

Parish Council News



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Cllr. Kath Brayford
01782 393157



Clerk to F.P.C.
Stephen Beck
01782 398090
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Affordable Housing

Proposals for a scheme to develop 20 affordable houses on the old 'Heather's Nursery' site on Hilderstone Road were on public display in Meir Heath & Rough Close Village Hall on Wednesday 9th October. The display provided residents with information on the housing needs survey completed in the Spring of 2011; a section 106 Agreement demonstrating how any proposed homes are kept in perpetuity for local people; information on what is meant by local connection for those who may qualify for such homes and a copy of the sites appraisal reports to show how and why the site had been selected. In addition architects drawings showing the proposed site layout, access and elevations were on display together with examples of similar completed

developments. A comments or feedback sheet was available for attendees to complete.

122 people attended the event and in total 43 feedback sheets were completed. Of the 43 sheets completed 15 respondents were in favour of the development and 26 against. It was not clear from the response of the remaining 2 as to their preference.

The Parish Council considered the responses to the consultation event along with the original need and demand survey at their meeting on 14th November and agreed to support Stafford and Rural Homes and their partner HousingPlus, in the preparation of a planning application

May we take this opportunity to wish all parishioners a joyous and peaceful Christmas, and a happy New Year!



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for the proposal. It is expected that a number of the concerns expressed by some residents will be addressed during the planning process. When the planning application is submitted there will be further opportunities for views to be expressed by residents in the parish.

Planning – Woodview, Hilderstone Road

It is understood that the appeal against refusal for this site has now been 'called in' by the Secretary of State and it is not expected that a decision will be made until the New Year. Anyone requiring more information should contact Mr P Atkins tel. 01785 619000 patkins@staffordbc.gov.uk

Various information leaflets available:

The Parish Council has available at the parish office leaflets relating to:

- Fly Tipping
- Unwanted Callers
- Dog Fouling

These leaflets can be used to inform the relevant authorities on any of the above issues.

Parish Council Audit for year ending 31st March 2013

The external auditor, Grant Thornton, appointed by Government, has confirmed that the parish council is following proper practices, no matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern and that all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have been met. The Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2013 are available to read on the Council's website.

Grindley Park

A new children's play area has been installed on Grindley Park. The new area has been developed in particular for young children (age 2 years upwards) and consists of swings, roundabout, springers and a playpod, which allows children to climb, crawl and slide.

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Mrs. L. McPherson
01782 397103

Cllr. Kath Brayford
01782 393157

Cllr. Deborah Barker
07528 317 313

Cllr. Shirley Wheat
01782 395133

Blythe Bridge Ward News

Litter and dog fouling

The dropping of litter and dog fouling has improved in some areas of the parish, but it has become worse during the past month in the Grindley Lane and Uttoxeter road area of the Blythe Bridge ward.

If you see anyone dropping litter or allowing their dog to foul the pavement and you can identify them, please contact the officer responsible at the Borough Council. If you think we need more litter bins please let us know and where they are needed. Would you please keep your dog on a leash when you are out walking your dog on the pavement or grass verge, even the most well behaved dogs can be unpredictable at times.

Pest Control

There is a continuing problem with rat infestation. Stafford Borough Council pest control officers have been around the area baiting main sewers. Please contact them on 0845 505 7378 (local call rate), or e-mail pestcontrol@staffordbc.gov.uk if you would like more information.

Springcroft School

Springcroft welcomed 30 new children and their families into school in September. This Autumn Term is always an exciting and hectic time but is also traditionally a time of giving and thinking of others.

The annual Harvest Festival donations were donated to the Stoke on Trent food bank, many thanks to all who donated so generously.

Great fun was had on November 15th when the children dressed up to support Children in Need, cakes were baked and sold to make this fundraising a great success.

Preparations are now underway for the infant nativity and junior carol service. The Christmas Fayre will take place on Friday December 6th between 3.30 and 6pm, everyone is welcome.

Finally, all the staff and pupils wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2014.

