

# our city



## CAUGHT RED HANDED

“Smart” liquids tag intruders and marked property **SEE PAGE 15**

### Mandate for Change

Developing world-leading technology to give city’s ceramics industry an extra competitive edge in global marketplace

**SEE PAGE THREE**



## Truck builder shows city is on road to more investment and job creation

By City Council Leader  
Councillor

**MOHAMMED PERVEZ**

IT is tremendous to hear news that the company behind the proudly-named Longton Avia Truck intends to create dozens of new jobs by manufacturing the vehicles at a base in our city (see page five).

When we launched our Mandate for Change initiative last summer we set out our stall to support and nurture existing businesses while doing everything we can to attract new investors to our city.

Making Stoke-on-Trent a great place to do business and helping to create jobs were the pillars of the campaign.

So it is heartening to hear companies like Longton Avia praising council teams for the help and support they have given to roll out the red carpet to business.

Pottery manufacturer Steelite International and global industrial research specialist Ceram have also benefited from this support and have recognised that the council is doing its bit to drive forward business.

The public sector is not in a position to create jobs. We have just seen the second round of biting Government cuts, where we had to make savings while protecting front line services and generating money to invest in the city's future.

There are more cuts to come next year and the council will have to work just as hard to achieve the same goals of driving progress while balancing the books because of financial restrictions which are not of our making.

So while we are shedding jobs in the public sector to meet Government spending cuts, we need to create the right conditions for the private sector to invest in our city.

That means giving every assistance to companies who are growing, moving forward and recruiting by helping with planning issues, land acquisition, infrastructure and even supporting bids for financial assistance.

It is good to hear industry chiefs like Steelite International's Kevin Oakes saying the council's support was vital in the company's efforts to create 200 much-needed jobs. We have started how we mean to go on and this approach will continue to create the right conditions for businesses to prosper in Stoke-on-Trent.

### COVER PICTURE:

*Caught red-handed:* Staffordshire Police's Sergeant Paul Cook shows how a new forensic marking product can protect property and show up on the hands of anyone who comes into contact with it, watched by PC Peter Clarke.



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Council Leader Councillor Mohammed Pervez and North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Sara Williams at the business hotline desk in Commerce House, Festival Park.

# Call the business hotline for **one-stop-shop** advice

**B**USINESSES across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire are already benefiting from a single number helpline set up to offer the kind of support they need to develop and prosper.

The new number – 0300 111 8002 – acts as one point of contact, making it easier for companies, big or small, to get access to vital expertise.

It has been launched as part of a drive by the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to roll out the red carpet for organisations. It also keys into one of the main principles of Mandate for Change, which is to support existing businesses.

The project, which has the backing of Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire's Chambers of Commerce, went live in February for a six-month trial.

Council Leader Councillor Mohammed Pervez said: "This one point of contact will make it easier for entrepreneurs, big or small, to get the information and advice they need with the minimum of fuss. With the business support line we have one voice when helping businesses to cut through bureaucracy and simplify things for them."

Cabinet Member for Economic Development Councillor Mark Meredith said: "This is about providing a seamless

service for existing businesses. We are already taking all kinds of calls on subjects such as recruitment, gaining access to financial grants and planning and environmental issues.

"The people who take the calls can either answer the queries themselves or signpost the business to expert help. It is early days but we believe there is an appetite for this

kind of one-stop-shop advice and we will continue to evaluate its success and demand throughout the trial period."

One of the first companies to benefit is specialist industrial manufacturer Euroslot KDSS Ltd. The Stone-based business, which employs 18 people, was looking for help and advice on the range of export grants available to small and medium-sized businesses.

Financial Controller Mike Sanders said: "We were looking for more guidance and information about the various incentives and grants set up by the Government to help manufacturers boost their export sales.

"So we called the new business helpline and as a result were directed towards specialist advice and export assistance, which is enabling us to take advantage of the schemes most relevant to us."

The helpline was set up in direct response to what businesses said would benefit them. North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Sara Williams said: "In a survey conducted by the county's Chambers of Commerce on behalf of the Local Enterprise Partnership, businesses were asked what would be of value to them. "The majority of respondents asked for a single point of contact for business advice. So it is really exciting that the LEP is able to respond so quickly to businesses needs."



With the business support line we have one voice when helping businesses to cut through bureaucracy and simplify things for them.

CLLR. MOHAMMED PERVEZ,  
COUNCIL LEADER

### Live webcast of full council meetings

MEETINGS of the full council can now be viewed online. To see and hear the debates and decisions which affect life in Stoke-on-Trent, visit [stoke.gov.uk](http://stoke.gov.uk) and click on webcasting. A list of dates and times of council meetings and committee meetings can be found on our website at [stoke.gov.uk/meetingdates](http://stoke.gov.uk/meetingdates)

Give us your feedback on this issue of **Our City** by emailing [ourcity@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:ourcity@stoke.gov.uk) or write to: FREEPOST *Our City*.



# Technology to boost ceramics industry

**A** Stoke-on-Trent based company is developing a world-leading technology which could save the city's ceramics manufacturers millions of pounds every year in energy costs.

The three-year project is being partly funded by a £1.9 million Regional Growth Fund grant to material technology specialists Ceram Research Ltd – whose successful bid was supported by the council's Economic Development Team.

It is hoped that another £1.9 million grant will come from the European Regional Development Fund with the remainder of the £5.7 million cost of the programme being met by Ceram itself and the ceramics industry.

The research work will see the development of new kiln-firing technology which, if successful, could potentially cut energy consumption by up to 25 per cent.

It involves the adaptation of "resistive field technology" used in the aerospace industry in the United States. An electric current is passed through the ceramic products while in the kiln which accelerates the firing process and significantly reduces the temperature at which pottery needs to be fired.

## Competitive advantage

Ceram will build two "semi scale" kilns at its Penkhull research laboratories – a 30 metre pull through kiln and an intermittent kiln, both with the cutting edge technology.

Tony Kinsella, Ceram Chief Executive, said: "By year three we will have the two kilns working at Ceram and local ceramic companies will be able to test their products to show that this world-first technology works for them. They will be in a position

## Mandate for Change



**CERAM Chief Executive Tony Kinsella, left, shows Councillor Mark Meredith, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, a Hygrothermal Rig which is used to check construction cladding materials meet the standards required by European regulations.**

to be the first to take up the technology and gain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

"Reducing energy means not only cost savings but also a reduction in factory carbon emissions – which could lead to potential tax savings. The companies will also be able to sell their ware as greener products.

"We want to be able to apply the technology to existing kilns as well as purpose-built new kilns. The industry's need for this energy saving technology is immediate and they will quickly be able to embrace it if we can implement it on kilns that are currently in use."

Prior to making its funding applications for the project, Ceram carried out a feasibility study with the technology in its research laboratories at Penkhull – with very promising findings. Mr Kinsella praised the role of the council's Economic Development Team in backing the bid for a grant from the Government's Regional Growth Fund.

"The attitude, enthusiasm and support of the team has been inspiring and was a factor in the bid being successful," he said.

"In fact, the project was initially prompted by council Chief Executive John van de Laarschot who invited local ceramics companies, Ceram and representatives of the British Ceramic Confederation and the Ceramic Industry Forum to ask how we could best help the industry.

"One clear message was that reducing energy costs was an urgent priority. We went away and started looking at how new technology could help deliver savings."

Councillor Mark Meredith, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, said: "The work being done by Ceram is extremely impressive and we were fully committed to helping them to secure the funding needed to develop this technology which could give our local pottery industry a further competitive edge and help its continued revival."

Ceram is an international materials technology company that focuses on innovation, sustainability and quality assurance. It operates in a wide range of industries including healthcare where it is currently working on developing new drug-release technologies.

Besides its Stoke-on-Trent headquarters, the company – which employs 190 people – has accredited research laboratories in the Far East and subsidiary companies in the United States.

## 400 musicians take to stage in recorder festival

AROUND 400 young musicians will take to the stage of the Victoria Hall for the city's annual Grand Recorder Festival.

Students aged from five to 18 from more than 20 schools in the city will delight audiences with solo works as well as massed performances and individual school performances during the two concerts that will be held on 27 March at noon and 6.45pm.

The programme is made up mainly of light classical music and works that have a jazz influence.

Also hitting the right notes will be the City Youth Recorder Ensemble and soloist Anna Bradburn, from Stoke-on-Trent, who is in the Sixth Form of the world-famous Chetham's School of Music in Manchester.

Anna started to learn how to play the recorder at the age of three and her mother Lynne will also be on stage as the Festival's piano accompanist.

Harry Hitchen, Acting Leader of the City Music Service, said: "The acoustics of the Victoria Hall help the recorders produce a fabulous sound. It's important to promote the recorder because it is very accessible for young children, is a wonderful instrument in its own right and one which often inspires students to explore other instruments."

Admission to the Recorder Festival is £3 at lunchtime and in the evening £6.50 for adults, £5 for children and £18 for a family ticket that admits two adults and two children. Tickets can be bought in advance at the Regent Theatre box office.



## Views sought on possible change to school year

**THE council is receiving a wide ranging response to its consultation on changing the traditional school year.**

Parents and teachers have been asked whether the established pattern should change, and even give their ideas for a new pattern, by going on to the council's website. "So far we have had more than 650 responses, with a lot of people in favour of some sort of change," said Aileen Perry, Governor Support Officer, Children and Young People's Services.

"Numerous parents and members of staff have responded, and also employers. We are asking the Chamber of Commerce to help us encourage more employers to take part.

"The preferences are across a wide spectrum, including some people who would like a return to the Potters' Holiday. I would urge all interested parties to take the opportunity of making their voices heard."

■ To give your views visit [stoke.gov.uk/termchanges](http://stoke.gov.uk/termchanges)

The three-month consultation period ends on 30 April.



**TECHNICAL Consultant David Pearmain uses Ceram's Scanning Electron Microscope to investigate ceramic samples fired with the new energy-saving technology.**

# A place with a great feeling of neighbourliness

**B**ARBARA Andrew arrived in the city from Coventry 26 years ago to run a hostel for homeless young men – and is still working hard on behalf of other people in her community.

Now Chair of Hartshill and Harpfields Residents' Association, Barbara looked back to the bitterly cold winter of 1985 when she came to the city to start her new job on New Year's Eve.

"On New Year's Day I walked out on to Snow Hill to find the local shops," recalled Barbara.

"Everywhere was still and from the top of Broad Street I looked over the city and remember thinking how ugly it was and yet also how strangely beautiful it seemed in the wintry light with everything covered in snow."

However it didn't take long for Barbara to fall in love with Stoke-on-Trent – and particularly with Hartshill where she chose to

settle. "It's like a village with a strong sense of history and community, good shops and restaurants and a great feeling of neighbourliness."

"I wouldn't want to live anywhere else," she said.

Barbara also found personal happiness in the city when she attended a meeting of North Staffordshire Homelessness Forum and met Joe who was chairing the event.

## Support

They have now been married for 23 years and Joe, who is Professor of Literature and Culture at Keele University where he has lectured for 40 years, supports the Residents' Association in every way.

Barbara worked in health and social care for 20 years.

She joined the Association in October 2007 as its Secretary and

became Chair in November 2009 following the death of her predecessor Graham Simpson.

She is particularly proud of how the people of Hartshill and Harpfields support their Residents' Association – it's normal for 80 people to attend meetings and as many as 120 have turned up.

For each meeting residents choose a theme reflecting their interests.

Last year these were Law and Order, Housing and Supporting

Local Businesses. This year the focus will be on Promoting Health and Wellbeing; Babies, Children and Teenagers and Services for Older People.

The Association's newsletter is delivered by volunteers to 3,000 homes on 80 streets and there is no shortage of positive ideas from residents.

While the area can justly boast of being one of the most green, pleasant and convenient within the city's boundaries, the Residents' Association is

extremely active in tackling the kind of bread and butter issues that can affect any neighbourhood – such as litter, traffic problems, housing, planning, noise nuisance and, recently, controversial plans to erect a mobile phone mast.

In each category the Association works closely with relevant agencies such as the city council, NHS, police and local councillors.



Barbara Andrew chats with Hartshill shopkeeper Reg Melathil while out and about in her community.

**FLAMES AREN'T GAMES GRASS FIRES KILL**

**Deliberately starting grass fires is a crime. Tackling them stops us being somewhere we could save a life.**

**MORE**  
for more, visit our fire and rescue services.  
[www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk)

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**Change to your free bus pass**

From 1 April 2012 you will only be able to travel using your bus pass in the Stoke-on-Trent area as follows:

**Weekdays - 9.30am to 11pm\***  
**Weekends - anytime of the day**  
**Bank Holidays - anytime of the day**

\* Please note this is the time you board the bus and not the time the bus is timetabled to arrive at your bus stop.

**Bus Stop**

Stanley Matthews Way  
Stanley Matthews Way

**Bus stops in Stoke-on-Trent have the city council logo, are red and look similar to the one pictured.**

**If your bus stop does not have a flag that looks similar to the one pictured, you will need to check with the authority whose area you are travelling in to see what time you can use your pass.**

[transportation@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:transportation@stoke.gov.uk)  
[stoke.gov.uk/concessionaryfares](http://stoke.gov.uk/concessionaryfares)

city of stoke on trent

# Plan for 'Longton trucks' to be assembled in Longton

**A** Stoke-on-Trent based truck company has welcomed council support as it works towards long term plans to assemble vehicles in the city – which could create dozens of jobs for the area.

Longton Avia (UK) Ltd has already appointed 40 service dealers across the UK as it rolls out production of its new "Longton" truck which is currently rolling off a production line at the Avia Ashok Leyland plant in Prague.

