

Eccleshall PARISH COUNCIL



Winter Newsletter 2025
www.eccleshallparishcouncil.gov.uk

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Mr Jeremy Pert (details as above)

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EGGLESHALL FESTIVITIES—CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS TREES

As usual the town will be decorated with Christmas trees and lights throughout December. The small trees and lights will be erected by Ecclian Society members and friends on Sunday 30th November.



The Parish Council wishes to thank the Ecclian Society who will erect the 72 small Christmas Trees in the town and check the brackets, Woods Christmas Tree Farm at Solihull for supplying and delivering the trees, A.S. Electrical Services for installing the lights on the large trees and Traction Equipment for the cherry pickers. A big thank you also to Spencer the Jeweller of Eccleshall ~ who this year have donated the 20ft Stone Road tree.

The decorations on the crossroads tree were made once again by the children at the Bishop Lonsdale Academy.

The trees are funded by the Eccleshall Parish Council.

CROSS ROAD CAROLS

Join the **new Lantern Parade** down the High Street in time for the crossroads tree lights switch on at **5pm on Sunday 30th November.**

Enjoy carol singing as the tree, adorned with baubles decorated by the children of **Bishop Lonsdale Primary Academy**, is lit up for the season.

FATHER CHRISTMAS

Santa on the Eccleshall Rotary Club's sleigh will be at the lych gate at Holy Trinity on Sunday 30th November from 3.45pm, listening to the children's wishes.



Carols around the Christmas Tree

Carollers should meet at the crossroads on **Monday 22nd December at 7pm**, armed with lights and warm clothing. Carols will be sung at the crossroads, then at the Millennium Clock and John Pershall Court.

Hot punch will be served in Holy Trinity Church by the Ecclian Society, concluding around 8pm with a last burst of singing.

SANTA IN EGGLESHALL 2025

Exciting news!

Santa and his sleigh will be visiting various parts of the town on the 12th, 16th and 22nd December and stopping for a chat at designated points on the route.

Routes and stopping points will be advertised on social media closer to the time.



Scouts Christmas Post Service

Once again, the First Eccleshall Scouts will be offering their Christmas Postal service for the delivery of festive cards to homes within in the 30 mph area of Eccleshall. Each card will be delivered for the price of 50p, a bargain compared with current postal charges and the funds raised will benefit the local Scout Group. They will be collecting cards outside the High Street library in Eccleshall on three Saturday dates, November 29, December 6th and 13th between 9am and 12 noon.





ECCLESHALL
PARISH



7th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

27 - 30 NOVEMBER 2025

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, ECCLESHALL, ST21 6BY

HOT & COLD DRINKS, HOME MADE CAKES,
MINCE PIES, & SNACKS ON SALE

**FREE
ENTRY**

OPENING TIMES:

THURSDAY | 27 NOV | 5 - 7PM

FRIDAY | 28 NOV | 10 - 5PM

SATURDAY | 29 NOV | 10 - 5PM

SUNDAY | 30 NOV | 11 - 5PM



Come & experience a truly
Christmasy event & experience a
wonderful display of individually
decorated Christmas trees.



@holytrinityeccleshall



WHAT'S
ON IN
ECCLESHALL

*This Advent Sunday, Eccleshall High
Street comes to life for longer, to launch...*

A Very Eccleshall Christmas.

Sunday 30th November 2025, 12-7pm

Christmas Trees | Live Music | Santa |
Lantern Parade | Panto' Cast | Treasure Trails
| Lights Switch-On | Carols | Food |
Shopping....& much more!

Jointly Funded by:



Funded by
UK Government



Stafford
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Eccleshall Parish
Council & The
Ecclian Society

Eccleshall Parish Council Freedom of the Parish Awards

It is six years since the Parish Council presented Freedom of the Parish Awards. The Council considered that the four residents indicated below, have given a valuable contribution to our community and therefore, qualified for such an award this year.

Jon Ball: for taking over Eccleshall Library, on behalf of Mercia Rotary, in 2019 when the library became community volunteer lead. Jon recruited, directed and supported the volunteer team to establish an efficient, well run library for the community, guiding the volunteer team through the difficult times during covid. Jon was presented with his award on 27 August in front of some 40 people in the library. Sadly, he died eight days later.



The following residents were presented with their awards on 12 October during the Civic Service at Holy Trinity Church.

Jon Araklitis: Jon has been serving the people of Eccleshall, and beyond, with fish and chips for 45 years. Jon takes great pride in the quality of his products. He has also given many young people the opportunity for work experience while they are at college or waiting to go to university. Jon has also supported many local events. To serve the people of Eccleshall for 45 years is an amazing achievement.