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Portland College (Aynsley School)

Portland College recently had the trees pruned that were overhanging the pavement on Uttoxeter Road. The school had to wait to cut the trees until the correct time of year to do this so as not to damage the trees. Two of the trees are being monitored as they are diseased.

Pot holes

Please report them to the Highways Hotline on 0300 111 8000.

Estate Walkabout

The estate walkabout will take place on the 20th of February 2014. The Staff of Stafford Rural Homes will be meeting residents at Mayfield Drive car park at 10 am. All residents are welcome to come along and express any concerns they may have.

Car Parking

We are having more and more complaints about the parking of cars particularly at school times. This is on Ridgway Drive, the bottom of Grindley Lane at the road junction and also parking and blocking the drives so that people are unable to enter or leave their drives. People are also blocking the entrance to Meadow Close.

PLEASE PARK ON THE ROAD AND NOT THE PAVEMENT.

We have also had complaints by a lady with a twin buggy about parking on the pavement in Grindley Lane; she was unable to pass the car and had to use the

grass verge to get past. This was very difficult for her as it had been raining and the wheels got stuck in the mud. The view is also obstructed for cars pulling out of Sutherland Crescent onto Grindley Lane.

Blythe Lodge

Blythe Lodge has vacancies for the over 55, for more information contact 0800 111 4334.

Door to Door sales people

Please beware of letting people into your house unless you know them. There are several scams going on in the area at the moment. Please ensure that cars left on drives are securely locked to prevent them from being stolen.

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Cllr. Steven Evans
01782 399320

Cllr. Tony Holmes
01782 395250

Cllr. Frank Colclough
01782 909582

Fulford Ward News

Fulford Dale

Local farmers cleared the streams for which they are responsible and the County Council identified the blockage in the pipe culvert under the junction with Fulford Lane which had been the cause of the flooding during heavy rainfall. A car wheel with tyre was removed from the culvert.

The potholes along Fulford Lane to Stallington have been filled in at last. New ones should be reported to the Highways Hotline.

Baulk Lane / Vicarage Lane

Car drivers should be aware that these are not only "Access Only" roads, but are used as a "walk to school route" – it has been noted that drivers are still using this as a through route, and at inappropriate speeds. The police should be informed of offending vehicles such that they can take action against identified vehicles.

BUS SERVICE 249 - use it or lose it!

The service between Longton and Stone via Meir Heath, Stallington, Saverley Green

and Fulford is operated by Bennetts Travel and gives 2 or 4 hours shopping time in Longton or Stone each day.

For timetable details see
<http://www.stokebus.info/timetables/249.pdf>

The morning/evening service 7/7A to and from Longton serving Saverley Green and Fulford which was operated by Wardle Transport has been withdrawn following re-tendering due to the little use made of this service.

Broadband

BT Openreach has upgraded the Blythe Bridge exchange with superfast fibre technology and is now deploying it to areas of Blythe Bridge and Meir Heath by Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC). This is a part-fibre, part-copper solution, capable of delivering download speeds of up to 80Mbit/s and upload speeds of up to 20Mbit/s. With FTTC, the fibre is overlaid on the copper cable infrastructure running from an exchange to new green cabinets in the street, which are then connected to the

existing cabinets. Copper will still be the final link (i.e. from the existing cabinet to your home or business).

Residents in Fulford village have connection speeds which are poor compared to other areas due to their distance from the Blythe Bridge exchange. These areas are “being evaluated as part of a government funded programme” under the Staffordshire Superfast Broadband project set for completion by 2016:
www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/

If you wish to monitor the roll out of superfast broadband you may like to use the BT Openreach website that will be updated periodically as this huge logistical exercise unfolds over the next couple of years:

www.superfast-openreach.co.uk/where-and-when/

BKV

Fulford again achieved ‘Highly Commended’ in the ‘Best Kept Village’ competition thanks to efforts all around the village. The judges’ detailed comments are available on the village website www.fulfordvillage.com/bkv-results.php.

“There was good BKV awareness, particularly through the village news and parish magazine, etc. There were well sited BKV posters on noticeboards and at village entrances.

