles and still recycle them, and they don't have to be clean

The 'Plastic Bottles: Recycle One and All' campaign will help bust those myths and help everyone to do their bit and recycle just one extra bottle a week. Together we can save 46 million in a year!

It's a small act that adds up to make a big difference.

Do you want to be a part of it?

Use the links below to sign up to get bulletins straight to your email inbox:

- Recycling, reducing and reusing tips
- How people are reusing and upcycling plastic bottles
- How schools and communities are getting involved in your area

and much more.

[Click here to sign up for email updates if your waste and recycling is collected by East Staffordshire Borough Council](#)

A50 Growth Corridor update

Project A as it is known is a major piece of engineering and a huge success and will deliver many economic benefits, while also improving road safety.

We are continuing to lobby for Project B to be in the Road investment strategy Programme as part of the North Midlands Manufacturing Corridor..

All county councillors are to be allocated £20,000 each to prioritise highways work in their own local communities.

After the exceptional weather last winter the additional £5 million last financial year on top of the annual £7.5 Million spend on highway maintenance was useful. The one-off £20 K was on top of annual £7K funding for highways each member must allocate to local roads.

This money was allocated to the rural areas as many other projects such as routine repairs, the new traffic calming in Bramshall, the speed and road improvements in Ellastone, or traffic calming at Ashbourne Road, Rocester are being funded by s106, business or Parish Councils along with normal contributions. Thanks to Rocester PC and Alton Towers in particular.

Early Peak-Time Free Travel to Remain for Disabled People

Free peak time bus travel for disabled people in Staffordshire has continued – following feedback from a public consultation on concessionary travel.

And while Covid-19 is on us, Staffordshire County Council has made concessionary travel 24/7, which means older people with bus passes in the county can travel at any time to ensure they can make use of the early opening times that some supermarkets have for elderly and NHS staff.

Getting the Best Deal for Staffordshire from HS2

The county council remains totally committed to getting the best deal for Staffordshire from HS2. This extends to getting the best deal for the county in terms of mitigation, compensation for residents, economic benefits and improved connectivity.

To remind you, we petitioned against Phase 1 and successfully achieved the lowering of eight km of the line in Lichfield. Staffordshire County Council also secured an assurance from the Prime Minister that the Handsacre link, connecting HS2 to the West Coast Main Line, would be constructed. This will provide the infrastructure needed for Staffordshire to receive HS2 services and gain economic benefit as a result.

The Hybrid Bill for Phase 2a is going through Parliament and should be passed if Parliamentary time permits at the end of this year.

Digital Working and Superfast Staffordshire Website Shows When New Broadband Will Arrive

Householders and businesses in East Staffordshire can find out exactly which areas will be getting faster internet speeds—the first communities already feeling the benefit. You can find when and where the faster fibre broadband will be available at the Superfast Staffordshire website www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/

Staffordshire County Council, BT and Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) are working in partnership to deliver superfast broadband services across Staffordshire as part of the national programme managed by BDUK. When added to the commercial roll-out we now have 97% of premises receiving speeds in excess of 24 Mbps.

With more people working from home because of the pandemic, the need for 5G and faster broadband has become even more pressing. It is a good job we have done what we have, but there is more needed.

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MyStaffs App and the shift to digital

You can access all your council services on the move with the 'My Staffs App', free and available on Apple devices, android and Google platforms from the Apple App store and Google Play.

What is the MyStaffs app? It's a much quicker and easier way in which customers can talk to us with new technology using smart phones. If you need to report an issue, make a transaction, or request information, with the free app you access key services anytime, anywhere.

You can even specify your location so that you receive information about the services which just apply in your area.

What's more is that the app doesn't just feature key county services but some at district and borough level too, which means you can access everything all in one place, at the touch of a button.

What's available on the app?