Article continues overleaf:

Eccleshall Parish Council Freedom of the Parish Awards (cont.)

Gill Bertram: Gill is a founding member of the Ecclesian Society, and for years she and her husband Peter, ensured that all new residents of Eccleshall were given a welcome pack. Gill opens her garden as part of Eccleshall Open Gardens weekend and raises funds for Katharine House Hospice by selling plants and serving food and drinks in her garden. She has also opened her beautiful garden, for many years, as part of the National Garden Scheme, firmly putting Eccleshall on the map by attracting visitors from far and wide, even Australia.

John Baldry: John Chaired the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme from 2009 to earlier this year. During this time, he managed to complete many projects aimed at helping Eccleshall residents feel safe and comfortable in our homes. He was in regular touch with the police and kept people informed of any unusual events or issues to watch out for in our community. For many years John also ran the speed watch team that helped to keep our roads safe in and around Eccleshall.

It is very unfortunate that there seemed to be no one to take over from John.

Ros Taylor

Chairman of Eccleshall

Parish Council



Beech Road Community Park

The Parish Council project to undertake a complete refurbishment of Beech Road park was completed in July 2025, to provide a fabulous community park for all to enjoy. A formal opening ceremony was held on Friday 15th August, when the Mayor of Stafford, Cllr. Jenny Barron, cut the ribbon to declare the park officially open.

Original Space:

The Parish Council and the group of residents who have been instrumental in supporting this project will be working on phase two over the coming months, to enhance the area with a sensory planting scheme.

And Now!



NOTE: we have had reports of dogs off lead in the park and incidences of fouling ~ please consider your community and keep the area free from dog fouling and follow the guidance on the signs for correct use of the area.

Eccleshall Library Literary Festival

On Friday, 12 and Saturday, 13 September, Eccleshall Library was delighted to hold a Literary Festival.

Friday, 12 September was Children's Day. Two groups, of around 40 children each, came down from Bishops Lonsdale Academy to the library for a talk from Barbara Mitchelhill. Her talk featured the heroine of her book 'Secret Suffragette'. The children were encouraged to dress up as Suffragettes and hold banners. Barbara is a local children's author and has always loved making up stories. She has written many books for 7-9 year olds and 9-11 year old children. She has won many awards over the years for her wonderful stories where the leading characters are always children.

On the evening of 12 September the Prize Giving Ceremony was held for the winners and runners up of the 500-word competition. Children entered their own stories, and the three winners of each age category were encouraged to read their own stories to the audience. The North Staffs Arts Society kindly awarded a grant of £250 for the event, this enabled the library to give each child that entered the competition, a certificate and a book. It was a wonderful evening that many family and friends attended.



On Saturday, 13 September, five authors attended the library. Each author presented their writing styles in very different ways.



Our first author was Kasim Ali. Kasim, originally from Birmingham, writes mainly about his first love, family obligations and finding your way in life in a multi-cultural world. His current book is 'Who Will Remain'. He was interviewed by Liz Gardner from Burton Library.

Richard Rimington, our second author, is predominantly a science fiction writer who self publishes his books on Amazon, in particular the 'Infinite Void' series. Richard is an expert on the history of Sci-Fi, and gave a fascinating talk charting the development and changes in Sci-Fi from the 19th century. Richard was originally from Eccleshall and attended Bishops Lonsdale Academy.



Jeanie Mehta read excerpts from her current book 'Hold Fast'. This book, and her first novel 'Unsuitable Girl', are mainly autobiographical and articulate real events, embellished with fictional dramatic turns against the terrifying backdrop of thousands of Ugandans who could not escape their own country and the evolving politics of our own country from 1964 to the present day.

Eccleashall Library Literary Festival (cont.)

Ruth Derham writes nonfiction books about Victorian life. Her first book entitled 'Bertrand's Brother' concerned the life of Frank Russell and his colourful career. Her second book 'Decadent Divorce' highlights the sexual inequality of the age, particularly in relation to marriage laws and the scandal and sensation that contrasted sharply with the Victorian notion of family life.



Zoe Sharp is an 'edge-of-your-seat mystery and thriller writer who has written many books featuring her no-nonsense ex-Special Forces trainee turned bodyguard heroine, Charlie Fox, as well as the Blake & Byron mystery series and the McColl & Weston psychological thrillers. Zoe, interviewed by Liz Gardner from Burton Library, gave us a fascinating insight into her life and background.