“Judges were impressed by the two excellent displays of children’s posters on the village green and by the village hall. The posters were very colourful and imaginative.”

Areas for improvement were also identified – some noticeboards, litter, a few gardens.

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01782 392548

Cllr. Angela Noblett
01782 397334

Cllr. Daryl Lightfoot

Meir Heath Ward News

Flooding on Hilderstone Road

The flooding on this road is going from bad to worse! We now have a situation where virtually every drain on this road, between Golborn Avenue and the "Blacklake" crossroads, has been overflowing. Recently we had four drains flooded, and water surging from a utilities inspection hatch.

Despite frequent complaints from ourselves and members of the public, to the Highways department, we feel that the problem had not been properly addressed, but a vehicle with camera and jet wash facilities is scheduled to evaluate and hopefully cure our problem.

Grindley Park:

Wildflower Meadow [update]

In October, some children from Meir Heath Primary School were involved in adding extra plants to the wildflower area. The activity was organised and supervised by

Bill Waller. [Bio-diversity officer for Stafford Borough Council]

The event was enjoyed by the school children and all those involved and we hope it will be repeated next year. This will

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promote the children's interest in and awareness of wildlife and be of great benefit to insects and birds as well as ourselves.

Toddlers' Play Equipment [update]

At the time of writing, work has just commenced - at last - on the installation of play equipment and, hopefully, by the time this newsletter reaches you the work will be complete and the equipment in use.

The onset of winter is not a good time to start using this equipment but circumstances have prevented us from installing it any sooner and, at least, the play area will be available when the weather allows and, in particular, when spring/summer arrives.

New Signs - Adventure Play Area [update]

Sadly, the new signs which were erected adjacent to the play area - warning dog

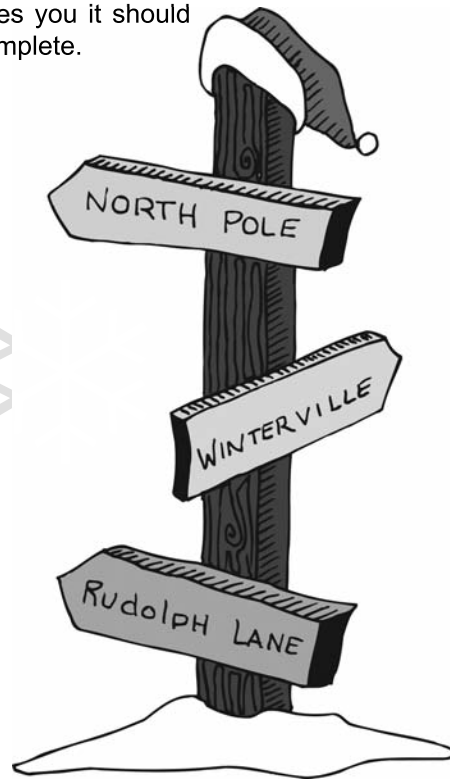
owners to keep their dogs out of this area - have been vandalised and removed.

We are, currently, in the process of arranging the replacement of the signs.

Would residents please report any incidence of vandalism on the park to our clerk, any of our councillors or the police.

Tree Work

An order has been placed for some 'tidy-up' work to be carried out on several of the trees/shrubs on the park. At the time of writing, the work has not commenced because of the very wet weather but by the time this newsletter reaches you it should be complete.



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Cllr.
Andrew Lovatt

Cllr. Gareth Brunt
01782 394079

Cllr. Mrs. Wendy
Jennings
01782 398784

Rough Close Ward News

Winter is almost upon us and the village is looking a little bleak. The state of the George and Dragon continues to cause concern to villagers as it deteriorates and attracts the fly tipper mentality. Stafford Borough Council environment officers and Cllr. Tony Holmes have recently viewed the site and residents are asked to be vigilant and to report anyone seen tipping on the site to the police or SBC immediately.