Services available through the app include:

- School Term Date Information
- School Closures
- Childcare
- Advice and information for parents of under 5s
- Local Venues and Attractions
- Waste Services
- School Meal Menus and Pricing
- Registration Services
- Council Tax Information
- Roads and Highways

So, if you're always on the go – save time today and download the MyStaffs App for Apple and Android devices

Welcome to the Staffordshire Connects

Staffordshire Connects is an online directory of local care, support and wellbeing services, activities and events across Staffordshire aimed at the whole family at <https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/home.page>

Staffordshire Connects makes it easier for people to find and access support and wellbeing services from hundreds of organisations, all in one place. With just a few clicks of a button, you can browse, compare, book and buy activities.

Support Staffordshire

A great source of help and advice can be found on their website

<https://www.supportstaffordshire.org.uk/>

Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS)

SCVYS is a charitable company committed to supporting excellent outcomes for children and young people in the county since being established in 1982. Through an arrangement with Staffordshire County Council, SCVYS provides support services to over 100 voluntary youth organisations delivering in over 700 places.

Certainly young people are leading the way on social action or people helping people as we call it here in Staffordshire. Latest Office of National Statistics figures show that whilst overall volunteering is slightly down, amongst young people it is significantly up. SCVYS census data collected from our members also shows a dramatic rise, with over 1500 under 18s volunteering regularly in local member group activities, up over 60% on last year..

There is certainly a shift in emphasis from public services towards greater personal responsibility, family resilience and resourceful communities to resolve their own issues, and only involve public services with those who most need the help.

So, once again young people are leading the way. They get so much bad press maybe it is time to loudly and proudly celebrate their contribution to Staffordshire's local communities.

More details at www.staffscvys.org.uk

A515 and HCVs

With economic growth comes traffic and the issue of Heavy Commercial Vehicles (HCVs) and there have been extensive discussions to find a solution to issues around HCVs using the A515 as a shortcut from the A50 to the A38.

Experimental traffic orders have reduced HGV traffic movement along sections of the road after coming into force in last year.

It is important to note that this is a community-led scheme and has been implemented in response to community concerns.

The scheme is supported by the police who will carry out enforcement of the orders.

Redundancy and Recruitment Support Triage Service (Covid-19)

The County Council on behalf of the SSLEP has worked with partners to re-focus elements of the National Careers Service West Midlands (NCS) contract operated by Prospects and put in place a triage service for employers and people affected by Coronavirus redundancies and for employers needing staff to fill their current vacancies. This is free individual support, advice and careers information and guidance for employers and employees.

Whilst the Government has created the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, designed to help businesses retain their staff during the current outbreak, there are redundancies currently being made by businesses across the SSLEP area. This is occurring whilst simultaneously large gaps in the labour market are appearing in sectors vital to the ongoing fight against Coronavirus.

The County Council on behalf of SSLEP worked with partners to create a triage service to help those made jobless, as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak, back into employment, including those in Apprenticeship roles.

The triage service asks employers and employees to contact NCS either by email or telephone. For people at risk of redundancy or already redundant/laid off, NCS will carry out a telephone skills analysis and give whatever support is needed. This will include signposting businesses and individuals to other support provision offered via a range of partners.

NCS will match people to the vacancies that they have been notified of and the ones they have obtained for themselves.

This triage service will also align with other local provision offers such as the:

- Rapid Response Service support DWP offers as NCS work with DWP on a regular basis;
- JET service that is currently supporting businesses and individuals across the Stoke-on-Trent area;
- Serco who hold the ESF call-off contract for Skills Support for Redundancy across the SSLEP area;
- Ladder for Staffordshire to provide Apprenticeship support.
- Growth Hub, Skills Hub and wider Chamber of Commerce services.