We were very pleased that Olive Italian were happy to support the Literary Festival by offering a discount to anyone who came to the festival and then booked a meal in their restaurant on the 13 September.

The Literary Festival was very successful and would not have been so without all the hard work of the group of dedicated library volunteers who made this event possible.

Cllr. Ros Taylor.

Community Interest Topics and Presenters

<u>Date</u>	<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Topic</u>
2025		
20 November	Caroline Spiers	My Mum flew Spitfires Rita Baines lived in Eccleshall until her death in 2007
2026		
15 January	Eccleshall Fire Service	Fire safety in the home
19 February	Sally McMahon	An update on the work of the Midlands Air Ambulance
19 March	David Glade	First Responders Eccleshall Serving the Community
23 April	PCSO Gareth Higgins	Crime Prevention Advice
21 May	To Be Confirmed	
18 June	Dan Myatt	The Wonder of Waste This talk will include a virtual tour around a power station

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.

ECCLESHALL COMMUNITY LIBRARY

UPCOMING CHILDRENS EVENTS

CUDDLY TOY SLEEPOVER

Bring a cuddly toy of your choice for a night of fun at Eccleshall Library.

Your chosen toy will have a fun sleepover whilst you sleep soundly in your own bed at home. Well behaved toys will receive a certificate and a medal.



February half term - fun 2 hour activities will be available during the week, at the library and Holy Trinity Church.

Dates and activity details will be published on social media and in the library soon

Free monthly library events programme available in the foyer - Drop in and see what we have to offer!

How to get in touch:

Tel: 01785 854180

email: eccleshall.library@staffordshire.gov.uk

When to Visit:

Monday: closed

Tuesday: 9am-5pm

Wednesday: 9am-1pm

Thursday: 9am-5pm

Friday: 9am-5pm

Saturday: 9am-1pm

Sunday: closed



PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR BALTI PALACE IN ECCLESHALL

The Balti Palace has been awarded a 'Certificate of Achievement' for being recognised as the 'Best Indian Restaurant in Staffordshire' at the Tommy Miah's International Indian Chef & Hospitality Awards 2025. This was presented on 21 September at the ILEC Conference Centre in London.

The Owner and Proprietor of the Balti Palace, Mohammed Hussain, is very overwhelmed and honoured with this award as his establishment was put forward for the award by his very satisfied customers.

Mo held a special evening on 23 October and invited guests, such as our Labour Member of Parliament, Leigh Ingham; Councillor Jenny Barron, Mayor of Stafford; County Councillor Jeremy Pert; and Ros Taylor, Chairman of Eccleshall Parish Council as well as members of the Eccleshall Rugby, Football and Cricket Clubs that Mo sponsors, to celebrate his success.

The Parish Council are delighted that this local restaurant has achieved this honour and wish to offer congratulations to Mo and all his staff.



Biodiversity and The Allotments (A Personal View)

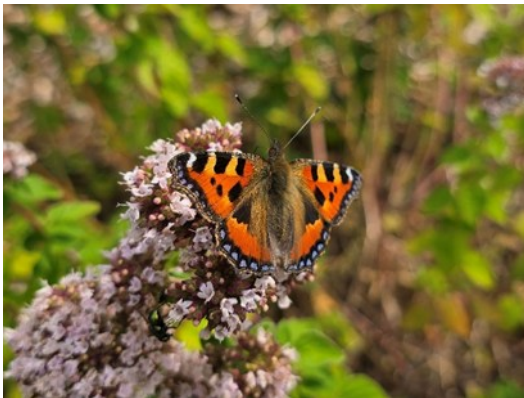
In the summer of 2025, the Allotment Association was asked to complete a survey looking at our biodiversity credentials. This was just a part of a larger project by the Parish Council.

As a coalition of gardeners, we believe we are, by our existence, defenders of the local ecology. However, this did get us thinking about what we do and where we might do more.

Anyone who walks around the allotments will see that many plots have small sections set aside for flowers. When the weather favours them, they are covered with butterflies, bees and other insects. You may not realise that most of the food crops that we dedicate our time to also have flowers at some stage of their growth and these,



too, attract interest from wildlife. In fact, if it were not for the pollinators, many wouldn't yield anything for us to eat.



Those who work the plots will also tell you of the varied fauna they see. Frogs and newts are not uncommon. The birdsong is a joy and often a robin will accompany you as you turn the soil.

Yes, there are some unwelcome guests. My personal number one enemy is probably the slugs. It is difficult to think of any mitigating characteristics of these slimy

molluscs. They can strip transplanted runner beans of their leaves in a day. They love a cabbage or cauliflower, and they are the scourge of potatoes. Some of the growers favour a variety of potatoes called Kestrel as they

are known for their resistant to these villains. I wish somebody would tell the slugs.