Windmill Hill

Traffic on Windmill Hill has been identified as something of a problem especially during the morning rush hour. The worst of the problem seems to be very dangerous overtaking and speeding occurring at the bottom of the hill (before the junction) and particularly approaching the entrance to the day nursery. Please curb your speed as you travel down the hill and do not be tempted to overtake drivers turning into the nursery gateway. This practise is an accident waiting to happen.

On a lighter note; Windmill Hill now boasts a new litter bin at the end of West View to complete the fixtures of the recently improved site there.

The Common

What news? No surprise to anyone, our treasured heathland is now looking very wet and wintry. However, the recently formed Friends of the Common group have held their second meeting and many adventures are afoot for the New Year. Staffordshire Borough Council's Bio-diversity Officer, Mr. Bill Waller is heading the arrangements for a marvellous event to banish the winter blues!

Sunday January 19th 2014 is set to be a **"WINTER WARMER WORKOUT"**. From 10.30am - 1pm all are invited to meet on the car park opposite St. Matthew's CE Primary school to collect tools and gloves for a gorse bashing extravaganza! All volunteers will be rewarded with a FREE Hog Roast. Tickets presented at the end of

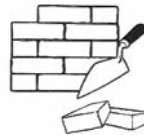
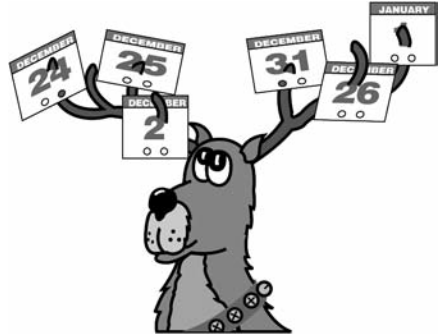
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work for the onsite refreshments. Representatives from Staffordshire Wildlife Trust will also be at the event to help out and provide information about our heathland inhabitants. Members of the Friends of the Common group will be available to answer any questions you may have and to provide details for anyone wishing to join the group.

So wrap up warmly and come along. Bring the children and enjoy the day with your local community. It's fun, fascinating and free!

The next meeting of the Friends of the Common group will be held in the Parish Office at Meir Heath & Rough Close Village Hall on Wednesday 8th January 2014 at 7pm. Again, all are invited, whether you can offer practical help or just want to find out what we're about; everyone is very welcome.

Queries to either Cllr.T. Holmes or Cllr.W. Jennings.



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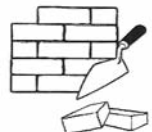
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Report from County Councillor



Super Fast Broadband is on its way

The County Council plans to deliver super fast broadband to virtually everyone by spring 2016 and many places will start to benefit as early as next year. Through

new investment by the County Council a deal has been made with BT to build the fibre-based infrastructure.

It means that Staffordshire will get ahead of many areas and homes and businesses will be able to benefit from a much faster service.

Investment in local roads

Hopefully, the major road works in Meir Heath should by the time this newsletter reaches you, be complete. My apologies for the inconvenience over the last few months, but I hope the extra investment in our local roads is going to pay off in the future.

I believe that after all the investment the County Council has made in our main roads, we have some of the best in the country. But we know there is still a lot more to do. The easiest way to report a defect is to call our help centre 0300 111 8000.

Housing development in Meir Heath

I know that the consultation regarding building homes on the former nursery site

at Meir Heath has caused concern to residents. As I am not a Parish or Borough councillor, I have no involvement in the decision.

The consultation itself clearly had support for further homes, especially homes which are affordable. However, I don't believe that this site is suitable. To allow building on the western side of Hilderstone Road could set a bad precedence. This side has only light development, has an open aspect and is an important buffer to the rural-semi rural areas. It seems pointless to change that. I will therefore be objecting to any planning applications for building on that side of Hilderstone Road and suggest that anyone who feels the same to do likewise. There are also other grounds to oppose; traffic, safety and green belt issues.

There must be more suitable sites in the area that don't eat into or damage the rural environment.