The firm has been set up by a number of Staffordshire businessmen in partnership with Avia Ashok Leyland, part of the giant Hinduja Automotive Group. They intend to assemble the vehicle at a plant in Stoke-on-Trent as soon as it has achieved a critical mass of sales.

Several sites have already been identified in the city for assembly of the trucks.

## British engineering

Jonathan Dale, the firm's Commercial Director, said: "As local businessmen we were keen to keep the company base here in Longton.

"The area seems ideal for investment and we have been pleased by the support and direction provided by the council's team in helping to make any move as easy as possible."

"We haven't set this up with big, shiny sales rooms at the start. We're coming at it from the other direction where quality and British engineering speak for themselves.

"We will build sales first



**Cabinet Member for Regeneration Ruth Rosenau and Jonathan Dale, Commercial Director for Longton Avia (UK) Ltd, pictured at the company's offices in the town.**

and then bring assembly and product development to Longton. We're talking about dozens of jobs, initially. The vehicle we're selling has been produced in the Czech Republic for five or six years.

"We chose to call our model the Longton. We have carried out worldwide research and reaction to the name and product has been very positive indeed.

"Within the commercial vehicle industry, the key components used in the manufacture of the vehicle will be recognised as the gold standard."

The company is planning to bring the assembly of the Longton-Avia Truck to the City once sales reach an appropriate level.

In preparation they are working with the council, Make It Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Investment Development Team to look at possible sites.

Councillor Mark Meredith, Cabinet member for Economic Development, said: "It is crucial as part of the Mandate for Change that we help support businesses to grow and flourish in the city.

"The Inward Investment

Team's red carpet service is designed to help businesses looking to invest. It is pleasing to see that the company recognises our city's potential and they are prepared to invest and bring jobs to our area."

Councillor Ruth Rosenau, Cabinet Member for Regeneration said: "Longton is a town which is undergoing a number of changes. It is pleasing to see that the company has recognised that potential and is keen to bring production here as well as naming the British designed trucks after the town."

## A proud city that is taking control of its own future

By City Council Chief Executive

**John van de Laarschot**



WHEN we launched our Mandate for Change to make Stoke-on-Trent a great working city and rolled out the red carpet to attract new investment to create the jobs our city desperately needs, we meant it.

Our teams and partners are working tirelessly to make new connections with employers encouraging them to locate here and make the most of our tremendous connectivity to the road and rail network, our hard-working people and a forward-thinking council.

But while doing all we can to bring in new businesses, we also made it clear we will make the same efforts to nurture and support existing employers in the city.

As an example, the city council has supported a locally-based consortium to establish a new truck manufacturing facility in the city. We are delighted with the news that Hinduja Group, a large Indian company, wishes to back the development and we will continue to give this our full support. News from Steelite International, who are creating 200 new jobs, and companies like Midland Glass, shows just how vital that support can be.

In making Stoke-on-Trent a great place to do business, we are creating an environment where existing businesses can prosper, where support from the council means they can expand quicker and more efficiently and where bids to secure funding are backed whole-heartedly by the local authority.

### A great place to succeed

We have launched a free business advice service, cutting through red tape and giving employers and entrepreneurs starting up a business a single point of contact where they can find assistance on a range of subjects from funding and skills to premises and supply chains – another important part of making our city a great place to succeed (see page 2 for more details). Our business support programme TEST (Transforming Enterprise in Stoke-on-Trent) has coaches and mentors ready to help businesses which want to grow.

There is lots going on, and more stories of business success, job creation and transformation of the city will follow.

And there is more good news. The bus station development in the City Centre is the key to unlocking the site of the huge City Sentral shopping and leisure area – a combined development of £350m.

As I write, the biggest exhibition so far of artefacts from the Staffordshire Hoard is being planned to be launched in the summer at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery in the city centre. Part of the Hoard has returned from Washington DC where over 55,000 people viewed it. We are also making final preparations to host the Olympic Flame in May which will be a high profile event for our city.

The eyes of the world will once again be on Stoke-on-Trent because of these achievements. We should all be proud that the world will see a city that is changing, taking control of its own future and committed to making things happen.

## Theatre project helps pupils understand the culture of the travelling community

**BRIDGES** are being built between travellers and the wider community thanks to a council-backed theatre project.

Up to 120 children at four schools took part in *Travellers Tales*, which included a series of workshops staged by New Vic Borderlines to highlight the genocide of up to half a million Gypsies during World War II.

The project, commissioned by the council's Community Cohesion Team, also involves the theatre collecting and recording stories of travelling families in the city. It culminated in a special performance at the theatre called *Speak Up – Speak Out*.

An audience of up to 400 enjoyed the

work of around 90 children from Hollywall Primary, St Joseph's Catholic Primary, St Margaret Ward Catholic College and The Co-operative Academy at Brownhills.

The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and the Imperial War Museum supported the event, which featured poetry, movement and drama.

Sue Moffat, Director of the New Vic's award winning community programme Borderlines, said: "This project is about building relationships.

"It's to give the travelling community a voice and to tell their stories so everyone in Stoke-on-Trent appreciates they are part of the culture and heritage of the city. While meeting with

the travelling community, I've been made to feel very welcome and we are very excited about ways of working together to tell real travellers' tales.

"Our gentle exploration of what happened to their community during the war allowed the children we worked with to find ways of speaking up and speaking out against prejudice and persecution.

"The kids have been amazing. Many of them had never performed before so they were very brave.

"When they get it, their sense of moral outrage, their sense of what is right and wrong is very strong. I think this project is the start of something fabulous."

# China Tales

By Placer

## City's Titanic displays are a real voyage of discovery

IT may be 80 miles from the sea, but Stoke-on-Trent is *the* place to embark on a voyage of discovery to commemorate the centenary of the sinking of the *Titanic*. After all, the city is the birthplace of the ill-fated ship's captain Edward John Smith.

Museum displays that evoke the Edwardian period and the fashions and music of those times will mark the disaster which cost 1,517 lives when the liner struck an iceberg on its Atlantic maiden voyage to New York and sank 375 miles south east of Halifax in Nova Scotia, Canada, in the early hours of 15 April, 1912.

Captain Smith, who was raised in Well Street, Hanley, went on to become the Commodore of the White Star Line. He was a celebrity of his day, in demand by the rich and famous who vied for a place at his captain's table.

The city's own commemoration has already cast off at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery where the *Titanic* Trail – a series of displays – explores the area's links with the doomed ocean liner. The displays, on show until 31 December, include Captain Smith's loving cup. The same venue will be staging the sort of music hall entertainment that would have been enjoyed by passengers on the *Titanic* and a presentation charting the story of the ship from her conception in 1907 to the discovery of the wreck in 1985.

On 1 April the Museum will also stage a one-day presentation of Edwardian society fashions – such as the one pictured above – that would have been seen on the liner and on the weekend of the centenary of the sinking it will stage the sort of Victorian music hall that would have entertained the *Titanic* passengers.

In addition a *Titanic* Science event at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery will explore the science of the sinking and give visitors a chance to try their hand at fascinating



experiments to discover how the unsinkable liner met her doom. Gladstone Pottery Museum will offer the opportunity to find out about more local people on board – like the ship's engineer, Leonard Hodgkinson, from Stoke, passenger William Angle, a Minton's tile fixer, and Father Thomas Byles, a priest who took over 100 confessions before the ship floundered.

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Terry Follows, said: "The sinking of the *Titanic* is a historic event as momentous today as when it took place and I'm proud that the city is doing so much to mark the centenary in so many ways as well as paying tribute to Captain Smith who was a son of Stoke-on-Trent."

What is not always remembered is that before going down with his ship, Captain Smith organised an evacuation that saved 706 lives – a fact perhaps worth toasting with a glass of Centenary or 1912, two beers specially brewed by Burslem's *Titanic* Brewery to commemorate the watery demise of its famous namesake.

● For more information visit the museums service website at [www.stokemuseums.org.uk](http://www.stokemuseums.org.uk)



RMS Titanic.

# Growth at the double



## Window manufacturer to expand workforce

**A**MBITIOUS window manufacturer Midlands Glass is looking to double its workforce and expand its operations with the help of a business coaching programme aimed at high-achievers with the potential to grow.

The company, based at Longport Enterprise Centre, was set up by owner – 23-year-old Shakeel Asghar

– just 12 months ago and currently employs six people. But with the help of the Stoke-on-Trent City Council-funded High Growth Programme, which brings together the combined expertise of the council, North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Keele and Staffordshire Universities, the company is flourishing and taking steps towards stable growth.

"Orders are coming in for our windows and frames from across the region and we have the potential to grow," said Shakeel. "We are on target to more than double our existing workforce by this time next year.

"We are also expanding fast and I am looking at new premises or more space at this current location. The programme has helped me to take the steps I need and the advice and financial support has been invaluable."

Midlands Glass is one of 13 small to medium-sized businesses taking part in the High Growth Programme.

It is aimed at companies that

Workshops are also hosted on a range of subjects, such as applying for tax credits to offset research and development costs, help with finance and how to get the most out of public relations, marketing and social media.

Councillor Mark Meredith, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, said: "Midlands Glass is a prime example of a manufacturing company that can be successful in difficult economic times. Shakeel has been able to take advantage of the High Growth

Programme by using the financial assistance and expertise to develop his business and plan sensible and sustainable expansion.

"We are now looking to take on the next wave of companies in April. To qualify, businesses need to be small or medium-sized and experiencing year on year growth over 10 per cent."

For details about the High Growth Programme contact the project team at North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce on 01782 202222.

## Mandate for Change



are rapidly expanding and a range of experts work with them to promote and enable sensible and sustainable growth for the future.

The programme offers a free mentoring scheme – teaming up experienced business people with the high growth companies – and in-depth marketing intelligence and advice.

It also provides grants of up to £1,500 to help buy new equipment and machinery and innovation vouchers, which fund up to £3,000 of research expertise.

## Social media helps update residents

HUNDREDS of residents are keeping up to date with the council's work through its Facebook and Twitter accounts.

In the last month the sites have covered subjects as diverse as updates to the gritting during the problems caused by snow, live tweeting of the budget council meeting, National Chip Week, adoption and fostering events and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

New videos added to the council's YouTube channel, included an interview with Olympic gold medal-winning swimmer Duncan Goodhew (who was working with

children in Stoke-on-Trent) and a short clip about the council's work with Staffordshire Police, the UK Border Agency and other organisations as part of Operation Impact.

Members of the council's trading standards and fraud teams spoke on camera about the importance of working together and sharing information to protect residents and ensure council homes and benefits are being received by those who are entitled to them.

To view council videos, go to [www.youtube.com/StokeOnTrentCouncil](http://www.youtube.com/StokeOnTrentCouncil) and subscribe to keep up with forthcoming videos.



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**Councillors seek election for many different reasons.** Some are motivated by a local issue, others by their **social conscience** and yet more because of their **love of politics**. Here, *Our City* asks another five councillors **what makes them tick** and what they hope their public service achieves.



Pictured at the Civic Centre reception are, left to right, Abi Brown, Kath Banks, Terry Follows, Paul Breeze and Joy Garner.

### Councillor **Abi Brown**

aged 33:  
**Conservative**  
Meir Park

“ THIS is my second year as a councillor, I was first elected in 2010 and then re-elected in 2011 when I was heavily pregnant with my second child. I’m currently the youngest female councillor and I know what it takes to balance family with working hard to earn a living. My two kids sometimes come with me to the less formal meetings and when they do the mood is lighter and it’s less aggressive which does help good decision making to a degree.

My little boy entertains himself and my baby girl is fairly well behaved. People seem to like it and they say it shows my commitment. I could just as easily say I don’t have childcare and not come but I don’t.

I’m proud of my city and area and want to make them better. I know it’s tough for everyone at the moment but I see it as a challenge. With good will in the community we can make things better. ”

### Councillor **Kath Banks**

aged 62:  
**Labour**  
Hollybush and  
Longton West

“ FAMILY ties drew me back to my ward where I grew up and got married. It’s where my two brothers, niece and four cousins still live.

I’ve had 21 years in public service, starting as a county councillor in 1985. I’ve lost my city council seat twice, once in 2001 and again in 2006. The second time I decided I wouldn’t stand again but I came back in 2011 and was re-elected. It was like coming home. Everyone’s like an old neighbour or extended family.

It was like a new lease of life for me. I always try to be available 24/7 and the only thing I promise is that I’ll do my best. I can’t always guarantee the outcome but I will listen and try to help. As long as I’m making a difference, I’ll keep going. If I’m 70 and still going, that’s fine, unless the voters let me know different before then. ”

### Councillor **Terry Follows**

aged 64:  
**Independent**  
Hanford and Trentham

“ I lived in Fenpark Road when I was a kid and used to marvel when the Lord Mayor went past in his Rolls Royce. I never thought it would happen to me.

I’ve been a councillor off and on for about 16 years and last year thought I might not get another chance to be Lord Mayor so I put myself forward. I was lucky enough to be chosen and I’m really enjoying the role.

It’s opened my eyes to how many voluntary sector groups are working around the city for their communities. Unpaid heroes I call them.

Local issues first got me involved in politics and though I’d no ambitions to be a councillor I thought I could do better than the councillors in my ward at the time. So I stood.

I like representing people. I don’t care about political parties. If you ask people to vote for you, you should represent them. ”

### Councillor **Paul Breeze**

aged 59:  
**Unaffiliated**  
Birches Head and  
Central Forest Park

“ COMMUNITY is really important to me and I’ve lived in the same multi-cultural terraced street in Northwood, which is a large part of my ward, since 1982.

When antisocial behaviour became a problem in the area years ago, I co-founded a residents’ association and got involved in trying to sort it out. Over the years I was asked for help with all sorts of things and first served as a councillor from 2003 to 2007.

