

# Eccleshall PARISH COUNCIL



**Summer Newsletter 2025**

**[www.eccleshallparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.eccleshallparishcouncil.gov.uk)**

# PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS



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## County Councillor

Election Result pending

## Borough Councillors

Mr Peter Jones (details as opposite)

Mr Jeremy Pert  
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## Clerk to the Council

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# Eccleshall Parish Council activities 2024-2025



## PROJECTS & NEW ACTIVITIES:

- Taken over the lease on Beech Road Community Park and undertook a complete refurbishment of the play equipment
- Taken on the running of Eccleshall Community Library, in partnership with Staffordshire County Council, working with Bishops Lonsdale CofE Academy to successfully deliver a programme of library visit sessions
- Hosted a VE Day Celebration Event at Eccleshall Community Centre
- Installed an additional Speed Indication Device to support traffic calming in Croxton and Slindon
- Created a new Heritage Walk brochure for the Parish
- Externally refurbished the BT box on the Washpits
- Installation of a new Trim Trail at Croxton park



## REGULAR ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

- Maintenance of public open spaces - including the Eyeswell path, Jubilee Playing Field, Elford Heath, Croxton playground and Copmere picnic site.
- Asset management - benches, bus shelters, pillar clock, noticeboards
- Provision of the large and small Christmas trees, and the watering contract for the Bloom hanging baskets and troughs
- Maintaining access and repairing signage on key Rights of Way by our dedicated footpaths operative, working from reports supplied by our Footpath Marshals
- Management of 6 rotating Speed Indication Devices
- Hosted the Community Showcase at Holy Trinity Church
- Used the lengthsman scheme to undertake tidying round the town centre and Croxton, additional vegetation cutting back to expose road signs, cleaning of the parish milestones, sign cleaning and cutting back of pavement overgrowth.
- Provision of Stafford Brigades Marching Band for Carols around the Tree
- Management of the 'Keep Eccleshall Tidy' Litterpicking team
- Considered and submitted responses to 46 planning applications in 2024
- Responded to national consultations to provide local insight
- Provision of a bi-annual newsletter
- Resident Support - e.g. organised a pension credit application day



## LOBBIED FOR ACTION ON:

- Pothole issues
- Flooding
- Parking
- Roadworks



## PROVIDED GRANTS TO:

- Eccleshall Community Amateur Dramatics
- Eccleshall First Responders
- Croxton Well Dressing
- Eccleshall Indoor Bowls
- Katharine House Hospice
- Eccleshall Festival



All of these activities, and those planned for the rest of this financial year, have been delivered with only a small change to the precept for 2025-2026, which currently sits at approximately £3.11 per month for a Band D household.

# Beech Road Community Park Refurbishment

The progress of the project by Eccleshall Parish Council to refurbish the outdated park at Beech Road has been eagerly watched by local residents over the last few weeks. The project includes the installation of a range of inclusive play equipment aimed at ages 0-12. The park will be open on completion of the safety inspection, with a formal opening ceremony planned for a later date.

Funding streams include the allocation of £90,277.34 from Stafford Borough Council through developer section 106 contributions, towards a total cost of approximately £95,000. The

refurbishment is part of a long-term vision by the Parish Council, which has secured a 30-year lease to manage and maintain the site. The revamped park offers a welcoming and accessible space for all children, supporting physical activity, imaginative play and community engagement.

A second phase will follow in the autumn, creating sensory planted areas to further enhance the space. The initiative aims to enhance community well-being, promote inclusivity, and create a vibrant, shared outdoor space for all to enjoy.



## Keep Eccleshall Tidy



Join our dedicated team of Eccleshall Litter Pickers to keep our town litter free and earn the thanks of our community.

Litter picking stops pollution, protects wildlife, and helps maintain the beauty and health of our environment. It reduces the risk of animals eating or becoming entangled in litter, prevents the contamination of soil and water, and can help with recycling by recovering materials for reuse. Litter picking promotes our commitment to community and environmental awareness



We can provide litter pickers, bags and hoops hold the bags open,

To join our team please contact Chris on 0777 1615140 or email [CSHW@aol.com](mailto:CSHW@aol.com)

Eccleshall Litter Pickers are sponsored by Eccleshall Parish Council

# 80<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY

## AFTERNOON TEA CELEBRATION

Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 was a very special day. It was celebrated in Eccleshall during the afternoon when the Library Community Lounge organised a fantastic traditional Afternoon Tea in the Parish Rooms. Tickets prices were subsidised by the Community Lounge and the Parish Council.