Tough times ahead

Like every council we have a lot less money to spend. We have saved about £140 million from the County Council's budgets over the last 4 years. Next year we need to save around another £26 million. Our hope is that we can achieve this and still freeze the council tax for the fourth year. But that depends on whether we can deliver an acceptable plan that achieves a balanced budget.

It's important that we understand what is important to you as we try to prioritise how we spend and save. Most of our costs involve looking after people so that is a major priority, we also think that helping our local economy and supporting people to find work is too.

However, we need to find ways of working with organisations outside the county council to change the design of essential support and services more efficiently and to find new ways to reduce costs, such as cost of running council buildings for example and reducing those which are no-longer needed.

We aim to be innovative in how we tackle these problems and avoid the cuts that other councils are making.

So if you have any ideas or suggestions please get in touch via my email or drop me

a letter to Staffordshire County Council, Martin Street, Stafford.

Community maintenance teams

The parish gets a visit from a County Council maintenance team 2 or 3 times a year. Their role is to fix the small highway or footpath tasks such as cleaning signs or repairing a verge. If you see small tasks like this please let me or the Parish Clerk know so that we can include it in a future planned visit by the team.

Please contact me if you need help with any local problems or issues involving the County Council
ian.parry@staffordshire.gov.uk

You can also get latest news by following my Twitter posts twitter.com/ianparrycc

Bulletin Board

Delivering Key Information Quickly

EVERY MONDAY, TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY (EXCEPT BANK HOLIDAYS), the Clerk of the Parish Council will be present at the annexe to the MEIR HEATH & ROUGH CLOSE VILLAGE HALL, GRANGE ROAD, MEIR HEATH between **9.30AM and 12.30PM** to discuss any problems or issues which the Parish Council may be able to help with. The contact telephone number is 01782 385187 where you can also leave a message.

Fulford Parish Council has a website which is run and updated by the Newsletter Committee of the Parish Council. Please log on to see and find the latest information!

www.fulford-parish-council.org
Contact via the Clerk
stephen_beck@btconnect.com

Meir Heath & Rough Close Village Hall (registered charity 506032)

The village hall continues to be very well used, both for private hire at weekends and activities during the week.

However, due to the recent relocation of a children's dance class, the VH committee is able to offer Tuesdays, up to 7.00pm, for anyone wishing to hire the premises on a weekly basis.

If interested, the contact numbers are 01782 396037 / 394922.

101 for Non-emergency Police Calls

Communities across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent have access to 101, the national non-emergency telephone number for the police service in England and Wales.

Calls to 101 will cost 15 pence per call, no matter how long you are on the phone - this applies to both landlines and mobile phones. In an emergency, the public should continue to call 999, such as when a crime is in progress, when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

People should call **101** to report less urgent crime and disorder or to speak to their local officers.

111 for medical help fast

NHS 111 is the service introduced to make it easier for you to access local NHS healthcare services. You can call 111 when you need

medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time. You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation. 111 will get you through to a team of highly-trained advisers, who are supported by experienced nurses. They will assess your symptoms and guide you to the right local service.

Blue Bin Recycling Service

In the Inner Caddy: Newspapers, magazines, brochures, catalogues, junk mail, yellow pages, shredded paper.

In the Bin: Cardboard (flattened); Aerosols - e.g. shaving gel, polish, deodorant; Plastic bags - must be empty; Wrappers - food, cellophane and clingfilm; Foil - food trays and tin foil; Cans - food and drink; Glass - bottles and jars; Plastic bottles - e.g. milk, soft drink, yoghurt pots, margarine tubs and household cleaning fluid bottles - shampoo, bleach etc; Waxed cartons - food and drink [Tetra Pak] e.g. juice, soup and milk cartons.

All items must be clean, empty and have the tops removed.

No longer must textiles be put in the blue bin as it has been found that textiles have become contaminated with broken glass etc., which means that they cannot be re-used.

Townswomen's Guild

Meets at Meir Heath and Rough Close Village Hall on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 2.00pm. There is a speaker each month followed by tea and biscuits. The group would welcome new members or visitors.

For further information contact 01782 393846.