I lost my seat but was re-elected in 2011 after I took time off to write a television screenplay based on a previously published novel while looking after my three sons as a single parent. My family is the most important thing to me and I have great empathy with people struggling on very low incomes while keeping their values of decency and respect. It can be stressful and frustrating trying to make my community better but it’s very rewarding. ”

### Councillor **Joy Garner**

aged 50:  
**Labour**  
Burslem Park

“ MY strong social conscience drives me on. That and the fact that politics is in my blood. My mother is chairperson of a residents’ association and she’s 80. My husband and sister are both city councillors too.

I’ve represented people all my life. I joined the USDAW trade union when I started work at Tesco in Hanley and over the years became branch chair, health and safety rep, store rep and a regional rep. I first became a councillor in 2002 and currently serve on three committees and the Police Authority.

I’d put so much time in, I gave up work in 2004 to dedicate myself to it full-time. I really enjoy serving the residents of the city plus visitors to Stoke-on-Trent too. We want to make it safe and secure so they come back. We need jobs and businesses in the city so we have to look after both or we’ll get neither. ”

# Initiative is providing more new apprentices

MORE apprenticeships are being created by companies working on Building Schools for the Future projects – thanks to a joint initiative between the major contractors, the council, and Stoke on Trent College

Construction giants Balfour Beatty, Thomas Vale/Wates together with ICT training specialist RM Education are looking to take on 40-plus apprentices throughout the remaining duration of the BSF programme.

They have formed a new forum with the college – which will provide vocational training – to oversee the recruitment of young people for the apprenticeships and work experience placements.

Andy Greenhough, the college's Director of Employer Engagement, is chairing the forum which includes BSF Project Director Tracy Penrose-Gould, council Economic Development Officer Steve Lovatt and representatives from the contractors.

## Training

He said: "The forum will enable us to work together to create opportunities for young people that might not have happened. The college will help with recruitment and provide training to prepare the apprentices for the workplace and the contractors will provide the jobs."

"It is an exciting initiative that will not only benefit the apprentices but also the companies who will gain from having quality employees for the future. The first batch of 19 potential apprentices are already being prepared by undertaking a pre-apprenticeship programme and recruitment will be ongoing."

"Although initially the forum is specifically for BSF it is envisaged the apprenticeship scheme will be extended to future major building projects such as the new city centre bus station and the City Sentral retail and leisure complex."

## Experience

Meanwhile, Balfour Beatty and the college have teamed up with The Prince's Trust to give construction industry experience to disadvantaged young people. The work placements will last around two weeks and are designed to give the participants a taste of construction industry work and, if they take to it, a possible route into employment.

Prior to the placements, The Prince's Trust volunteers are given a day's vocational training to prepare them for a building site including a Health and Safety induction.

Colin Harper, Balfour Beatty's BSF Project Director in Stoke-on-Trent, said: "We have had 12 young people between the ages of 17 and 25 from The Prince's Trust on work placements which give us a chance to assess them and for them to assess the industry. One teenager who has taken part in the scheme has already been taken on as a full-time apprentice."

**THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME:** construction work is moving apace on the futuristic Co-operative Academy at Burslem.



# Projects boost economy and create employment

STOKE-ON-TRENT'S biggest ever school building programme has pumped tens of million of pounds into the local economy in its first year.

Since work started on the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) project, £61 million has been spent with the supply chain – of which £31 million has gone to local companies and contractors.

Councillor Ruth Rosenau, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, said: "This represents 55 per cent of the supply chain budget being spent locally – which is significantly higher than the national average figure for BSF projects of around 40 per cent."

"It shows we are delivering on our promise to procure locally where possible to help sustain jobs and businesses. We intend to continue this commitment to local spend right through to the completion

of the building and refurbishment programme in January 2014 by which time it will have amounted to approximately £100 million worth of work. Not only is BSF transforming the city's educational infrastructure, it is also making a real contribution to regeneration and job creation."

## New academies

Work is now underway on 16 of the 18 building projects in the £250 million BSF programme, which comprises a mix of new build schools, major refurbishments and extensions.

Works by Thomas Vale/Wates are progressing well at Haywood Engineering College at Burslem, Trentham High, Birches Head High, Aynsley Special School, Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy and Kemball School at Blurton,

St Thomas More Catholic College at Longton, the Discovery Academy at Bentilee and St Peter's Academy at Fenton.

Meanwhile, Balfour Beatty have completed the new Reach Pupil Referral Unit at Trent Vale which is now in use. They are on site with The Co-operative Academy at Burslem, Ormiston Horizon Academy and Middlehurst Special School at Chell, Thistley Hough Community High at Penkhull, St Margaret Ward Catholic College at Tunstall, and St Joseph's College at Trent Vale.

Work on their last two schemes is planned to start later this year: Holden Lane High and Specialist Sports College at Sneyd Green will be substantially rebuilt with the old 1960s block demolished, and Abbey Hill School & Performing Arts College is planned to move from Abbey Hulton to a new building at Longton.

# Plumber taps into a great opportunity

**PLUMBER Bruce Bagnall tapped into a great opportunity when he applied for the chance to become Balfour Beatty's first Advanced Apprentice in Construction Management in Stoke-on-Trent.**

**The 23-year-old was up against tough competition from more than 20 other applicants and, as part of the recruitment process, sat four exams in Birmingham, two exams, two group exercises and an interview in Manchester before a final interview with two other shortlisted candidates in The Potteries.**

**But it was all worthwhile when Bruce landed the job and last September began a busy learning curve supervising building site work on BSF projects in the city.**

**"I'm absolutely loving the job – I'm gaining new skills and know how every day," said Bruce, who left**

**Blythe Bridge High School at the aged of 16 with nine GCSEs. "The work is varied – as well as learning to supervise construction, I'm carrying out Health and Safety inductions."**

**After leaving school Bruce had a few different jobs before eventually becoming an apprentice plumber and achieving NVQ Level 2. Now, he is about to start another two-year NVQ course in construction management at Stoke on Trent College – for which he is released by Balfour Beatty one day a week to attend.**

**Colin Harper, Balfour Beatty BSF Project Director in Stoke-on-Trent, said: "Bruce has settled in very well and we are extremely pleased with his progress. He is a fine example of the high quality people available in this area who, if given the right opportunities, provide a tremendous resource for businesses."**



**Balfour Beatty Advanced Apprentice Bruce Bagnall at work on the construction site of the new Thistley Hough Community High School.**

# Making the most of hi-tech classrooms

**T**EACHERS are receiving specialist training under the Building Schools for the Future programme so they can make the most of hi-tech equipment in new 21st Century classrooms.

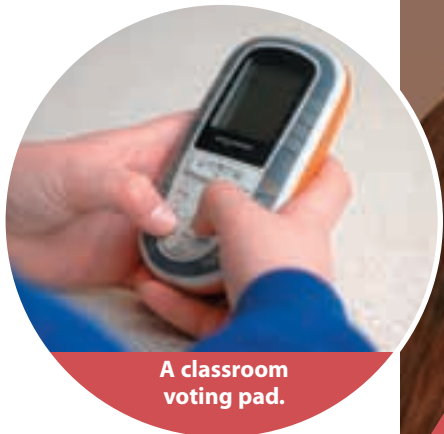
A raft of new technology is being introduced centred around interactive whiteboards – a large, touch sensitive board connected to a digital projector and computer – which some schools are using for the first time.

The projector displays the image from the computer screen on the board and the computer can then be controlled by touching the board, either directly or with a special pen.

Voting pads, mobile slates – portable tablets which can be passed around the classroom – iPods with educational Apps, and visualisers, which can magnify and record written material and demonstrations and project them on the board, all feature in the exciting new learning spaces.

The council's leads for ICT for schools and education, Steve Johnson and Shirley Robinson, have brought in a specialist company, RM Education, to deliver guidance and training on the innovative technology to support learning and teaching – a crucial part of the overall BSF investment.

Katrina Hay, RM Education Development Manager, said: "The training is not led by the technology but by the educational vision of the school and how teachers believe the technology



A classroom voting pad.

can best be used to achieve their teaching and learning priorities.

"No two schools are the same so the training is tailored to each school. Some schools are having the whiteboards for the first time, while others have had them for years and are now introducing additional technologies.

"The training has two strands – essential training which raises the abilities of teachers so they can make the most of the hi-tech equipment and the action research project which trials technology in the classroom to assess how it can improve learning."

Haywood Engineering College, Burslem – a leading innovator in the use of technology to support learning – already has extensive

“”  
Students are much more engaged in the lesson and willing to contribute

SIAN HUGHES, HAYWOOD'S HEAD OF INCLUSION

expertise in applying the new technologies and teachers have reported excellent feedback from students.

Sian Hughes, Haywood's Head of Inclusion, said the use of voting pads and mobile slates was further encouraging students' participation in lessons.

She said: "Using the technologies such as the voting pads and the slate means that students are much more engaged in the lesson and willing to contribute. Being able to track students' responses means that I have an even clearer idea of their level of understanding and I am

able to target intervention more rapidly and effectively.

"I was surprised how even the most reluctant students were willing to engage more fully with the lesson and to get actively involved through the medium of technology."

Pupils at Haywood Engineering College using the Activ Slate that syncs with the classroom interactive whiteboard.

## Specialist city firm wins contracts

A Stoke-on-Trent company which specialises in manufacturing furniture for schools and colleges has already gained "significant" work from the BSF programme.

Little Dreams has a 30-strong workforce at its factory, offices and showroom in Campbell Road, Stoke, and has customers throughout the UK. Winning two contracts through competitive tender to supply furniture for the new Co-operative Academy at Brownhills and the refurbished Aynsley Special School, Blythe Bridge has helped the company to further invest in new manufacturing equipment and jobs.

At The Co-operative Academy, Little Dreams is designing, manufacturing and installing 31 "teaching media walls" – contemporary storage units for the 21st Century classroom, accommodating hi-tech equipment such as interactive whiteboards – and ICT work stations for 180 computers.

Some of the work stations are motorised so that at the touch of a button the computer monitors descend into the furniture to leave a clear space for students to carry out non-computer work or to hold discussions. The work stations vary in size for clusters of between three and six students.



Little Dreams Managing Director Andrew Leake in the company's showroom at Stoke.

The commission from Thomas Vale/Wates at Aynsley Special School is to fit out a science laboratory, food technology room and library – as well as providing tables, chairs and other furniture throughout the building.

Andrew Leake, Managing Director of Little Dreams, which has been in business for 25 years, said: "We have a range of state-of-the-art modern furniture products – the design of which can be adapted to suit the specific requirements of a school. We

listen very carefully to staff at the schools so we can create designs which give the best solutions for them."

Mr Leake said the city's BSF programme had provided the company with a business opportunity on its doorstep. "It is a significant amount of work for us and has helped to secure existing jobs and to create further new jobs. We hope to have the opportunity to bid for more work in other BSF projects in the city."



# Budget shows city's finances in good health

**CAREFUL planning in the face of the worst ever Government cuts mean Stoke-on-Trent City Council's financial health is as good as can be expected in the current climate.**

As well as balancing the books for 2011-12 after achieving £36million of spending reductions, councillors and officers are trying to achieve an underspend which will help to ease the pressures of the coming years.

A year ago Stoke-on-Trent faced the UK's eighth worst financial settlement

for a unitary authority. Now it has weathered the storm of the first year of cuts, and has more than a fighting chance of meeting the challenges of the next year. The approved budget deals with the Government cuts and creates an additional £5million to fund vital job creation in the city.

Councillors set the budget for 2012-13 last month after a comprehensive consultation exercise which gave members of the public the opportunity to have their say on the council's spending priorities.

## Huge challenges

Councillor Sarah Hill, Cabinet Member for Finance, said: "We face huge challenges but managed to set a bold and ambitious budget package after comprehensive and inclusive consultation. We made some concessions after listening to the public, including retaining the Lord Mayor and withdrawing proposed cuts to Marrow House. Moving forward, we will continue to listen to families in respect of all the sensitive and vulnerable areas."

Assistant Director of Finance, Peter Bates said the council had managed its finances effectively in the face of the toughest of challenges and would deliver a balanced budget for 2011-12.

He said: "The financial health of the organisation is as strong as could

realistically be expected given the speed and severity of funding cuts. We have had to manage £36million worth of reductions in the last year, and a further £24million will be made in the coming year. Although there is still huge uncertainty about the level of cuts we face in the coming years our performance so far gives us a solid foundation to plan from."

The council has also defended its decision to increase Council Tax to reduce the impact of cuts on resources and help drive forward its programme of investment in job creation and regeneration.

Councillor Hill said: "We appreciate these are hard times for residents but the rise, which equates to less than 77p per week on a Band D property, means we still have the third lowest level of Council Tax in Staffordshire."

"We have to create the right conditions to attract jobs and private investment in the city, and this budget is an important part of that effort."



### NEW SKILLS:

One of the priorities in the council's budget is to invest in developing a skilled workforce across the city. It will support facilities like an Ecohouse, pictured here, where Stoke on Trent College apprentices learn the latest energy-efficient construction skills. Our picture shows Apprentice Domestic Gas Fitter Tom Smith with a photovoltaic solar panel as he learns to wire the fuse box for the latest renewable energy technology.

## Tax success

STOKE-on-Trent City Council has increased the amount of Council Tax it collected in the last year by over one per cent... worth around £800,000 extra money collected.

It means collection rates in the city are better than they have been for a number of years.

Assistant Director of Finance Peter Bates said: "We are committed to continuing to improve collection performance which in turn reduces pressure elsewhere on the city's finances."



## Do you have a child who will be three or four years old by 31st March 2012?

**FREE**  
early education  
for three and  
four year olds

If so, your child is entitled to receive up to 15 hours a week of **FREE** Early Education.

Early Education is part of the foundation stage and helps children to develop a strong basis for future learning. Early Education can help your child to learn through hands-on activities and play, supported by staff who understand how children grow, learn and develop.