Fifty-two residents of Eccleshall were welcomed to a full Afternoon Tea comprising delicious sandwiches (made by a chef at The Kings Arms), scones, cream and jam and a wide variety of cakes, plus tea or coffee. The tables were decorated in the patriotic colours

of red, white and blue and flags were festooned around the hall and on the railings outside. Guests enjoyed live entertainment of World War II songs with singer, Linda Mae. Many residents 'Dressed to Impress'.

Perhaps the highlight of the afternoon was the presence of eight young soldiers from the 248 Queens Royal Gurkha Signal Squadron based at Stafford Barracks. Guests were 'piped' into the hall by a Gurkha bagpiper and a line of soldiers lead by Cpl. Dinesh. It was an

amazing start to the celebration and recognised the vital contribution of the Gurkhas in World War II. These young soldiers then integrated with guests and chatted to many people. The involvement of the Gurkhas made this event a very special celebration.

I also wish to thank everyone who helped to make this event so very special. This type of occasion would not be possible without the support of such willing volunteers. Thank you.



# Eccleshall Community Lounge

## Community Interest Topics and Presenters

| <u>Date</u><br><b>2025</b> | <u>Presenter</u>                                                           | <u>Topic</u>                                                                                              |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17 July                    | Rev'd Phillip Johnson<br>chooses his<br>In conversation with<br>Ros Taylor | <b>Desert Island Discs</b>                                                                                |
| 21 August                  | Ian Farr                                                                   | <b>My life in Papua New Guinea</b>                                                                        |
| 18 September               | Dan Myatt                                                                  | <b>The Wonder of Waste</b><br>(This talk will involve a virtual<br>tour around a power station)           |
| 16 October                 | Melanie Latham<br>Back by popular demand                                   | <b>Chutney and Cheer for a<br/>Christmas buying opportunity</b>                                           |
| 20 November                | Caroline Speirs                                                            | <b>My Mum flew Spitfires</b><br><b>Rita Baines lived in Eccleshall</b><br><b>until her death in 2007.</b> |

*18 December Community Lounge Christmas Party*

### **2026**

|             |                         |                                                                |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 15 January  | Eccleshall Fire Service | <b>Fire safety in the home</b>                                 |
| 19 February | Sally McMahon           | <b>An update on the work of the<br/>Midlands Air Ambulance</b> |

Please note: the dates are the third Thursday of each month from 2 – 4pm in the upstairs room in the library. A ticket, costing £1 from the Reception Desk in the Library, will be required as entry is limited.

Tickets will be available from the first Thursday of each month for the lecture in that month only.

The ticket price includes a coffee/tea and biscuits.

*Some speakers, who are representing a charity, may bring collection boxes for voluntary donations.*

# 80<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY

## ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL CELEBRATION EVENING

Eccleshall came together for a truly memorable evening on 8th May 2025, as the Parish Council hosted a sold-out celebration marking the 80th anniversary of VE Day.

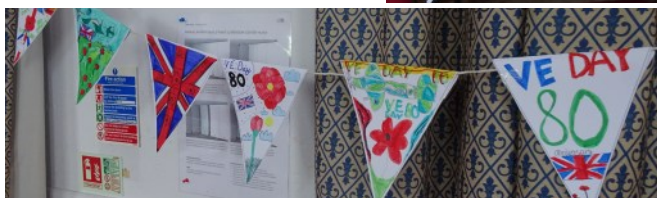
Guests packed into the Eccleshall Community Centre from 6.45pm to 9.45pm for a night of nostalgia, community spirit, and entertainment. The event featured wartime-themed music melodies performed live by Linda Mae – with an enjoyable singalong. Attendees also tested their knowledge in a themed quiz, with prizes awarded to the highest scorers.



A delicious fish and chip supper was included with every ticket, and guests brought along their own drinks and nibbles to enjoy throughout the evening.

The evening culminated in a poignant moment as a **Beacon Lighting Ceremony** took place at 9.30pm, joining in with a “**Shared Moment of Celebration**” with communities across the nation. The beacon was lit by Simon McKnight, a former armed service member and longstanding active member of the local branch of the Royal British Legion.





## Severn Trent launch scheme to upgrade customer-owned lead water pipes

We don't often think about the pipe that brings us fresh water every day. This supply pipe, particularly in properties built before 1970, could be made from lead, and is at higher risk of leaking, due to its age.