Butterflies can coexist with cabbages, but the gardener needs to take precautions. I see many cabbage whites on my plot, but rarely do they get into my brassica cage.

I do know of one grower who is very philosophical about sharing her hard work with the pests. "So long as the mice don't eat all my strawberries, I am happy", she once told me.



I personally would love to see bee hives on the site, a view not shared by everyone. But someone would need to look after them and I know nothing about keeping bees and they are not allowed at the allotments anyway.



Having an allotment is not all about weeding and digging, although there is plenty of that. I have conversations with members from time to time who tell me of the positive effect that having a plot has on their mental health. There is little more therapeutic than relaxing in a chair on your plot and just taking in the glory of nature

that surrounds you. Bring a picnic, several do. A glass of red wine is not against the rules - as far as I'm aware.

If an allotment sounds like something that would appeal to you, drop me an email at eccleshallaa@gmail.com, and I'll get back to you and gladly show you around.

Andy Iliffe

Encouraging *biodiversity* in beautiful Eccleshall Parish



In accordance with Environment Act 2021, Eccleshall Parish Council is committed to protecting, promoting and enhancing biodiversity within the council area. Since July 2021, a working group of parish councillors have been working to achieve this in the following ways:

- Considering the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- Managing its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- Supporting local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- Encouraging and supporting other organisations within the parish / town to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- Supporting residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

Swifts migrate to the UK from Africa each year, and only spend a few months with us while they raise their chicks. Swifts begin arriving from late April, with most arriving in May. Swifts are stunning – the UK's fastest bird in level flight, faster than a Peregrine Falcon in a dive.

They like to live in houses and churches, squeezing through tiny gaps to nest inside roofs. But as more old buildings are renovated and gaps in soffits are closed up, Swift nest sites are fast disappearing and consequently Swift numbers are plummeting. They're now on the UK's Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern.

To help us improve on this situation in Eccleshall, Holy Trinity Church has agreed to allow us to site some Swift Boxes on the tower of the Church. The nests will have live cameras so we will be able to watch if the Swifts nest in the boxes and follow the development of their chicks.

Many insects reap the benefits of bluebells which flower earlier than many other plants. Woodland butterflies, bees and hoverflies all feed on their nectar. Bees can even 'steal' the nectar from bluebells by biting a hole in the bottom of the flower, reaching the nectar without the need to pollinate the flower.

We are delighted that on 14th November, the Eccleshall Scouts will be helping Eccleshall Parish Council by planting 480 English bluebell bulbs on the open space adjacent to public toilets which will help extend the flowering season for pollinators as well as providing a lovely spring display.





We are working with local Butterfly Conservation groups to identify which butterflies in our area are in decline and what we could do to halt the decline, e.g. planting of pollinating flowers and food sources for caterpillars.

A display will be mounted in the library in the spring / summer of 2026.

The Eccles Society and the Parish Council are currently investigating a joint project with local garden centres to encourage creation of bee/ butterfly friendly flower planters to be created by members of the community next summer.

The working group have been very fortunate as local expert David Cadman has joined the group bringing a wealth of knowledge and useful on-line resources regarding the state of wildlife habitats in Eccleshall Parish.

David suggested we encourage parishioners and members of community groups to download the App: **iNaturalistUK** which is used by the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. They were 4th best across Wildlife Trusts nationally in obtaining data via this app to help identify patterns of decline/ growth in flora/fauna and fungi.

A promotional graphic for iNaturalistUK. It features a green bird logo, the text 'iNaturalistUK', and a hand holding a green globe. The background is a light green with a subtle pattern.

iNaturalistUK

Help Staffordshire Wildlife Trust find out more about nature in our area

iNaturalist is a free website and app to record observations of plants and animals in nature using photographs and sound recordings.

Download the app now!

Your data will contribute to a global dataset of biodiversity which is used for science and conservation, and will help to identify areas which need to be protected.

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

Staffordshire Ecological Record

We thought this was an excellent idea and we really hope you will become involved with this opportunity to engage in supporting biodiversity in the parish. The data provided will be used to create up-to-date maps of the biodiversity in the parish which may be helpful when reviewing planning applications.

We will be looking to encourage Bishop Lonsdale School, local Nurseries; allotments and other organisations and community groups in the wider parish to get involved.

If you would like to join the working group, - please contact the Parish Clerk who will give you the date / venue of the next meeting.