Remember, all children who are aged three or four before 31st March 2012 are eligible to receive 15 hours free Early Education (if your child attends a nursery class attached to a school or a maintained nursery school, they are already receiving their entitlement).

So, to find out more, including a list of local childcare settings who deliver Free Early Education, contact the

# family

## Information Service

tel: **0800 015 1120** or **01782 232200**

 Find us on  
**Facebook**

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)  
and search for Stoke Family Information Service

 [www.twitter.com/StokeFIS](http://www.twitter.com/StokeFIS)



[stoke.gov.uk/families](http://stoke.gov.uk/families)

# Children's Centre UPDATE

News and information from Stoke-on-Trent's Children's Centres

March 2012



Stoke North Health Visitor Liz Elliott with local Resident Samantha Dale and her nine-month-old baby Amelia Jones.

## More NHS staff employed to give a healthy revamp

**U**P to eight more health visitors are being taken on in Stoke-on-Trent by 2015 as part of a Government boost to services offered through children's centres.

The city is one of first 20 areas in the country to benefit from a re-vamp as outlined in the new four-part Health Visiting Service Offer, which will be provided locally by the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS

Trust. It safeguards wide-ranging services already being delivered by health visiting teams including the Healthy Child Programme and covers support for teenage mums and their babies through the Family Nurse Partnership.

Liz Elliott, a Health Visitor and Team Leader based at Stoke-on-Trent North Children's Centre, said: "It'll make a huge difference to outcomes for children and their families.

"As part of it, we're already working in partnership with

children's centres to better map the development of one, two and three-year olds so we can identify any issues earlier and offer the relevant support."

A qualified general and paediatric nurse for 20 years, Liz is one of four health visitors based in Chell Heath. Her team, including a staff nurse and a healthcare support worker, operate alongside family support and childcare staff from the children's centre.

Preventative care is central to their work and they run baby

clinics, drop-in sessions and parenting programmes as well as carry out home visits. They run quit smoking groups and can refer mums for support with postnatal depression and low mood.

They also signpost families to children's centre services like baby massage groups, which can help babies with colic, or "Stay and Play" sessions to help new mums feel supported and less isolated.

Liz, who moved into health visiting 11 years ago, said: "I'd worked with sick children in hospital, which was wonderful, but it's also great to work with children and their families in the community. One of our roles is supporting and empowering communities. It's fantastic to build relationships and support families. When they recognise that they've made a change for the better, that's the best bit. When a mum is able to feel that she is a good mum and says thank-you, it's fantastic. It's why I really don't mind coming into work. I really look forward to it."

### Funding bids made to save vital service

AWARD-winning support services delivered at Stoke-on-Trent Children's Centres are at risk unless funding can be found.

Start-Up Citywide helps more than 700 parents a year into training and employment through a programme of courses delivered by Training and Employment Coaches working with the centres.

David Williams, Business Development Manager at YMCA North Staffordshire who run the service, said: "This unique and award winning partnership

has made a real difference to the lives of families.

"But this valuable service could be lost if we don't get funding. We currently have bids in for Government, European and lottery funding to try and secure its future."

The service has helped more than 4,000 people since its launch in 2003, many of them left school with few or no qualifications.

Around 70 people a year are supported into jobs and 800 employer-focused qualifications achieved.

**Ball Green**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 231096

**Burslem**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 238989

**Norton**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 231096

**Stoke-on-Trent North**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 232977

**Tunstall**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 236655

**Kingsland**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 238352

**Penkull**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 236333

**The Hope**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 234357

**Thomas Boughay**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 237100

**Blurton**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 231815

**The Crescent**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 596421

**Fenton**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 237650

**The Grange**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 233775

**Hanford**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 234024

**Treehouse**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 233670

**Westfield**  
A Sure Start Children's Centre

Tel: 01782 237500

# PULL OUT GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S CENTRES ACTIVITIES



## CHILDREN'S CENTRES IN THE NORTH OF THE CITY

### Ball Green

01782 231096

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Ball Green Primary School, Whitfield Road, Ball Green ST6 8AJ

<b>MONDAY</b> Stay and Play Drop-In 9:30-11am	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Toy Library Volunteering Programme Jumping Beans Tiny Talkers
<b>TUESDAY</b> Adult Learning and Crèche (Ask at reception) 1-3pm	
<b>FRIDAY</b> Little Sprouts Stay and Play Gardening Group (0-5yrs) 1:30-3pm	



### Burslem

01782 238989

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Vale Park, Hamill Road, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 1AW

<b>MONDAY</b> Maths Course and Crèche (Ask at reception) 9:30-11:30am Stay and Play Drop-In 1-2:30pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> Lets Get Creative 9:30-11am (Messy play Drop-In, please bring a change of clothing)
<b>TUESDAY</b> English Course and Crèche (Ask at reception) 9:30-11:30am Growing Together 1-2:30pm (Referral only)	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Toy Library Volunteering Programme Jumping Beans Tiny Talkers
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Stay and Play Drop-In 9:30-11am Baby Massage Drop-In 9:30-10:30am	
<b>THURSDAY</b> Tiny Explorers Baby Group (0-18mths) 9:30-11am Adult Learning and Crèche (Ask at reception) 12:45-2:45pm	



### Norton

01782 231096

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
St Nicholas Avenue, Norton, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 8JW

<b>MONDAY</b> English Course and Crèche (Ask at reception) 1-3pm	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Toy Library Volunteering Programme Jumping Beans Tiny Talkers
<b>TUESDAY</b> Sweet Peas Baby Group (0-18mths) 9:30-11am Adult Learning and Crèche (Ask at reception) 1-3pm	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Stay and Play Drop-In 9:30-11am	
<b>THURSDAY</b> Childminders Stay and Play Drop-In (Childminders only) 9:30-11:30am Growing Together 1-2:30pm (Referral only)	
<b>FRIDAY</b> Maths Course and Crèche (Ask at reception) 9:30-11:30am	



### Stoke-on-Trent North

01782 232977

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Bishop Road, Chell Heath, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 6QW

<b>MONDAY</b> Stay and Play Drop-In 9:30-11am Adult Learning and Crèche (Ask at reception) 12:45-2:45pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> Growing Together 9:30-11:30am (Referral only)
<b>TUESDAY</b> Health Visitor Drop-In (Ask at reception) 9:10-10:30am Messy Monkeys Baby Group (0-18mths) 9:30-11am English Course and Crèche (Ask at reception) 12:45-2:45pm	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Toy Library Volunteering Programme Jumping Beans Fathers Group
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Stay and Play Drop-In 9:30-11am	
<b>THURSDAY</b> Maths Course and Crèche (Ask at reception) 9:30-11:30am Tiny Talkers 1-2:30pm (Ask at reception)	



### Tunstall

01782 236655

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Woodland Street, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 6AP

<b>MONDAY</b> Stay and Play (Booking) 9:30-11am Maths Course and Crèche (Ask at reception) 12:45-2:45pm	<b>THURSDAY</b> Stay and Play (Booking) 9:30-11am Young Parents Group 10-12pm English Course and Crèche (Ask at reception) 12:45-2:45pm
<b>TUESDAY</b> Childminders Stay and Play Drop-In (Childminders only) 9:30-11:30am Baby Massage Drop-In 12-1pm Jumping Beans 1:30-2:30pm (18mths plus, booking required)	<b>FRIDAY</b> Busy Babies Group 9:30-11am (0-18mths) Well Baby Clinic 9:30-11:30am Growing Together 1:30-3pm (Referral only)
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Adult Learning and Crèche (Ask at reception) 9:30-11:30am Mum 2 Mum Breastfeeding Café Drop-In 9:30-11:30am	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Toy Library Volunteering Programme Tiny Talkers Teenage Parents Group (Coming soon)

### The Hope

01782 234357

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Garth Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 2DA

<b>MONDAY</b> Stay and Play (PICL, 18 mths plus) 9:30-11am Health Visitor Drop-In 9:30-11:30am Chill & Chat* 1-3pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> Parent Forum 1-2:30pm (2 Mar, 6 April, all welcome)
<b>TUESDAY</b> Connect Community Group (Limited crèche places) 9:30-11:30am Post-Natal Group 1-2:30pm	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Speech and Language Support* Play and Learning in the Home* Family Support in the Home* Family Walking Group Volunteering Programme
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Baby Stay and Play - Growing Together (0-18 mths) 10:30-12pm Mandarin Group 12:30-2pm Babble and Speak* 1:30-2:30pm	
<b>THURSDAY</b> Ready, Steady, Go (Transition crèche to NEG School) 9:30-11:30am Hands from Around the World* 10:30-12pm	



## Families welcome to take part in packed activity programme

EVERY family in Stoke-on-Trent can make the most of a great range of services and facilities at the city's children's centres.

The teams reach out into their local communities to support families and give children the very best start in life.

But anyone is welcome to pop into their local centre and take part in one of the dozens of activities featured on this pull out and keep special feature.

Children's centres provide a range of services including:

- childcare and children's learning and development
- health services
- family support
- specialist support for children with additional needs
- outreach workers
- information for parents
- activities to help parents and carers get back to work.

Each children's centre also delivers additional services tailored to meet local needs. There are even opportunities to volunteer and learn new skills that could lead to qualifications, a job or career change.

Contact details are included with each centre's calendar.



## CHILDREN'S CENTRES IN THE CENTRE OF THE CITY

### Kingsland

01782 238352

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Eaves Lane, Bucknall, Stoke-on-Trent ST2 9AS

<b>MONDAY</b> Time 4 You* 12:30-2:30pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> Breastfeeding Café 10:30-12:30pm Messy Monsters Craft 1-2:30pm
<b>TUESDAY</b> Midwife Clinic (Booking) All Day Baby Weighing Clinic 9-10:30am Babbling Babies/Growing Together 10:30-11:30am Staying Connected* 12:30-2:30pm (Limited crèche places)	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Toy Library (By request) Sensory Room (Booking only) Speech and Language Support* Play and Learning in the Home* Kingsland Kindergarten (Day Care) Volunteering Programme
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Parent Forum 9:30-11:30am (28 Mar, 25 April) Cook and Eat 9:30-11:30am (Referral only) New Birth Registration Drop-In (28 Mar, 25 April, Trent Vale Health Centre) 10-12pm Transition Group* 1-3pm Health Visitor Drop-In (First Wed of every month, 0-5yrs) 3-4pm	



### Penkull

01782 236333

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Greatbatch Avenue, Penkull, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 7JU

<b>MONDAY</b> Stay and Play (PICL, 2-5yrs) 9:30-11am Growing Together 1:15-2:45pm (Baby Stay and Play for 0-12mths) Midwife Clinic (Booking) All Day	<b>THURSDAY</b> Health Visitor Drop-In 9:30-11am New Birth Registration Drop-In (29 Mar, 26 April) 9:30-11am Stay & Play (St John's Centre, Trent Vale, 0-5yrs term time only) 10-12pm Midwife Clinic (Booking) All Day
<b>TUESDAY</b> Triple P (Appointment only) 9:30-11:30am Breastfeeding Café 10:30-12pm Stay & Play (PICL, 1-2yrs) 1:15-2:45pm Midwife Clinic (Booking) All Day	<b>FRIDAY</b> Singing Sunflowers 9:30-10am & (0-5yrs, Stoke Library) 10:15-10:45am New Birth Registration Drop-In (30 Mar, 27 April) 11-1pm Tiny Talkers* 1-2pm
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Parent Forum 9:30-11:30am (28 Mar, 25 April) Cook and Eat 9:30-11:30am (Referral only) New Birth Registration Drop-In (28 Mar, 25 April, Trent Vale Health Centre) 10-12pm Transition Group* 1-3pm Health Visitor Drop-In (First Wed of every month, 0-5yrs) 3-4pm	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Toy Library Sensory Room (By request) Speech and Language Support* Play and Learning in the Home* Family Support in the Home* Volunteering Programme

### Thomas Boughey

01782 237100

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
College Road, Shelton, Stoke on Trent ST4 2DQ

<b>MONDAY</b> ESOL 9:30-11:30am (English Speaking for Other Languages) EYFS Crèche* 12:30-2:30pm Ready Steady Learn 12:30-2:30pm (Transition based group)	<b>THURSDAY</b> Dove Service* 9-11am Health Visitor and Baby Weighing Group (Drop-in Session) 1:30-2:45pm Chill and Chat Drop-In 9:30-11:30am (Limited Crèche places, must be booked)
<b>TUESDAY</b> Observation and Assessment Crèche 12:30-2:30pm Baby Stay and Play (PICL, 0-2yrs) 1:15-2:45pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> Baby Massage (Booking) 10-11am Fun to Talk - Speech and Language (2yrs plus) 10-11:30am Crèche/Behaviour Management Crèche* 12:30-2:30pm
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Little Stars* 9:30-11:30am (Additional Needs Group)	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Speech and Language Support* Play and Learning in the Home* Family Support in the Home* Volunteering Programme
<b>THURSDAY</b> Stay and Play (PICL) (2-5yrs, held at The Shelton Centre) 1-3pm Parent Time 9:30-11:30am (21 Mar, 25 April)	



## CHILDREN'S CENTRES IN THE SOUTH OF THE CITY

### Blurton

01782 231815

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Oakwood Road, Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 3AR