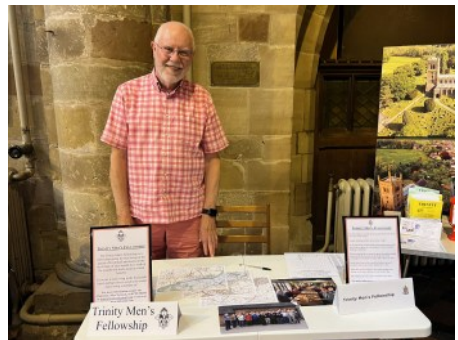
Replacing a supply pipe is the responsibility of the property owner, and can be quite costly to replace, but Severn Trent has launched a scheme for customers in the local area to replace lead pipes – **for free.**

Katie Machale, who manages the Supply Pipe Replacement project says, "Replacing a leaking supply pipe could cost up to £3,000 per property, however we are providing customers with brand new connections at no cost to them. This is all part of our investment into our network, to help make lead pipes a thing of the past for Eccleshall and the surrounding area."

Severn Trent aim to remove all lead supply pipes in the area, so will be contacting residents and business owners over the coming months. If you'd like to learn more, visit [stwater.co.uk/supply-pipes-staffs](http://stwater.co.uk/supply-pipes-staffs)

# 2025 Eccleshall Community Showcase

This year's showcase, on Monday 16th July, saw a change of venue to the beautiful and historic Holy Trinity Church. The annual Parish Council event hosted 25 exhibitors for residents to come and have a chat with. For those interested in a new hobby— there were music groups, bridge club, marquetry and crochet, to name a few. Many groups were represented, including Broughton WI, Eccleshall WI, Open Gardens, the Ecclesian Society, Broughton and Croxton Garden Guild, plus many others. Eccleshall First Responders, Katharine House and Eccleshall Cancer Warriors came to highlight the important work they do to support the community. Eccleshall Scouts were in charge of the refreshments for the evening and did a brilliant job of keeping both visitors and exhibitors suitably topped up with tea and cake. See you next year!



# 2025 Eccleshall Community Showcase



## Parish Council information

For updates on meetings, community events, Council projects, refuse lorry collection dates, upcoming consultations and financial information

look us up at: [www.eccleshallparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.eccleshallparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Or follow us at [www.facebook.com/EccleshallPC](https://www.facebook.com/EccleshallPC)



This year's annual report and financial summary is available on the website and in printed format in the library.

Each area of the parish is represented by one or more councillors who would like to hear your views or residents can attend a meeting.

The Clerk can be contacted at [clerk@eccleshall.staffslc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@eccleshall.staffslc.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01785 282296.

# Croxton Well Dressing 2025

14th June 2025 saw the seventh Croxton Well Dressing Festival take place, - bringing together many people in the community of all ages as well as welcoming many visitors to the village. For over 12 months, people from a wide range of local community groups have been planning the event, creating the designs and collecting natural materials.

The theme for the 2025 Well Dressing Festival was linked to the 80th anniversary of V.E. Day. There were four decorated wells; - the largest one at Boughey's Well, on the main road through Croxton was entitled 'Forward Together' and was based on Winston Churchill and his contribution to achieving peace during WWII. Other designs had local connections - the 'Swynnerton Roses' well dressing commemorated the thousands of women who worked at the nearby Swynnerton Munitions factory. Another design celebrated 'The Women's Land Army', - many of whom worked on local farms whilst male farm workers had been called up to serve in the wartime forces. The smallest well dressing depicted Pablo Picasso's 'Dove of Peace'.

At 11.30am, Borough Councillors Jeremy Pert and Peter Jones together with hundreds of visitors gathered in front of Boughey's Well as Mrs Ruth Butter officially opened the Festival, and Mr Phil Finch (Safety & Training Officer at Swynnerton Army Camp) spoke about the important and dangerous work carried out by the brave women who worked at the Munitions factory in WWII.

As per tradition, water was celebrated with a 'blessing of the well' conducted by Rev. Dawn Walker and Rev. Sara Humphries. Right on cue, a brief shower of rain fell bringing a smile to everyone. As well as the trail through the village to see the 4 well dressings, people were also able to visit stalls and displays in the Millennium Wood and enjoy a bacon butty from the BBQ.