CHOEUR DE CHAMBRE DES DEUX-SÈVRES CONCERT

The audience in Holy Trinity Church was transported to France on the evening of October 25th when the French choir Choeur de Chambre des Deux-Sèvres performed in a joint concert with Broughton Community Choir and the Eccleshall Community Band. They delighted the packed church with their eclectic programme which included one particularly moving improvisational piece during which the choir encircled the audience and produced waves of sound which spiralled up into the rafters of the church in a swirl of harmonics.

Eccleshall Community Band's set included a rousing performance of the Eccleshall Rondo, an original piece commissioned by the band and written by Martin Jones, accompanied by Wendy Jackson on the full-throated church organ.



After separate performances from both choirs the evening culminated in a beautiful joint performance of the Jones and Jones song "Friendship in the Air" with especially re-written lyrics in both English and French, accompanied by the band.



The Chairman of Eccleshall Parish Council, Councillor Ros Taylor, thanked the French choir and presented them with a photo book of Staffordshire as a memento of their visit.

With a glass of French wine provided in the interval, it was both a delightful and unusual evening.

Shân Jones

Grand Eccleshall Singathon 2025

On Saturday 18th October the Grand Eccleshall Singathon once again filled the Community Centre for a full day of music, dance and song with a huge range of local choirs, musicians and performers taking part. This exciting event took over the entire building with a great variety of choirs and larger groups performing in the Main Hall with a wide range of musical styles (from Newcastle Male Voice



Choir to the Loud Mouth Women) while the smaller rooms were put into action as a Live Lounge (from singer songwriter Richard Farnsworth to a star turn by Fagin and Nancy) and the Acoustic Room with a mix of smaller groups and individuals from recorder group Tooty Flooty to saxophone quartet Gratuitous Sax.

It really was extraordinary to witness so much local musical talent with Eccleshall as the hub, and great to have such a range of ages performing. The day began with solo piano players in Pot-luck Piano and ended with a Big Sing involving all the choirs and Eccleshall Community Band.



With teas, coffees and delicious cake available all day in the Singing Café it is definitely a good idea to put next year's date in your diary.....

Saturday 17th October 2026

Go to [facebook.co.uk/Eccleshall Grand Singathon](https://facebook.co.uk/Eccleshall%20Grand%20Singathon) or visit www.eccleshallsingathon.weebly.com for photos and videos of this year's event.

Shân Jones

Christmas tree collection

Recycle your tree hassle free!



We will collect your **REAL** Christmas tree in return for a donation to help fund free care in our local community



Collections will start week commencing 5 January 2026 in postcodes:

**ST14, ST15, ST16, ST17, ST18 ST19, ST20, ST21,
WS11 WS12, WS15**

JustHelping supports volunteers, businesses and charities to contribute to their community and the environment. Our national Christmas tree collection raises essential funds for hospices and communities.

Scan to register by
4 January 2026 at:



katharine
house
hospice 
embracing life and living

Registered charity no. 1011712

Working in
partnership with

JUSTHELPING
Registered charity no. 1030888

Supported by

 **VEOLIA**

Registered company in England & Wales no. 02700516

Planning Updates

As residents are aware, Eccleshall is experiencing an unprecedented level of speculative planning applications submitted for land outside of the current settlement boundary.

Any responses made by the Parish Council will be uploaded onto the Stafford Borough Council planning portal— <https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/planning-public-access> which is searchable by the application reference number.

Copies of the representations, and other useful reference information is also available on the council's website at <https://eccleshallparishcouncil.gov.uk/local-information/planning/local-planning-updates/>

£ PARISH GRANTS £

Each year the Parish Council receives applications for financial support in the way of grants to support their club or organisation.

In the past we have supported sports clubs, social clubs, churches and new groups starting out. Recent grants have been provided to Eccleshall Community Amateur Dramatics, Katharine House and Eccleshall Indoor Bowls Club, but there is still funding available.

The council can only consider applications from organisations that provide benefits to those within the parish.

Applications should be made to the Parish Clerk ,Mrs Stacey Worden. The application is available online at:

<https://eccleshallparishcouncil.gov.uk/finances-and-documents/general-publications/>

Grime Watch

If you know of fly tipping in your area
you can report it by calling

01785 619402.

Or email the
Borough Council
at grimewatch@staffordbc.gov.uk

Eccleshall Guide

The Eccleshall Guide is online for
all your information about
Eccleshall. Guide information can
be found at:

www.eccleshallguide.org

The 2026 printed edition of the Guide
is due out in January 2026

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

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

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

Grime Watch (fly tipping):

Call 01785 619402 or

Email 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/>**