<b>MONDAY</b> Midwife Clinic 9-1pm Jo Jingles (1-5yrs, £2 per family, term time, book at reception) 11:15-12:00pm Growing Together (0-5yrs, book at reception) 1-2:30pm	<b>THURSDAY</b> Growing Together 9:30-11am (0-5yrs, book at reception) Start Up Literacy 12:30-2:30pm Baby Massage 1:30-2:30pm (Book at reception)
<b>TUESDAY</b> Baby Clinic 9:30-10:30am (Hollybush Community Centre) Play Together Group 9:30-11:30am (Book at reception) Baby Club 10-11am	<b>FRIDAY</b> Growing Together 9:30-11am (0-5yrs, book at reception) Baby Signing 1:30-2:30pm (Book at reception) Growing Together (Newstead Primary School, term time only) 1:30-3pm Birth Prep (book with Midwife, first Friday of the month)
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Midwife Clinic 9-11am Job Club 9:30-11am (Hollybush Community Centre) Baby Jabadoo 9:30-11am Blurton Children's Centre 11-12pm Blurton Health Centre 1:30-3:30pm Start Up Numeracy 12:30-2:30pm Parent Forum (fortnightly) 1-2:30pm	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Indoor and Outdoor Playspace (open Monday to Friday) Baby Massage (one to one sessions) Volunteering Programme Sensory Room

### The Crescent

01782 596421

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Pinewood Crescent, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 6HZ

<b>MONDAY</b> Crèche Training, Parent Forum, Volunteering and Respite 9-11:30am Jo Jingles (£2, book) 10-10:45am Parent Forum 9:45-11:30am Baby Jabadoo (0-First steps) 1-2:30pm	<b>THURSDAY</b> Midwife Clinic 9-1pm Crèche Training, Volunteering and Respite 9-11:30am & 12:30-3pm Child Health Clinic 9-11am (Weston Heights Community Centre) Numeracy 9:30-11:30am Literacy 12:30-2:30pm
<b>TUESDAY</b> Midwife Clinic 9-1pm Child Health Clinic 9:15-11:30am Busybodies 9:30-10:15am (Meir Park Playgroup) Play Together (0-5yrs) 9:30-10:45am 10:45-12:15pm Baby Club 10-11:30am	<b>FRIDAY</b> Crèche Training, Keep Fit, Volunteering & Respite 9-11:30am Fitness/Zumba 9:45-10:45am (Book at reception) Growing Together 0-5yrs 1-2:30pm
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Midwife Clinic 9-1pm Crèche Training, Volunteering and Respite 9-11:30am Triple P 9:30-11:30am Growing Together (0-5yrs) 1-2:30pm	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Cook and Eat Volunteering Programme



### Fenton

01782 237650

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Travers Court, Temple Street, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4NR

<b>MONDAY</b> Health Visitor Drop-In 9:30-11am Cook & Eat (7wk course) 9:30-11:30am Zumba Fitness Class (£3.50) 10-11am (Term time only) Fenton Book Buddies (30 April) 11-12:30pm Growing Together (0-5yrs) 1-2:30pm	<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Breastfeeding Café 10:30-12:00pm First Aid Course (5wk course) 1-3pm (18 April) THURSDAY Outreach Drop-In (Clarice Cliff Primary School, 0-5yrs) 9:15-11am Jabadoo (0-Walking) 10-11:30am Coffee Morning Drop-In 9:30-11:30am (19 April)
<b>TUESDAY</b> Play Together (0-5yrs) 9:30-11:30am Baby Massage 9:30-10:30am (17 April, 5wk course, 0-6mths)	<b>FRIDAY</b> Parent Forum (20 April) 9:30-11:30am SATURDAY Dads Morning (31 Mar, 5 May) 10-12pm
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Toy and Book Library Community Garden Play and Learning Home Visits Sensory Room (book at reception) Volunteering Programme	



### The Grange

01782 233775

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Normacot Grange Road, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 7AW

<b>MONDAY</b> Play Together (0-5yrs) 9:15-11:15am Midwife Clinic 9:30-2pm Cook & Eat 12:30-2:30pm (6wks, crèche available, limited places, book 01782 596421)	<b>FRIDAY</b> Baby Jabadoo 0-First steps 9:30-11am Growing Together (0-5yrs) 1-2:30pm
<b>TUESDAY</b> Midwife Clinic 9:30-1pm Busybodies 9:30-10:15am (Meir Park Playgroup) Baby Massage 1-2:30pm (0-12mths, 5wks, book 01782 233775)	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Crèche Baby Club
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Growing Together (0-5yrs) 9:30-11am	
<b>THURSDAY</b> Jo Jingles 10-10:45am (£2 per family, book call 01782 233775) Baby Club 11-12:00pm Little Sunshine's Group (0-5yrs, Drop-In) 1-2:30pm Child Health Clinic 1:15-2:45pm	



### Hanford

01782 234024

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Jubilee Road, Trentham ST4 8EF

<b>MONDAY</b> Priority Playgroup 9:15-11:30am (Term time only) Baby Jabadoo 0-First steps 12:30-2pm	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Outdoor Play Area Volunteering Programme
<b>TUESDAY</b> Growing Together (0-5yrs) 9:30-11am	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Crèche for Training and Parent Forum 9:30-11am Parent Forum 9:30-11am Pandas Group (0-5yrs) 12-2:30pm	
<b>THURSDAY</b> Growing Together (0-5yrs) 1-3pm	
<b>FRIDAY</b> Play Together 9:30-11am	




### Treehouse

01782 233670

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Dawlish Drive, Bentilee, Stoke-on-Trent ST2 0HW

<b>MONDAY</b> Playspace and Café 9:30-4pm Midwife Clinic 9-3:30pm Baby Jabadoo (0-First Steps) 1-2:30pm	<b>THURSDAY</b> Playspace and Café 9:30-4pm Midwife Clinic 9-3:30pm Fitness Group 10-11am Start-Up Drop-In Smile 10-Noon (28 April)
<b>TUESDAY</b> Playspace and Café 9:30-4pm Growing Together 9:30-11am Speech and Language Therapy 9-4pm Health Visitor Drop-In 9:30-11am	<b>FRIDAY</b> Playspace and Café 9:30-4pm Moss Green Growing Together (Riverside Housing Office) 9:30-11am Midwife Clinic 9-3:30pm STAR Project 10-2pm Play Together 1-2:30pm Antenatal Group 1-2:30pm
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Speech and Language Therapy 9-1pm Parent's Forum 9:30-11:30am Job Centre Plus 9:30-2pm Midwife Clinic 9-3:30pm Baby Massage 1-2:30pm (0-12mths, book at reception) Walking Group 1:15-2:15pm	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Crèche (Mon, Wed, Thur) PACT Drop-In Session 12 April 2:30-3:30pm 19 April 2-3pm Updated Sensory Room Volunteering Programme Early Intervention Team Training and Employment Support

### Westfield

01782 237500

A Sure Start Children's Centre  
Buccleuch Road, Normacot, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 4RF

<b>MONDAY</b> Play Together 9:30-11:30am Job Club 10:30-12pm Twins and More Siblings 10:30-12pm Start-Up Course 12:45-2:45pm	<b>FRIDAY</b> Playspace and Café 9:30-11:30am Parent Forum 9:30-11:30am 20 April Baby Massage (0-12mths) 10-12pm Growing Together 1-2:30pm
<b>TUESDAY</b> ESOL 9:30-11:30am Post Natal/New Baby 10-11am (0-5mths) Busybodies 11:30-12:15pm Baby Clinic 4:30-6pm (First Tue of every month, please book)	<b>OTHER SERVICES</b> Soft Play Area 8:30-5pm Café (Mon, Thur, Fri) 11-3pm Asian Ladies Advice Group Drop-In (£1 per family) 5-10, 19, 24 April 11:30-1:30pm Midwife Clinic Play and Learning Home Visits (Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri) Crèche Training, Volunteering and respite PACT Drop-In Session 12 April 2:30-3:30pm 19 April 2-3pm Updated Sensory Room Volunteering Programme Early Intervention Team Training and Employment Support
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Speech & Language Therapy 9:30pm Cook & Eat (book) 9:30-11:30pm Development Checks 9:30-11pm Play and Sing Together 1-2:30pm	<b>THURSDAY</b> ESOL 9:30-11:30am Breastfeeding Café 10:30-12pm Baby Jabadoo (0-First steps) 1-2:30pm Baby Clinic 1-3pm

\* Referral Only. PICL - Parents Involved in Children's Learning.

\* Appointments Only.



## Children's Centre UPDATE

Children's Centres in Stoke-on-Trent are having a massive impact on the lives of the families they engage with. Here, *Our City* talks to parents and volunteers about their experiences.

# Free entitlement to nursery care helps two-year-olds into stimulating learning

CONCERNED about his son Ryan's delayed development, Anthony Giorgino asked about free entitlement to early years learning when he first took his two-year-old along to Kingsland Children's Centre.

Staff helped Anthony apply for two year funding, which is designed to close the learning gaps for disadvantaged families, and his son was soon enjoying stimulating sessions two and a half days a week. Dad-of-two Anthony, 27, who lives with his partner, said: "I have a cousin who used

to go to Kingsland who mentioned the funding.

"I thought Ryan needed a bit of help with his speech and language, potty training and with his concentration so I asked about it. Ryan was shy at first but soon settled in and he's improving all the time.

"He stayed on two-year funding from August 2011 to January this year. He's moved on to three-year funding now so it's slightly more intensive learning. He's progressing and using more words.

"It's been brilliant and we couldn't be happier. I'm 100 per cent thankful and very pleased."

Families eligible for two-year funding can access early learning designed to enhance later life chances. Three and four-year olds can also access funding which pays for 15 hours a week at a suitable children's centre or nursery.

The three-year funding is universal and can be accessed by all three year olds. Children's Centres and the Family Information Service (FIS) support families to access suitable, quality services best suited to their children's needs.

● **For more information, contact your local Children's Centre or call FIS on free phone 0800 015 1120, 01782 232200, email [fis@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:fis@stoke.gov.uk) or go to [www.stokefis.co.uk](http://www.stokefis.co.uk)**

# Volunteers chip in to help community

## Supporters of charity

CHARITY events and initiatives at Stoke-on-Trent children's centres are helping parents, supporters and children develop their social conscience.

Staff and parents in the North Locality are busy knitting and crocheting eight-inch squares for the benefit of orphans and abandoned children in South Africa. The squares will be sent to charity KasCare who have volunteers on standby to turn hundreds of thousands of squares into 5,000 blankets, 5,000 hats and 2,000 knitted garments.

At The Crescent Children's Centre, over 200 people attended the Celebrate Life fundraiser in memory of foster carer Jane Salmon who lost her long battle with cancer last year. More than £1,000 was donated to the University Hospital of North Staffordshire's cancer unit.

Children's Centre Community Development Officer Caz Gotham said: "The event was a massive success and we were supported by several businesses, who were very generous.

"We are talking about other fundraisers this year but haven't decided what to do yet. It would have to be something very close to the children's centres hearts."

## VOLUNTEERS at The Crescent Children's Centre in Meir are helping the community grow in more ways than one.

Pensioner Fred Rushton is the driving force behind the centre's allotments and community garden while mum-of-one Kathie Powell spends at least three days a week supporting other parents through her work with groups and in the Healthy Café.

Former lorry driver Fred, 69, formed a committee four years ago to apply for funding so mums and dads could grow vegetables and flowers on the site. They now have a greenhouse and have built a poly-tunnel with support from NHS Stoke on Trent PCT's My Health Matters project.

Fred said: "My osteoarthritis stops me doing as

much these days so I project lead and pass on my skills to other volunteers. It keeps the brain ticking over.

"We have about 10 children and some teachers from Sandon Business, Enterprise and Arts College down every couple of weeks to help and we sell our produce. Some of our volunteers have gone on to get jobs and training because of the work they've done, which is very satisfying.

"We're always on the look out for more volunteers, so I'd encourage anyone to get involved. It's great fun and a good way of keeping fit, a bit like a green gym."

Kathie Powell, 45, first attended The Crescent with her daughter Keirra, who is now seven. With several courses under her belt and a little girl who loved 'Stay and Play' sessions, Kathie decided it was time to give something back.

She said: "That was about four years ago and I asked how I could help. I'm now qualified to co-run Cook and Eat sessions, I help clear up in the café and cook breakfast for the Dads2 group once a month. I've also contributed to the Parents Forum and help out with community events. It's loads of fun and I love it. I wasn't very talkative when I first started but I'm much more confident now. It's really satisfying helping others."

Volunteering provides valuable

work experience to those looking for jobs and can also help improve confidence.

Opportunities exist across a wide range of disciplines from 'Stay and Play' groups and the crèche to community development teams and toy libraries.



Phil Cartlidge, main picture, and, inset, Fred Rushton, at work in the Crescent allotment.



Kathie Powell volunteering in the Crescent cafe.

# JUSTICE SEEN JUSTICE DONE

**Our City reports back on convictions secured to make Stoke-on-Trent safer for us all...**

This column keeps Stoke-on-Trent's communities updated about criminals aged 18 or more who have been jailed for six months or more at crown court.

The offenders featured may well have had a direct impact on the quality of life where you or they live.

The council, police, Crown Prosecution Service, courts and Youth Offending Services believe it is important that the public are reassured that the criminal justice system is working effectively on their behalf throughout the city.

**CHRISTOPHER FLETCHER (AGED 34)**

**ADDRESS:** Stoke-on-Trent.

**OFFENCE:** Possess with intent to supply Class A drug – heroin.

**SENTENCE:** 3 years' 3 months' imprisonment. Sentenced at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court.



**PAUL WOODCOCK (AGED 37)**

**ADDRESS:** Stoke-on-Trent.

**OFFENCE:** Assault and possess offensive weapon.

**SENTENCE:** 12 months' imprisonment. Sentenced at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court.



**HUU NGUYEN (AGED 31)**

**ADDRESS:** Stoke-on-Trent.

**OFFENCE:** Production of Class B controlled drug – Cannabis.

**SENTENCE:** 14 months' imprisonment. Sentenced at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court.



**ANDREW COOPER (AGED 43)**

**ADDRESS:** Stoke-on-Trent.

**OFFENCE:** Aggravated vehicle taking and production of Class B controlled drug, Cannabis.

**SENTENCE:** 21 months' imprisonment. Sentenced at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court.



**PAUL PRICE (AGED 27)**

**ADDRESS:** Stoke-on-Trent.

**OFFENCE:** Robbery.

**SENTENCE:** 8 years' imprisonment. Sentenced at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court.



**GRAHAM PRICE (AGED 24)**

**ADDRESS:** Stoke-on-Trent.

**OFFENCE:** Robbery.

**SENTENCE:** 8 years' imprisonment. Sentenced at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court.



**SMART WORK:** Sergeant Paul Cook, right, and PC Peter Clarke spray property with a forensic marking product which is only visible in ultraviolet light.