Tea and cake were available in St Paul's Church, Croxton, and at 2pm, a music and poetry concert took place showcasing the talents of local musicians. One of the pieces of poetry was especially written by Shan Jones for the event.

The well dressings were left up for viewing for a week after the festival. A big thank you to Eccleshall Parish Council and The Community Foundation for Staffordshire and Shropshire for grants and to Fletchers Garden Centre for their kind donation.

Thank you to everyone who helped organise or came and supported the Festival, we had a wonderful day in the sunshine. The next Croxton Well Dressing Festival will take place in 2027.

You can find out more information on the website:

[croxtonwelldressing.weebly.com](http://croxtonwelldressing.weebly.com)



# From Deluge to Drought (Allotmenteeing ~ A Personal View)

It's the beginning of May 2025, and what a difference a year makes! This time last year, the allotments were impersonating swamps - cold, flooded, and generally uninviting. Seeds refused to germinate, and the slugs? Well, they were thriving, dining on the few brave plants that dared poke their heads above the surface. Fast forward to this year, and suddenly we're being warned about droughts and hosepipe bans. In fact, April was apparently the sunniest since dinosaurs were seen roaming on Elford Heath (well, maybe only since records began, but who cares!)

I love introducing newcomers to the allotments and to the gardeners who are already members. Many arrive wide-eyed with enthusiasm and some slightly terrified by the commitment. Many of the existing plot holders are very experienced and knowledgeable, and some might even appear to live on their allotment (they're always there). Some may seem a little shy (but not most) and if you're brave enough to ask most will enthusiastically dole out advice. My recommendation? Absorb all their wisdom, nod thoughtfully, and then do whatever feels right for you.



Because ask five different gardeners and you'll get five different answers, sometimes all contradictory.

That said, there is one golden rule I always stand by and that's patience. No matter how eager you are to stick your seedlings in the ground, February and March are generally a bad idea. The soil is still chilly,

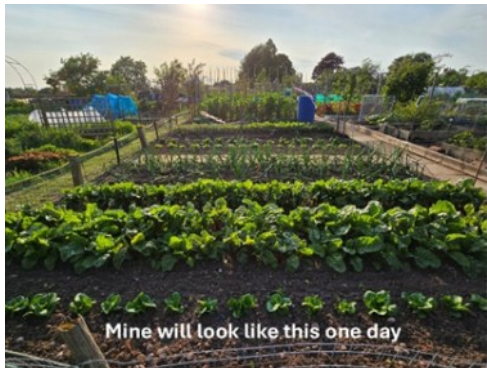


frost can lurk well into May, and your ambitious efforts could end in shrivelled stumps.

Moving on - it's now the end of May, and we've finally had some rain! A relief for farmers, allotmenters, and unfortunately, weeds. But despite the much-needed showers, we're still finding reasons to grumble. (It's tradition.) Personally, I'm fretting about being behind—Ray's potatoes are already well ahead of mine, Malcolm's courgettes look ready to stage a coup, and Michelle's peas have left mine looking like underachievers. However, I'm claiming small victories: lettuce is now on the menu, I pulled my first onion yesterday (a long-time resident from last year), and strawberries are starting to appear. Radishes are abundant, but that's only exciting if you actually enjoy radishes.

Jealousy though, I've decided, is wasted energy. Instead, I've opted for the tried-and-tested method of lurking discreetly and spying on the experts before copying what they do. I know that may contradict what I just said, but that's gardening for you.

So, if the weather behaves itself, this could be a good year—at the very least, hopefully, not as mindbogglingly dispiriting as last year. And few things are more satisfying than hosting a dinner party and watching your guests marvel as you smugly inform them that every last bite is homegrown.



If an allotment sounds like your kind of adventure, drop an email to [eccleshallaa@gmail.com](mailto:eccleshallaa@gmail.com), and I'll get back to you and gladly show you around.

Andy Iliffe  
(Secretary to the Eccleshall Allotments Association)

# Encouraging Butterflies to Boost Local Biodiversity in Eccleshall

Eccleshall Parish Council is committed to enhancing the natural environment for the benefit of both local wildlife and residents. One key initiative we would like to promote is the encouragement of butterflies into our gardens, green spaces, and wider countryside.

Butterflies are not only beautiful to watch, but they also play an essential role in maintaining a healthy and balanced ecosystem. By increasing butterfly populations, we can significantly improve biodiversity in our local area.