Referral Process:

- If you have been made redundant or are at risk of redundancy contact the National Careers Service now on **0121 296 5550** or email ncswmenquiries@prospects.co.uk to book a telephone appointment
- If you are an employer whose staff are at risk of redundancy, please call **07879 603635**
- If you require support to fill urgent vacancies, please call **07879 603635**

Partners who are actively involved in supporting this triage service:

Organisation
Staffordshire County Council
Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire SLEP
Prospects
DWP JobCentre Plus
Serco
Growth Hub
Skills Hub
Chamber of Commerce
The Ladder for Staffordshire
Federation of Small Businesses

Contact Officer: Anthony Baines – Assistant Director for Skills & Employability, Staffordshire County Council. E: Anthony.baines@staffordshire.gov.uk

Locally last year's **Staffordshire People Helping People Fund** went to:

Privacy door

A solid set of wooden doors will provide light- and sound-proofing to encourage older people to exercise in the hall in private, without being overlooked by people in the kitchen, thus helping to improve health outcomes..

£500.00

Places of Welcome, East Staffs

Places of Welcome is a national movement of local venues open each week, where people help people, providing a warm welcome and free hospitality for all.

Over the next 7 months we will encourage new Places of Welcome to open all over East Staffordshire. For details - www.placesofwelcome.org.uk

£500.00

Cycling without Age project at Wonderdale Care

Wonderdale Care have been approved as a cycling without age centre. This scheme use adapted trishaws enabling older people to experience the joys and benefits of cycling. Giving them the right to wind in their hair, the right to experience the countryside and nature close up from a bicycle.

£500.00

Denstone Voluntary Car Scheme

A Community based scheme where volunteer drivers provide transport for the elderly or those with mobility issues who live in the village to enable them to attend Doctor and hospital appointment and keep in touch with family and friends.

£500.00

Connecting Families - A TURN Community Project

Connecting Families a TURN Community Project. Working with the most vulnerable families in and around Staffordshire to improve communication, resilience and confidence and allow families to come together to tackle their challenges and problems.

£500.00

This year's Covid-19 Support Fund

Marchington Community Shop

Marchington Community Shop continues to support the community during the COVID-19 crisis by remaining open and delivering fresh local produce those shielding and self isolating. The support from SCC has enabled new personal protection and as a result has increased the confidence of the community.

£289.00

Abbots Bromley support for Covid-19

Abbots Bromley Parish Council is helping to provide support for those self-isolating within the village and surrounding area. Volunteers can help residents with any shopping requirements and collection and delivery of medical prescriptions.

£350.00

Denstone Community Support Group - Covid-19

To provide support to those within Denstone, the collection of medicines, prescriptions, food and other essential items, checking on the welfare and well-being of those who are alone without immediate local family members, providing a dog walking service for those unable to leave their home.

£500.00

Much more than this is happening in the Uttoxeter Rural area.

This is only a snapshot of the many things that I come across in a year and if anyone wishes to know more on any subject do not hesitate to contact me.

Philip Atkins

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EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR BAGOTS WARD - REPORT

Not available at the time of going to print.

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Wednesday, 17th April 2019 at the Village Hall, Abbots Bromley, pursuant to notice having been given
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Present:-,

Councillors :- P Charles (Chair), Mrs A Appleby, B Walters, R Jarman, P Ryan, J Houlihan, Mrs M Moore, Mrs R Robb

Attendees:- Mrs S Meads, Clerk, County Councillor P Atkins, plus 22 members of the public.

1. **Apologies:-** Mrs A Roe (ABPCC), Mr M Hobbs (NDPG), Mr R Hall

2. **Chairman's Report.**

Presented by Cllrs P Charles and Mrs A Appleby

3. **Parish Assembly Minutes for May 2018**

Signed as a true and correct record by Cllr P Charles

4. **Jubilee Cup**

The Jubilee Cup was presented to Mr Simon Wilson in recognition for all his work in the village, including the Fire Service, Scouts and the Village Hall Committee. Mr Wilson gave thanks.

5. **United Charities**

Distribution of funds took place in December 2018. Those that received funds included the Friendship Group, Evergreens, Scouts & Guides, ABSA and residents of the village. Cllr Appleby signed on behalf of the Parish Council.