**YOU'RE NICKED;** The words are spelt out in the "smart" light liquid and revealed in UV light.



**SHINE A LIGHT;** One of the UV light tubes in the special tunnels.

# Special light exposes burglars and thieves

**SPECIALIST** Ultraviolet (UV) light tunnels are being installed by Staffordshire Police to help identify stolen goods and clamp down on burglars and thieves.

The walk-through tunnels are set up to detect forensic property marking products – colourless "smart" liquids which are invisible to the naked eye but glow brightly under UV conditions.

And because each batch contains a chemical code that is as unique as DNA, items marked with them can be quickly identified and reunited with the rightful owner.

Businesses can also install forensic marking sprinkler systems that "tag" intruders with the invisible, forensic liquid, helping to generate evidence connecting a suspect to a specific location.

Police officers are encouraging residents and

businesses to not only use the forensic marking solutions to identify valuable property but also to promote its use, through posters and stickers, to deter burglaries and thefts.

Superintendent Juliet Prince, Staffordshire Police's Lead on Forensic Property Marking, said: "This is a very effective way for people to uniquely identify valuable items, and it is acting as a powerful deterrent against crime."

"Forensic marking products can be used to mark all sorts of

property, from jewellery and ornaments to laptops, TVs and even vehicles.

"Business owners can also use it on property – for instance to deter metal theft – or install special sprinkler systems that target intruders.

"The products are not easily removed and can be used to help connect suspects to a crime many months down the line.

"Our officers are issued with UV torches, so they can make on-the-spot checks – but we are

now taking it a step further by installing the forensic marking tunnels."

One of the tunnels has been installed at the Northern Area Custody Suite at Etruria. It means any suspects or property that have been marked will be identified by simply passing through its UV light.

Superintendent Prince added: "The use of forensic property marking is a very useful tool and complements the work the force is carrying out within the community to combat theft and burglary.

"So we are encouraging people to promote the use of these products by putting up promotional posters or stickers, while continuing to take normal crime reduction measures such as looking after their property and not keeping valuables on display."

**For more details about forensic property marking log onto [staffordshire.police.uk/forensic-marking](http://staffordshire.police.uk/forensic-marking)**

## Where to buy marking kits:

THERE are many forensic marking providers and Staffordshire Police does not specifically endorse any particular product – viewing them as equally effective.

Forensic marking providers SelectaDNA, Smartwater and Red Web are accredited by Secured by Design – the UK police flagship initiative, aimed at preventing crime in homes and business premises.

**For more information visit: [www.selectadna.co.uk](http://www.selectadna.co.uk) or [www.smartwater.com](http://www.smartwater.com) or [www.redwebsecurity.com](http://www.redwebsecurity.com) or [www.crimestopperspropertyprotector.com](http://www.crimestopperspropertyprotector.com)**

## Chance to nominate unsung council heroes

AN appeal has been made to give the council's unsung heroes a chance to win one of this year's WOW Awards – the national scheme designed to raise standards of customer service. Only members of the public are allowed to nominate a member of staff they consider has gone above and beyond their normal duties to help someone.

In previous years frontline services like benefits and social care have featured in

the WOW nominations from Stoke-on-Trent. Now, however, it is hoped that people who provide other services – like waste services staff, school crossing wardens, cleaners and school meals staff – will be put forward for one of the prestigious honours.

Donna Hammersley, the council's co-ordinator for the scheme and a past WOW award winner, said: "It would be nice for the unsung heroes who provide

less high profile services to be nominated. For instance, an Australian tourist who visited the Staffordshire Hoard exhibition at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery has already nominated one of the museum's attendants for being so helpful."

To make a nomination collect a form from the reception area of any council office, email [wowawards@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:wowawards@stoke.gov.uk) or visit [stoke.gov.uk/wowawards](http://stoke.gov.uk/wowawards)

# World-class facilities at new A&E

**W**ORLD-CLASS Accident and Emergency facilities have been opened at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire.

A new state-of-the-art Emergency Centre, which will treat more than 100,000 patients each year, replaces the previous A & E squeezed into a department built 50 years ago.

With 10 consultants and more than 200 staff, the centre now has one entrance for walk-in patients and a second for ambulance cases and those brought in by helicopter.

The main treatment area has 31 cubicles, an increase of 12.

There is an eight-bed resuscitation area surrounded by a complete range of life-saving and

intensive care unit equipment. A 10-bay children's emergency area is reserved for the 30,000 under 18s who arrive every year.

For the first time, the centre has its own imaging suite with three rooms for X-ray, one for ultrasound and a fifth for CT scans.

## Simply stunning

Magnus Harrison, Clinical Lead and Consultant in Emergency Medicine, said: "The new Emergency Centre is quite simply stunning. Plans were already being made for a new unit when I arrived here seven years ago but I never dreamed we would have anything anywhere near as good as this, particularly with what we had previously at the Royal Infirmary."

"The whole specification puts it with the best nationally and internationally. Everything is

designed to improve the patients' experience and our ability to treat them better and quicker.

"There will be no more queues on trolleys or sitting on chairs in corridors waiting for an X-ray or a bone to be plastered. Patients being shuffled from place to place will be a thing of the past.

"We are trying to increase consultant numbers up to 12, compared to the three when I arrived, and we aim to have consultants walking the floor 16 hours a day and eventually 24 hours."

Trust Chief Executive Julia Bridgewater said: "This has been a dream for so many people for so many years and now we are in the most modern hospital in the country."

**WELCOME TO THE NEW A&E:** Consultant in Emergency Medicine Ann-Marie Morris, right, and Lead Nurse Mel Mountford for the Fit for Future project team outside the new unit on the former City General site.



Phlebotomist Maria Alison takes a blood sample from a walk-in patient at Bradwell Hospital

## Walk-in blood tests move out from hospital and nearer to people's homes

BLOOD tests are being carried out nearer people's homes now the University Hospital of North Staffordshire's pathology lab has closed to GP walk-in patients.

Bradwell Hospital began operating its testing service last November and is joined by the newly opened Meir Primary Care Centre and Cobridge Health Centre from 26 March.

Services, which are carried out by University Hospital staff, will be available from Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm.

Andrew Clarke, Blood Sciences

Manager at University Hospital, said: "The walk-in blood test service at our pathology lab was very popular but it was difficult for people to attend as it was located next to our very busy outpatient department.

"At Bradwell, Meir and Cobridge it is the same staff who provide the high quality service but it will be a better experience. It will also mean that people will be able to have their blood test nearer to home.

"All blood tests requested by GPs, with the exception of children, will be delivered closer to people's homes

within the community."

The new arrangements are part of the Fit for the Future programme of major changes designed to transform health services across Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire and make sure patients receive the right care, in the right place and at the right time.

Blood testing services run by some GP practices remain unchanged. The current arrangements for bookable blood test appointments in the community also remain unchanged. The telephone number to call for appointments is 01782 555506.

## Changes make it even easier to anonymously inform on criminals

CHANGES to Crimestoppers Charity now make it even easier for people in Stoke-on-Trent to pass on anonymous information that may help police bring criminals to justice.

From 1 April the independent charity is routing all 0800 555 111 calls from landline phones to its 24/7 national call centre in Surrey, which has the facility to respond in any one of 170 languages within 30 seconds

North Staffordshire is one of the few areas of the UK where calls to Crimestoppers from landlines are currently dealt with locally – although all mobile phone calls go through to the national centre – and local call handlers are unable to offer a service in so many languages.

Callers do not have to give their name or personal information and calls cannot be traced.

In addition information can be passed to Crimestoppers online at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org) while

young people aged between 11 and 16 who have concerns or know of criminal activity can visit [www.fearless.org](http://www.fearless.org) which is a website that introduces them to the concept of good citizenship.

Informants who use the website can also be confident that they remain anonymous because Crimestoppers is the only organisation in the world prevented from tracing an IP address.

### Arrested and charged

Last year Crimestoppers received over 90,000 calls and as a result more than 8,000 criminals were arrested and charged, illegal drugs worth more than £25 million were seized and £3 million worth of stolen goods were recovered.

Pauline Hadley, Crimestoppers Regional Manager, said: "We are an independent charity so callers who prefer not to contact police because they don't want to get involved or

make a statement or appear in court know they can pass information to us anonymously, and their identity cannot be found.

"Even when we pay cash rewards we use codes and banks so that callers cannot be identified.

"The changes we are making to the service will make it even easier for people in Stoke-on-Trent to use Crimestoppers and make their families and communities safer by giving us the information police need to fight crime."

Crimestoppers are appealing for volunteers with experience such as marketing, running projects, fundraising, organising events and working with the media to help promote the charity in their area.

For details visit [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org) or email [Pauline.Hadley@crimestoppers-uk.org](mailto:Pauline.Hadley@crimestoppers-uk.org)



# Seax in the CITY

**T**HE Potteries Museum & Art Gallery will host its largest-ever exhibition of the Staffordshire Hoard this summer... with some pieces going on display for the first time cleaned and fitted together.

Members of the public will be able to view more than 100 eye-catching artefacts including the reconstructed hilt of a Seax – pronounced Sax – a single-edged short sword intricately decorated with gold and jewels.

The exhibition, funded by a £40,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, will run for 13 months from 21 July and will feature up-to-date information on the latest research and findings.

The 7th Century treasure – which is the biggest and most valuable hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold ever found – has been wowing the crowds at the National Geographic Museum in Washington DC. More than 55,000 visitors went to see the Staffordshire Hoard in Washington, including people ranging from the former British Ambassador to the USA to the chart-topping singer-songwriter Kesha.

The pieces were returned to the UK earlier this month. In April and May some of the country's top archaeologists, scientists and historians will carry out further tests on the precious Dark Ages artefacts, which were unearthed in a farmer's field near Lichfield in 2009. Items on permanent display at the City Centre venue will be also be removed from the ground floor archaeology gallery during the six-week run up to this summer's exhibition.

Principal Collections Officer Deb Klemperer said: "The response in the US has been phenomenal, proving the wide appeal of the

## New details revealed as Staffordshire Hoard treasure goes on display in museum

Staffordshire Hoard. The items are now back in the UK to be checked, stabilised, photographed and studied prior to a new exhibition at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, which will be the biggest ever staged at the venue. Many new items will be on display including the Seax handle which has been carefully reconstructed after being discovered in several pieces.

"We will be updating the exhibition with information displays explaining the latest research, findings and theories about who owned the Hoard and why it was buried. For instance, one of the latest ideas that is being examined is that the Hoard may have been deliberately buried as part of an Anglo-Saxon ritual. This is an intriguing idea particularly given it happened at a time when Christianity and Paganism were clashing over hearts and minds.

"We may never know the exact reason for the Hoard's burial but certainly the Staffordshire Hoard will continue to shed light on our knowledge of the history, art, craft and culture of the Dark Ages for many years to come."

● For further information please visit [stoke.gov.uk/museum](http://stoke.gov.uk/museum)



This fascinating mystery artefact from the Staffordshire Hoard is going on display for the first time this summer. Experts believe it may be the end of an elaborate shield or an ornamental saddle mount.

## Pupils' art brightens up construction hoardings

SCHOOL pupils helped brighten up a hoarding surrounding the construction site of a multi-million pound bus station by taking part in a poster competition with a public transport theme.

Forty designs by youngsters have gone on display at the City Centre site as work continues on the £15million construction project.

Children from the winning schools were given a tour of the John Street station and the chance to see their work on display.

The drawings, selected as part of a council competition, have been unveiled along part of the 272-metre (892ft) hoarding on the John Street side of the development.

Councillor Ruth Rosenau, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, said: "The new bus station is creating a landmark design in the heart of the city centre.

"It is important that young people have been involved in the process by not only designing images to go on the hoarding, but also by having a unique glimpse of what is going on in the site behind the boards."

The new bus station represents the first phase of the £350 million City Central shopping centre. Meanwhile, councillors have given the go ahead for the second



Ten-year-old Christina Johnson, a pupil at Forest Park Primary School, with her winning design on the construction site hoardings.

stage of a multi-million pound transformation of public spaces in the City Centre. Work will start in the Autumn to improve the Albion Street and Parliament Square areas. It follows a public consultation period in which residents and visitors had their say on the latest proposals.

The work is part of a multi-million pound

refurbishment to improve the City Centre street scene, creating a more inspiring outlook for visitors to the city and a strong link with the new bus station.

Work on the previously approved first phase of the project, which focuses on Tontine Square and Percy Street, is due to start in April.

## Campaign to stop deliberate grass fire starters

STAFFORDSHIRE Fire and Rescue Service has launched its annual grass fires campaign – *Flames Aren't Games* – in preparation for the Easter holidays.

Typically, the service sees a dramatic increase in deliberately started grass fires when children are on holiday from school.

Last year, almost half of all grass fires were started during school holidays and 86 per cent of the fires were deliberately started.

April 2011 saw the most grass fires across the county, with a staggering 233 blazes reported. The fire and rescue service hopes to reduce that figure this year by educating children and parents about the dangers of starting fires deliberately.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's Head of Risk Reduction, Glynn Luznyj said: "Young people who start grass fires seem oblivious to the fact that they are endangering firefighters' lives as well as their own.