*Red Admiral*

Butterflies are excellent indicators of a healthy environment. Their presence often reflects a well-functioning ecosystem, rich in a variety of plants and insects. They are also important pollinators, helping to fertilise wildflowers and garden plants, which supports food chains for other species, including birds and small mammals. When butterflies thrive, so too do bees, moths, and other invertebrates, all of which are vital to a vibrant and sustainable ecosystem.

Unfortunately, butterfly numbers across the UK have been in decline due to habitat loss, pollution, and climate change.

*Small Tortoiseshell*





*Common Blue*

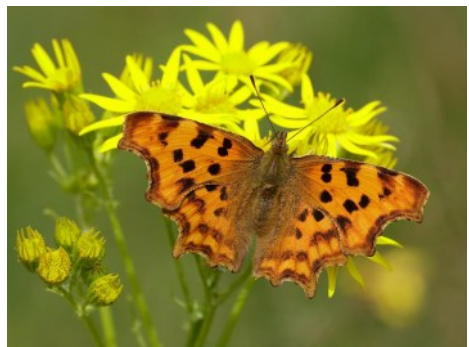
Eccleshall Parish Council recognises the need to reverse this trend at the local level. By encouraging residents and community groups to plant butterfly-friendly gardens and protect existing habitats, we aim to create a network of green corridors where butterflies can feed, breed, and flourish.

Simple actions such as planting nectar-rich flowers, reducing pesticide use, and leaving areas of lawn to grow wild can make a significant difference. Creating spaces with native wildflowers supports not only butterflies but many other species. Hedgerows, meadows, and woodland edges also offer critical shelter and breeding grounds.

Eccleshall Parish Council would like this initiative to become part of a broader biodiversity strategy to enhance the resilience of our local environment. A healthy butterfly population is not an end goal, but a sign of a thriving landscape where many forms of life are interconnected and supported. It also offers social and educational benefits – engaging children, inspiring gardeners, and promoting community involvement in conservation efforts.

*Comma*

**For further information, visit**  
**<https://butterfly-conservation.org/>**





**Eccleshall Community  
First Responders**

**In the Community | There in Minutes | Saving Lives**



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

# **CAN YOU HELP?**

**Are you able to spare some  
time to help us continue?**

**While we are not actively recruiting  
responders at the moment, we are  
looking for volunteers to help with  
various aspects of running the scheme,  
such as fundraising, media/marketing,  
raising awareness, maintenance etc**

**If you could spare an hour or two a  
month to help us keep the scheme  
running, then talk to us today or email  
[information@eccleshallcfrs.org.uk](mailto:information@eccleshallcfrs.org.uk)**





**Eccleshall Community  
First Responders**

In the Community | There in Minutes | Saving Lives



The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service

# 2025 FUNDING GOALS

**New Responder Vehicle  
£35,000**

**New Patient Monitor  
£1,200**

**Replacement Uniform  
£1,000**

**Scheme Running Costs  
£800/month**

We receive no money from the Ambulance Service for equipment, and all of our funding comes from generous donations from the community to keep our voluntary life-saving scheme alive and running.

Much of our equipment and uniform is now 10+ years old and requires replacing due to being obsolete or worn out

Any and all donations are greatly welcomed

# Eccleshall Castle Spring Gardens

## Charity Event ~ 10th May 2025

Eccleshall Castle grounds were open to the public on Saturday, 10 May.

The weather was warm and sunny, and visitors were treated to a stunning array of flowering shrubs in the beautiful grounds. The Eccleshall WI supplied copious amounts of very tasty cakes with tea and coffee, and people were able to sit on the grass to enjoy their refreshments. Members of the Historical Society were available to give everyone information about the history of Eccleshall Castle. The event raised nearly £1,500 for local charities.

Thank you to the Carter-Motley family and all the volunteers who made this event possible and so successful.

Ros Taylor

Look out for details of the  
'Corner Patch' Charity Sewing  
Day on Sunday,  
19 October 2025.





Bottom four photos  
credit C. Cook



# Eccleshall Library

**Children's Day ~ Friday, 12 September 2025**

**Venue:** The Meeting Room at Eccleshall Library

Two groups of children will be attending the event from Bishops Lonsdale Academy, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Local children's author Barbara Mitchelhill will be speaking to the groups.

'It was while Barbara was a teacher, that she began writing for BBC children's television. Later, as an award-winning author, she has written many books for young children and novels for older ones.'