6. **HS2**

An update on HS2 was provided by Cllr Jarman. He explained that the Parish Council had been working with neighbouring Parish Councils, Newborough and Hoar Cross plus local residents as a working group to petition the government against the proposed power lines. Petition going to parliament on 23rd April. The group petitioning for consideration to be given to undergrounding the cables and for construction traffic to be routed away from the villages.

7. **Neighbourhood Planning Group**

Mr P Male provided an update on the NDPG (full report provided in the 2019 Annual Report document).

Mr Male said that the Parish Council restarted its engagement and conducted a review of the previous group's work. New group of volunteers came forward and authorisation given by the Parish Council to start work on 26th September 2018. During the intervening time the group had no authority but did meet eight times.

Following approval of the Terms of Reference an application for funding was submitted. Quotations were received from 5 consultants and funding would be available at the beginning of the financial year to be spent by the end of the year.

The group has provided opportunities for the village to meet. To date 5 meetings had taken place. It was disappointing that young people didn't attend the meetings. The group wants to ensure that everyone has an involvement.

Housing needs assessment needs updating.

In summary, the group needs support from residents of the village and wishes to involve as many people as possible so please do get in touch.

8. **Open Forum**

Mr T Rawlinson, Community First Responders. Mr Rawlinson said that there will be five defibrillators in the village located at the Village Hall, Top Shop, Goose Lane bus stop, fire station and ABSA. The units cost £2,000 each. Thanks to all those that have contributed. Having only had one first responder there are now new people being trained. Now hoping to build fund so that a new vehicle can be purchased.

A resident raised concerns over councillors stepping down and not putting themselves forward for election, particularly at this important time. Councillors explained why they did not stand for election:-

Cllr Charles, felt it was time given his age and length of service

Cllr Mrs Appleby said that she just doesn't have the time to commit

Cllr Jarman said that he just felt that it was time to step down

Cllr Charles said that the expertise comes through the Clerk

A resident thanked the councillors but said that he was very disappointed that none had chosen to stand again.

Cllr B Walters said that he felt that he was treated extremely poorly. People went about destroying trust in the neighbourhood plan and created bad feeling. He said

that he has stuck it out as a councillor for twelve months so as not to trigger an election but he has a bad taste in his mouth.

Cllr P Ryan said that he had registered for the election but later withdrew. He explained that he had done ten years but now spends a lot of time in Ireland and elsewhere and would be missing several meetings a year. He said he would still be there as a sounding board.

Cllr R Jarman said that the councillors would still be there for questions and available on the phone.

Cllr Mrs R Robb said that she had been co-opted on to the council. She said that there had been a lot of ill feeling created through social media and she really didn't need that.

Cllr J Houlihan decided to step down 18 months ago and what happened at last year's Parish Assembly had reinforced the decision.

Cllr Mrs M Moore said that she found the decision very difficult. She said that she took the behaviour at the previous Assembly very personally and those that stood up did not give Councillors chance to speak. She said that the plan is now moving forward and there are lots of vocal people in the village who could get involved.

A resident thanked councillors for their work and said that it was a thankless task.

Another resident said that nobody should have to answer as to why they are not standing for election again. They are quite entitled to do what they wish.

Cllr Atkins said that he had been coming to Abbots Bromley Parish Council for 32 years. He said that it is a thankless task, however, Abbots Bromley has great community spirit. He said that social media has a lot to answer for and was sad what had happened and councillors shouldn't have to deal with that. He said that there is support through the Clerk, Staffordshire Parish Council Association and East Staffs Borough Council. He thanked the Parish Council.

Cllr Walters said that he wanted to put it on record thanks to Borough Councillor Hall for the work that he does.

Closing remarks from Cllr Charles, he thanked everyone for coming and also thanked Mrs Tonking for the loan of the presentation equipment.

Signed..... Date