Staffordshire County Council -

Stone Rural Councillor:

Ian Parry 01785 279015

Stafford Borough Council -

Fulford Ward Councillors:

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Cllrs. Colclough, Evans, Mrs. Jennings,
Lovatt, Mrs. McPherson, Mycock,
Miss Noblett, Shaw,
Chairman and Vice-Chairman ex-officio

Representatives to Outside Bodies

Portland School & Specialist College
(formerly Aynsley Special School)

Governor: Cllr. Mrs. Brayford

Meir Heath & Rough Close Village Hall:

Cllr. Mrs. Jennings

Fulford Village Hall:

Cllr. Tony Holmes

Springcroft Primary School LEA Governor:

Cllr. Kath Brayford, Cllr. Richard Mycock

Cllr. Linda McPherson

Staffordshire Parish Councils Association:

Cllrs. Mrs. Brayford, Holmes
and Mrs. McPherson

Dates for 2014 Parish Council Meetings

Thursday 9th January

Location:

Meir Heath & Rough Close Village Hall

Thursday 13th February

Location: Fulford Village Hall

Thursday 13th March

Location:

Meir Heath & Rough Close Village Hall

Note: All meetings start at 7.15pm with an opportunity for any local government elector from the Parish to ask questions of the Parish Council relating to any Parish issue. At the formal meeting, which follows at 7.30 p.m., these matters will then be considered; the public may also attend but are not usually invited to join the debate. Alternatively, write to the Clerk such that the matter can be raised.

Civic Amenity Visits

A REFUSE LORRY will next be available for the collection of household items in the spring of 2014.

Household Recycling Centres

At recycling centres in Staffordshire there are facilities to recycle newspapers, magazines, telephone directories, glass bottles, jars, fridges, freezers, scrap metal, car batteries and oil.

Stone -

The recycling centre is on Beacon Road, Stone Business Park, off the A34 Stafford Road at the roundabout with the A51 Butterhill Bank Road - about 1 mile from Stone Town Centre. This centre is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Cheadle -

This centre is on New Haden Road, Cheadle, off the road to Draycott, and is closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Police Contact numbers

In an emergency, where life is in danger or a crime is in progress, call **999**.

For non-emergency calls and general enquiries contact us on the new **101** number service (replaces the 0300 123 4455).

Based at Stone Police Station are the Community Beat Officers and Police Community Support Officers for our area, PC 5506 David Perry, PCSO 8849 Becky Powell. You can speak to your local officer by calling them direct on **0300 123 2345**. Follow the simple instructions and enter the officer's personal collar number. Or call **101** and speak to the operator.

Call Crimestoppers - Tel 0800-555-111

This telephone number can be used to pass specific information about crime or criminals without fear of reprisals or direct contact with the police. Calls are **FREE** from land lines and most mobile phones. The service is anonymous and rewards of up to £1,000 are available for information which leads to an arrest and charge.

Stafford Borough Council

Customer Contact Centre
Open 8.30 am - 5.00 pm Monday - Friday
Tel: (01785) 619000 or
www.staffordbc.gov.uk

Planning queries: 01785 619337
planning@staffordbc.gov.uk

Staffordshire County Council

General Enquiries Tel: 0300 111 8000
This is a new number replacing the former switchboard number of 01785 223121.
The new phone number is charged at local rate.
www.staffordshire.gov.uk

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Tel: 01782 398693 Mobile: 07768 307482

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Highways Hotline (formerly CLARENCE)

Safety Defects, such as potholes, ice, flooding and broken street lights should be reported directly to the Highways Hotline on

0300 111 8000

email to

highways@staffordshire.gov.uk

or on-line via **Report Faults Online**

STREETscene

ONE phone call, one solution – The special hotline means that a wide range of environmental issues, such as littering, graffiti, dog mess, sharps, fly tipping and problems with children's play areas, can all be reported with just one phone call.

You can contact the Streetscene team in the following ways:

Phone the contact centre on
01785 619000

Text in with your problem on
07781 471023

Email
contactcentre@staffordbc.gov.uk