"For every grass fire we attend there could be a person trying to get out of a burning building or trapped in a car in need of our help."

**S**HOCKING cases of child sexual exploitation do occasionally hit the headlines but it remains a mostly hidden issue with victims so traumatised they never come forward. Here, **Our City** tells the story of a teenage girl who escaped the clutches of her abuser and looks at the support services that helped her do it.

# Bid to prevent child sex exploitation

**H**ELP is at hand for vulnerable and defenceless girls and boys in the Potteries who are being groomed and put at risk of sexual exploitation.

It comes as a Government action plan highlights how local authorities must improve their response and raise awareness so victims are identified and supported earlier and abusers face court.

Carole Preston, the city's Safeguarding Children Board Manager, said: "We know that resources are under huge demand but our work to set children free from sexual exploitation is a priority. We know that child sexual exploitation is not just something that happens in the bigger cities of the UK – it is happening right here in Stoke-on-Trent as Chrissie has shown by bravely agreeing to tell her story.

"The reality is that any child or young person from any social or ethnic background can be exploited. Boys and young men can be at risk as well as girls

and young women. We must all be aware and watch out for the signs so fewer children suffer the tragedy of abuse, which often leaves them deeply traumatised and scarred for life."

Experienced workers at Base 58, run by creative support, housing and employment provider Brighter Futures, offer support and advice covering a variety of potentially dangerous situations.

If you think you are at risk and want help, call Base 58 on **01782 286862** or email [info@brighter-futures.org.uk](mailto:info@brighter-futures.org.uk).

You can also call, text or leave a message on **07879 423935**. If you would prefer to talk to a woman, call **07899 923598** or you can reach a man on **07747 442726**. Calls made after 5pm will be returned the next day so leave a message.

If you would like to know more about child sexual exploitation, the signs and find more contacts for help and support, go to [www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk](http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk)



*This image is a library photograph posed by a model.*

**Are you aware that the people looking after your children should have been checked by the Criminal Records Bureau?**



**You, as a parent or carer, cannot just assume that the person working with your child has passed a CRB check!**

You will need one if you are employed in an establishment wholly or mainly for children, in healthcare, in after school clubs and other children's activities or

have applied to be a foster carer, adoptive parent or child minder.

It will cost you or your employer £44. Volunteers will get theirs free.

You and your employer will see the results of your check. Your employer will use them to decide whether they can employ you.

**To apply, contact the CRB helpline on 0870 9090 811 or go to [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) and follow the employment links.**

## The signs that indicated Chrissie, 13, was in a relationship with a man

**CHRISIE** was just 13 when fears grew that a 34-year-old friend of her dad was grooming her for sex.

She was seen at his flat at all times of the night and day and always seemed to have money and gifts like make up, clothes and a mobile phone. She was often reported missing as she stayed away from home for days at a time without talking to anyone from her family.

Her school attendance was poor because she was being bullied and she had no friends her own age. She denied being in a relationship with the man but the alarm bells were ringing.

Children and Young People's Services at Stoke-on-Trent City Council intervened and referred Chrissie, not her real name, to Base 58 – a specialised support service run by local charity Brighter Futures for at-risk boys, girls and young people.

A Base 58 worker helped her through a six-week sexual exploitation workshop designed to help her stay safe and improve her self-esteem. She was also given advice about sexual health, alcohol and drugs.

She denied contact with the 34-year-old man but admitted he visited a family friend at the same time she was there with her father. As she moved into temporary foster care, police took action against the man when more information surfaced.

Now 15 and back home, Chrissie is fully aware of the risks and legalities of being in a relationship with an older man. Her school attendance is now almost 100 per cent. She will soon be ready to leave the Base 58 programme but will receive follow up support from school-based mentors and continued social care support for the foreseeable future.

## Look when you cook! Why care in the kitchen is a recipe to prevent blazes

A "Look When You Cook" campaign has been launched by Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service to encourage safety in the kitchen - where over half of all house fires start.

Two hard-hitting posters - one showing a man asleep on his sofa

clutching a bottle of beer while a pan burns in the background and the other showing a busy mum on the phone being distracted by her daughter whilst a pan is on fire in the kitchen - have been distributed to Sainsbury's supermarkets.

The posters bear the message: "Look when you cook! Watch your pan!"

Last year Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service dealt with 376 kitchen fires - 92 of them in Stoke-on-Trent - which resulted in 46 casualties and seven

people had to be rescued. Head of Risk Reduction Glynn Luznyj said: "Taking the simplest precautions can prevent a cooking fire."

"For instance if you need to leave the room, turn off the appliance until you return or wait until you've finished cooking before leaving the room. The few minutes you're gone could result in a destroyed home."

● To arrange a free home fire safety check call freephone 0800 0241 999.



Community Safety Officer Pete Hall shows Cobridge resident Olwyn Douglas how to keep appliances safe in the kitchen.

# Charter accolade for city's **councillor training**

**C**OUNCILLOR training and support services at the council have won a prestigious regional award.

The West Midlands Member Development Charter Full Award recognises the council's approach to helping elected members achieve high standards while representing the electorate.

The council's Councillor and Civic Support Team provide a universal service of learning and development opportunities, which can lead to formal qualifications. Personal development plans are worked out with councillors who are supported to visit outside organisations and can shadow council officers. The team gives assistance, advice and operates a new casework system to help councillors better answer ward queries.

Michaleen Hilton, the Councillor and Civic

Support Manager, said: "Councillors are given a wide range of learning opportunities within tight financial constraints. It is paramount that the council provides effective training, development and support."

### Testament to hard work

"The Member Services Division encourage all councillors to take full advantage of the assistance on offer to help them increase their knowledge, capacity and expertise when making decisions, representing their area and being the city's representative on outside organisations."

Council Leader Councillor Mohammed Pervez said: "This member-led award is a testament to the hard work I know goes on by our city's elected members, ensuring that the lives of people in the city are made better."

"It is important to give councillors the right

tools to do their job. This enables them to inspire their constituents and ultimately deliver services for the public.

"It is another step on our journey to becoming an effective and confident council and making Stoke-on-Trent a great place to live and work as outlined in our Mandate for Change."

Councillor Randolph Conteh, ward member for Penkhull and Stoke and Chair of the Member Services Working Group, said: "The members' working group has worked collectively and non-politically with officers and councillors to improve member development."

"This is not about trophy hunting. Quite simply, the purpose of the West Midlands Charter is to improve performance of local authorities, through the development of its elected members."

## New services for visitors to the Crem

NEW facilities have been opened to look after visitors to Carmountside Cemetery and Crematorium.

A cafe and waiting room were officially opened by Lord Mayor Councillor Terry Follows.

Light snacks, drinks, breakfast and afternoon tea are now served seven days a week in the refurbished community building.

Improvements also include a quiet room, community police post, conservatory and decking area. The waiting room offers live video streaming of funeral services taking place in the chapel. There is also the facility for families and friends who cannot attend the crematorium to watch services over the internet either live or at a later date.

**For further details please contact Aileen Harvey at the Bereavement Care Office on 01782 235050 or email [bereavement.care@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:bereavement.care@stoke.gov.uk)**

## Spring clean recycling call

RESIDENTS planning a spring clear out are being urged to recycle as much of their rubbish as possible.

They can use their blue or brown bins and green boxes or visit the recycling centres at Burslem or Hanford which are open every day.

This could help reduce around 95 complaints received by the council each month about untidy yards and gardens.

Small electrical items like kettles and irons are classed as hazardous waste and should not be placed in bins.

A bulky collection service for larger items can be booked by calling 01782 234234.

## Bilingual pre-school sessions are a hit with Polish mums

RHYMETIME Sessions at Bentilee Library are hitting the right note with Polish mums and their young children. The weekly sessions for pre-school youngsters and their parents or carers have been held for some time, but numbers swelled as word about the fun and educational activities spread among the area's Polish community.

The half-hour sessions use songs, musical instruments, movement and other group activities to help children develop their confidence, creativity, co-ordination and social skills. Bentilee Library Manager Vicky Embrey said: "At first just a handful of Polish ladies and their young ones started to come to the sessions, but over the months we



Reading a Polish/English storybook at one of the bilingual Rhymetime Sessions at Bentilee Library are Lidia Inglot, left, and her son Oscar, aged two, and Daria Dziuba and her two-year-old daughter Julia.

saw quite a few others. Now there are around 15 Polish ladies who come to the Rhymetime Sessions, although they don't all attend on the same weeks.

"The mums and children chatter to each other in Polish but they enjoy joining in the activities which are conducted in English, and some have told me they enjoy the

sessions because they help to improve their English as well as the development of their children."

Rhymetime Sessions are held at Bentilee Library on Fridays at 11am.



# Top team prove small is beautiful

**THE efforts of a small group of workers who help young people to overcome drug and alcohol misuse have been recognised with an award.**

The T3-Stoke Young People's Drug and Alcohol Team received the Small is Beautiful accolade at the annual conference of CRI, the national charity which manages the project in the city as well as young people's services across England and Wales.

The prestigious award was given for the best performing small team in the North and Midlands. As a team of four case workers and a manager with access to an additional psychiatrist and administration support, the T3-Stoke team is indeed small.

However, it has proved effective in working with the causes and effects of substance misuse on young people under the age of 19 living in Stoke-on-Trent.

T3 is commissioned by the Safer City Partnership to meet goals agreed with young people with regard to controlling their drug and alcohol problems, reducing harm and engaging in a more positive lifestyle.

The service is financed on a payment by results basis and is required to produce data and audited evidence of its achievements.

Young people referred to T3 meet an outreach worker at a time and venue of their choice so they can talk comfortably and confidentially. Referrals can be made directly by young people and their carers by texting 07507 411 733 or phoning 01782 221090.



Agencies refer a young person by using the young people's drug and alcohol screening tool available by emailing [stoke.t3@cri.org.uk](mailto:stoke.t3@cri.org.uk) which also provides access to evaluation and feedback forms.

The service also offers a peer mentoring programme, providing young people with opportunities to develop and involve themselves within the service.

Rosie Greaves, CRI Team Manager for T3-Stoke, said: "The service aims to work with other agencies and professionals across the city for the benefit of the young person."



**A WINNING LINE-UP:** The T3-Stoke Young People's Drug and Alcohol Team, back row left to right, Vicky Gould, Team Manager Rosie Greaves, Ben Richardson, Team Administrator Becky Welsh and, front row left to right, Diane Harper and Debbie Jones, who is also pictured, inset left, counselling.

## New alcohol restriction zones in force at Tunstall



A Designated Public Place Order (DPPO), sometimes known as an Alcohol Restriction Zone, was granted on 28 February 2012 by the council's Licensing and General Purposes Committee for parts of the Tunstall, Goldenhill and Sandyford and Little Chell and Stanfield Wards.

The Safer City Partnership, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire Police worked closely with the Tunstall Chamber of Trade after concerns were raised that people consuming alcohol in public places was affecting the trade in the town.

The consultation with the local community included a notice in the local paper, letters to each address and licensed premises within the proposed zone and the opportunity to attend three different consultation events held in Tunstall. The Safer City Partnership received 101 responses to the consultation, the majority in support.

The DPPO gives police officers additional powers to confiscate alcohol or ask people to stop drinking in public open spaces; if they refuse they may be arrested. The new zone is bordered by and including: High Street, Furlong Road, Victoria Park Road, Little Chell Lane, Sunnyside Avenue, Green Bank Road, Thornley Road, Sherwin Road, Scotia Road, Pinnox Street, Hand Street, Railway Street, Gibson Street, Brownhills Road, Connaught Street, Harewood Street, Watergate Street, Chatterley Road, Reginald Mitchell Way. The Order includes areas such as Tower Square, the Memorial Gardens, Tunstall Greenway, Tunstall Park and Tunstall Cemetery.

The zone will be identified by warning notices displayed on street signs throughout the affected area.

# Workshops to educate parents

A series of workshops are being held in the city to educate parents and provide them with information about drugs and alcohol.

The aim is to provide parents and carers with the latest and most accurate information about substance misuse, local drug and alcohol services and how to discuss the subject with their children.

Launched 12 months ago, the Drug and Alcohol Parenting Workshops have been designed to cater for all parents.

They are usually held in local primary and secondary schools and are delivered by the city's Integrated Young People's Drug Project in connection with Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Education Advisors who are all funded by Stoke-on-Trent's Safer City Partnership.

Each of the one-off workshop sessions lasts around two hours and are free of charge. Parents who attend can be sure of complete confidentiality as well as a relaxed and informal setting.

Parents are advised on the risks and effects of substance misuse, how to spot signs that their children may have used drugs and/or alcohol and how to cope with young people who are under the influence.

Project Leader Gemma Newitt said: "The workshops help parents to talk about drug and alcohol issues with their



**EDUCATING PARENTS:** Family Worker Natalie Harp, left, Hidden Harm Team Leader Gemma Newitt and Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco Education Advisor Mike Coll with some of the literature at their workshops.

children and open up channels of communication and equip mums and dads with the skills and knowledge needed to assist their children.

"This is a useful service for parents whose children have not experienced problems but who may be concerned about how they would cope if confronted with this situation."

Gemma added: "The workshops also

help to dispel popular myths about drugs and alcohol, and since it was started the project has received a lot of positive feedback from families who have attended."

**For information about the Drug and Alcohol Parenting Workshop contact Gemma Newitt or Family Worker Natalie Harp on 01782 234195.**



# Invaluable support transforms lives

The comfortable lounge at Chepstow House where informal classes are held as well as being a place where the customers can go to relax.