## 500 Word Competition for Children

Are you between 5 and 11 years old? Well, why not enter our very special 500 word competition! **Pick up your entry form from Eccleshall Library or Bishops Lonsdale Academy.**

There are 2 age groups for the competition ~ 5 to 7 years old & 8 to 11 years old. The 500 word story can be about any subject you choose. It must not be a story you have read in a book/comic, seen on television or a film. It should be a story you have in your head that is special to you, it should be creative and totally original. It doesn't matter if your spelling and punctuation is not quite correct (don't tell your teachers!). Your story will be assessed on originality, characterisation, plot and how much the reader has enjoyed it.

The 500 words do not need to be exact, just a guide to the length of the story.

**Entries need to be received by Thursday, 4 September. These can either be given in at Bishops Lonsdale Academy or at Eccleshall Library.**

**There will be prizes!!!**

The Prize Giving Ceremony will be held at 6pm on Friday, 12 September at Eccleshall Library when the top three entries from each age group will be read to the audience and prizes will be awarded.

Do enter this exciting competition – you might win! Anything is possible!

**Watch out for details about tickets for the 500 word readings and prize giving to be held on Friday, 12 September.**

# Literary Festival

**Eccleshall Library will be pleased to present four authors on  
Saturday, 13 September 2025.**

Brief details about these exciting authors are below. More details and tickets will be available in the library from mid August.



## **Zoe Sharp**

A chance to meet edge-of-your seat mystery and thriller writer Zoe Sharp, author of the Charlie Fox and Blake & Byron series. Her latest book *The Girl in the Dark* has Blake and Byron in another mind blowing and totally addictive crime thriller.

## **Richard Rimington**

Richard Rimington is the author of 'The infinite Void' series, who grew up in Eccleshall and spent ten years living in Hong Kong and India. Richard has published four novels and two anthologies to date, and is always searching for great ideas.



## **Ruth Derham**

Ruth Derham is the author of two books concerning the English system of divorce introduced by the Victorians: its controversy, humanity, inequality and ultimately, its reform. Her most recent book examines the impact of the scandal associated with the court on the lives of the unhappily married from each strata of society who passed through its doors.

## **Jeannie Mehta**

Jeannie Mehta will talk about 'Hold Fast' ...a cross- cultural romance spanning half a century where the main characters decide to ignore the naysayers, eventually arriving at their happy ending in 21st century UK. This is the sequel to 'Unsuitable Girl' launched in Eccleshall in 2017.



**Watch out for more details, and tickets in your library from mid August**

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### HIGHWAYS

Street lights, pot holes, standing water, footpaths issues and many highway matters can be reported online at:-

**[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/reportit](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/reportit)**

It is important that residents report issues so that it is logged with an enquiry number and assigned to a County Council officer for inspection and assessment.

### RIGHTS OF WAY

There is a reporting system for issues with the public rights of way, which can be found at:

**<https://prow.staffordshire.gov.uk/standardmap.aspx>**

### BOROUGH COUNCIL

To report problems associated with grass cutting, play areas, fly tipping, street sweeping and name plates:

Street Scene - 01785 619401

Recycling collection - 01785 619402

**email: [info@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:info@staffordbc.gov.uk)**

**Report online at: <https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/streetscene-service-online-forms>**

**Dogs - dog fouling and stray dogs:**  
01785 619000

**Email: [dogs@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:dogs@staffordbc.gov.uk)**

**Grime Watch (fly tipping):**

**Call 01785 619402 or**

**Email [grimewatch@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:grimewatch@staffordbc.gov.uk)**

## PARKING

For parking issues where cars are parked in contravention to highway restrictions (e.g. double yellow lines, bus stops, school keep clears etc. this can be reported to the County Council using the shortcut link:

**<http://bit.ly/3lbq7CL>**

If a vehicle is obstructing access to pavements, or is parked dangerously, this can be reported to the police using the non urgent 101 function or online by using this shortcut link:

**<https://bit.ly/43N2HcC>**

### REFUSE LORRY

The Civic Amenity Lorry parks on Stone Road opposite the Methodist Church from 9 - 11am for the disposal of excess waste .

Dates for 2025 are on noticeboards and the parish website.

## SUSPECT A CRIME?

Report any suspicious activity you witness to the **police on 101** at the time of the incident. Please obtain as much information as you can, i.e. description of person involved, vehicle registration, make and model. There is also the option to report by clicking the live chat button at: **<https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/>**

**Please still call 999 if it is an emergency and an urgent response is needed.**