**F**REE, invaluable support is helping to transform the lives of hundreds of women who have been affected by crime.

Chepstow House provides expert help to women living in Stoke-on-Trent or North Staffordshire who are at risk of offending or re-offending.

The service, which is delivered by the Brighter Futures charity, and is funded by the Safer City Partnership and the National Offender Management Service, is based in the city centre.

It provides support in a range of areas including accommodation, finance, drug and alcohol misuse, health, families and education.

There is also help with training and employment, self-esteem,



confidence, abuse and domestic violence.

As well as the dedicated support, one of the aims of Chepstow House is to reduce the cost to the tax payer by cutting the number of women in prisons and the associated costs of this.

According to last year's Counting Cost Report compiled for the Revolving Doors charity, the cost of one female prison space for one month is £3,423 and when children go into social care it costs £2,929 per child.

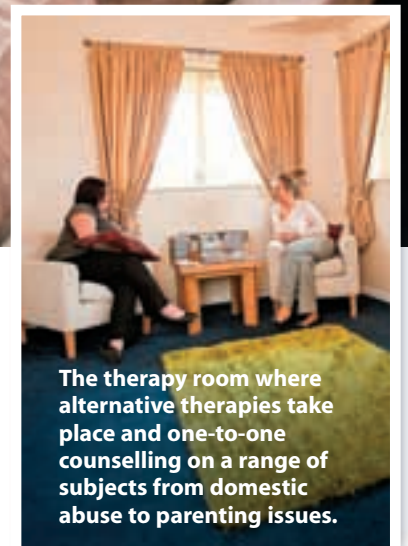
By comparison the cost for women to attend Chepstow House

to receive a range of rehabilitative support is on average £184 per month.

Chepstow House Operational Manager Emma Stazaker said: "Women are helped to draw up personal action plans, tailored to their needs and circumstances and aspirations.

"A wide variety of people are

supported including women coming out of prison and those in contact with the police or probation service. We work with a number of organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Gingerbread and the CRI drug treatment programme, to provide the expertise that is needed."



The therapy room where alternative therapies take place and one-to-one counselling on a range of subjects from domestic abuse to parenting issues.



The arts and crafts group at Chepstow House helps the customers learn new skills while meeting new people.

Chepstow House Operational Manager **EMMA STAZAKER** looks at the all-encompassing support given to one woman leaving prison and trying to start a new life while battling addiction and other issues...

## After leaving prison Louise was able to beat her drug and alcohol addictions

**LOUISE** first came into contact with support from Chepstow House while serving a custodial sentence for assault. She suffered from drug and alcohol addiction and was receiving treatment for it in prison.

After she was released on tag we supported her to continue her treatment programmes, to register with a GP and to keep her appointments with her Probation Officer.

Through the service, the Citizens Advice Bureau helped her to establish her benefit claim and put a payment plan in place to

tackle her debts. Meanwhile, Adsis and CRI continued her alcohol and drug treatment. She also joined our arts and crafts group, which helped her to meet new people while learning new skills.

She met a new partner and soon after, when she discovered she was pregnant, Chepstow House continued to support her.

She also stopped drinking and continued to stick to her drug treatment programme.

After giving birth to her daughter, Louise attended parenting classes at Chepstow House to learn practical skills and support

regarding being a new mum. Our Gingerbread Family Support Worker worked closely with her to support her while she developed and practised her new parenting skills.

Unfortunately, soon after the birth of her daughter, Louise's partner became violent towards her. So, we helped Louise to find and move into a new home where we arranged for extra security devices to be fitted for their protection.

Louise and her daughter are both doing well and we will continue to help and support them.



# Feeling the Difference

## Dealing with what matters to you in Stoke-on-Trent



**Chief Superintendent Bernie O'Reilly**  
Telephone number: 101  
bernard.o'reilly@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

**WE** conduct our 'Feeling the Difference' survey twice a year to get your feedback on local policing and other services. Many hundreds of people have already been surveyed in your area.

Below are the top three things

that you tell us through 'Feeling the Difference' would reassure you that we are dealing with what matters in your area.

We have also included some examples of what we have been doing so far.

I hope you find this information useful. I would like to thank you for taking part in 'Feeling the Difference'.

Your feedback will help us in our work to keep our communities safe and reassured.

### Your Local Police Commanders and Police Authority Members:



**Superintendent Laurie Whitby-Smith**  
Tel: 101  
Email: laurence.whitby\_smith@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk



**SOT North**  
**Chief Inspector Adrian Roberts**  
Tel: 101  
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**SOT Central**  
**Chief Inspector Jeff Moore**  
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**SOT South**  
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## You said, we did...

These are the top three things you want us to focus on, and what we're doing about them. You've told us you want us to:

### UNDERSTAND WHAT MATTERS TO YOUR COMMUNITY

- We have engaged 2,506 citizens in your area in one-to-one discussions about what matters to them.
- We have held 785 public meetings in Stoke-on-Trent to seek your views.
- Since June 2010, we have involved 1,000 people in your area in our 'Feeling the Difference' survey.

### DEAL WITH MINOR CRIME

- We have achieved a 18.8% (2,720 reports) reduction in anti-social behaviour compared with the same period last year
- We have achieved a reduction in overall crime of 5% (1,180 crimes) in Stoke-on-Trent compared with the same period last year
- We have achieved overall service satisfaction rates of 89.9% for victims of crime, and 87.3% for victims of anti-social behaviour.

### BE THERE WHEN YOU NEED US

- We have attended 89% of incidents requiring an immediate response in your area within our target time of 15 minutes in urban areas and 20 minutes in rural areas.

\* Figures are for 1 February 2011 to 31 January 2012 inclusive, unless otherwise stated.



**Joy Garner**  
Police Authority Member for Stoke-on-Trent North  
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**Hifsa Haroon-Iqbal**  
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**Peter Vigurs**  
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Tel: 01782 658716



**Peter Hayward**  
Police Authority Member for Stoke-on-Trent South  
Tel: 01782 644052

## Putting you at the heart of what we do

**FEEDBACK** from members of the public about how we're doing is vital to help us keep our communities safe and reassured – which is why we'd like to invite you to join our Citizens' Panel and/or one of our associated panels for specific community groups (see our website for more details on these).

By giving us your valuable time and completing several short questionnaires in a year, you could help to shape how your neighbourhood is policed.

In return we'll keep you updated with personal newsletters, detailing how we've responded to what you've told us, and keep you informed about major developments throughout the year.

To join, visit our website at [www.staffordshire.police.uk/information\\_zone/citizen/](http://www.staffordshire.police.uk/information_zone/citizen/) or contact Natalie Wilford, Citizens' Panel Co-ordinator, via the contact options below:  
Tel: 01785 232284.  
Email: [natalie.wilford@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:natalie.wilford@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk)

## Follow us on Twitter and be a fan on Facebook

YOU can now receive frequent updates about policing in your community, and in Staffordshire as a whole, through social networking sites Twitter and Facebook.

As well as getting updates about police events and initiatives, you can comment and leave feedback on a discussion board. Simply:

- follow us on Twitter@StaffsPolice

- become a fan on Facebook
- As well as our main Facebook and Twitter sites, you can view our local pages, which allow beat officers and PCSOs to provide information relevant to specific neighbourhoods or groups.

You can also visit our YouTube site, at [www.youtube.com/staffordshirepolice](http://www.youtube.com/staffordshirepolice), where you can see videos about force campaigns

and operations – the site already has 35 videos on subjects including road safety, tackling drugs and domestic violence.

**REMEMBER:** The force's social networking sites should NOT be used to report an emergency, details of a crime or any other urgent matter. They are not monitored 24-hours-a-day. Always dial 999 in an emergency.

### USEFUL CONTACTS:

#### POLICING MATTERS:

CrimeStoppers (call anonymously)  
**0800 555 111**  
CrimeStoppers is an independent charity

Neighbourhood Watch  
Stephen Morris:  
**01782 233838**

CONTACT YOUR COUNCIL:  
Stoke-on-Trent City Council  
**01782 234234**

Parking problems  
**01782 232091**

Environmental, refuse, recycling  
**01782 234000**



Are we dealing what matters to you? Please visit [www.staffordshire.police.uk/whatmatters](http://www.staffordshire.police.uk/whatmatters) to tell us what matters to you.





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## Bradeley and Chell Heath



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## Burslem Park



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## Ford Green and Smallthorne



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## FORTHCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS AT THE CIVIC CENTRE, STOKE:

Cabinet meetings are scheduled at 5.30pm:  
26 April 2012, 31 May 2012, 28 June 2012 and  
26 July 2012.

Full City Council meetings are at 5.30pm:  
29 March 2012 and 5 July 2012. The Annual  
Council meeting is at 11.00am on 24 May 2012.

For more information on your councillors go to [stoke.gov.uk/councillors](http://stoke.gov.uk/councillors)  
Councillors can also be contacted through the Councillor and Civic Support Team who can take  
messages and forward them on. They can be contacted on 01782 231922 or 231924.

# Proud salute to sporting stars and heroes

**T**HE cream of the city's sporting stars and heroes has been honoured at The City of Stoke-on-Trent Sports Personality of the Year Awards.

The glittering ceremony hosted by double Olympic gold medal rower James Cracknell saw local cricketer Ben Johnson and Olympic running hopeful Emma Jackson named Male and Female Sports Personality of the Year.

Inspirational Ben from Checkley Cricket Club returned to the cricket field less than a year after a road accident left him in a coma. His achievement earned a standing ovation from the 400-strong audience at the King's Hall in Stoke.

Emma, who also collected the Senior Individual title on the night, is only the 18th British woman to run 800 metres in under two minutes. She is now preparing in her bid to represent Team GB at the London Olympics.

A total of 34 awards were handed out at the gala night attended by triple jump world record holder Jonathan Edwards and World Cup winner Gordon Banks, nine-time Paralympic gold medal winning equestrian Lee Pearson and reigning world darts champion Adrian Lewis.

Imran Sherwani, the Olympic gold medal winning hockey player, was inducted into the City of Stoke-on-Trent Sporting Hall of Fame alongside Hanley-born cycling legend Les West.

Inspirational Achiever went to three times Potteries marathon winner Julia Matheson, who overcame a crippling back injury to compete again, while former Paratrooper Dan Hopwood who is paralysed from the chest down scooped the Disability Award for winning a World Sprints canoeing medal.

Junior award winners included hurdler James Taylor who is top of the UK under-17s rankings and the Staffordshire under-13s cricket team.



Sports Personalities of the Year – international runner Emma Jackson and local cricketer Ben Johnson.



Former Paratrooper Dan Hopwood receives the Disability Award from television presenter Nick Hancock.



Footballers of the Year – Stoke City's Jonathan Walters, left, and Port Vale's Doug Loft.



Inspirational Achiever Julia Matheson is presented with the award by World Cup winner Gordon Banks.

## Main winners at a glance:

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>SENIOR INDIVIDUAL:</b><br>Emma Jackson        | <b>JUNIOR TEAM:</b><br>Staffordshire Under-13s cricket | <b>EDITOR'S AWARD:</b><br>Peter Coates   |
| <b>JUNIOR INDIVIDUAL:</b><br>James Taylor        | <b>COACH:</b><br>Darren Barton                         | <b>FOOTBALLERS OF THE YEAR:</b><br>Stoke City FC:<br>Jonathan Walters<br>Port Vale FC: Doug Loft |
| <b>SENIOR TEAM:</b><br>Stoke Rugby Club          | <b>SPORT IN COMMUNITY:</b><br>Bradwell Belles          | <b>OVERALL WINNERS:</b><br>Male: Ben Johnson<br>Female: Emma Jackson                             |
| <b>INSPIRATIONAL ACHIEVER:</b><br>Julia Matheson | <b>SERVICE TO SPORT:</b><br>Neil Gilson                |  |
| <b>DISABILITY:</b><br>Dan Hopwood                |  |  |

*Pictures courtesy of The Sentinel*

## Does your gran look like HRH?

GRANNIES in the city could scoop a Royal Jubilee prize... if they resemble Her Majesty The Queen. Tourism officers in Stoke-on-Trent have launched the hunt for a royal lookalike grandma as part of a campaign to promote the city in the run up to Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

To enter the competition just email a photo of somebody you know (it doesn't have to be your gran!) – with their permission – to [images@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:images@stoke.gov.uk)



Some of Stoke-on-Trent's most famous pottery manufacturers have joined the council to put together a royal itinerary to follow in the footsteps of The Queen and her family. It can be seen at [www.visitstoke.co.uk/royal.aspx](http://www.visitstoke.co.uk/royal.aspx)

It includes opportunities to visit the Wedgwood Visitor Centre and Museum, Moorcroft Heritage Visitor Centre, Emma Bridgewater, Aynsley China, Portmeirion and The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery. Details of these venues and a link to money saving vouchers can be found at [www.visitstoke.co.uk](http://www.visitstoke.co.uk)

## Civic celebration of Fairtrade



OVER 100 people attended a civic reception hosted by Lord Mayor Councillor Terry Follows to celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight.

The event showcased achievements of the city council and Fairtrade Action in Stoke-on-Trent (FAST).

Fairtrade aims to achieve better deals for producers of food and other commodities in developing countries. Stoke-on-Trent is a Fairtrade city and the reception celebrated St Margaret Ward High School achieving Fairtrade status.

To find out more please visit [stoke.gov.uk/fairtrade](http://stoke.gov.uk/fairtrade)

## Fuel bills survey

A citywide survey is seeking residents' views on priorities for reducing household fuel bills and carbon emissions.

A strategy is being developed in partnership with public and private sector organisations to help save householders and businesses money and create a cleaner environment.

The council recognises that a changing climate, rising bills and poor health from living in cold homes have a detrimental impact on the city.

Please visit [stoke.gov.uk/consultations](http://stoke.gov.uk/consultations) to find out more.