

Council news round-up

Your weekly guide to the latest news

Issue 163

9 April 2020



This week's news from around the Council.

- **Stay home to help save lives**

Remember to maintain social distancing measures this holiday weekend and keep at least two metres away from other people to avoid catching or spreading coronavirus. We're expecting more good weather and people may be tempted to ignore official advice and spend more time outside. Right now, the safest place to be is at home.

To help reduce the risk of catching or spreading coronavirus, please continue to follow the advice from Public Health England and the NHS.

- Wash your hands more often.
- Use soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Or use hand sanitiser.

Follow official NHS advice at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

- **Council services over the Easter break**

- The Council Offices will remain closed. If you have any queries, please email info@sstaffs.gov.uk and we will be in touch on Tuesday.
- All scheduled waste and recycling collections will be taking place as normal on Friday and Monday.
- The COVID-19 helpline for vulnerable residents will be open over the Easter holiday weekend.
- Baggeridge Country Park remains open and we are monitoring it on a daily basis. All amenities on site are closed and visitors are asked to abide by the recommended social distancing guidelines and keep at least two metres (six ft) away from other people. Car parking capacity has been reduced to 30 cars at any one time.
- Strawberry Lane and Sytch Lane Cemeteries remain open on a daily basis from 9am to 8pm. Again, visitors are asked to abide by the recommended social distancing guidelines.
- The Leisure Centres in Cheslyn Hay, Codsall, Penkridge and Wombourne are closed but please follow their Facebook pages for information about activities you can participate in via the internet and social media.
- Our Environmental Health and Licensing team will continue to monitor businesses and compliance with COVID-19 regulations and liaise with the Police.

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- Our other services will be closed until Tuesday but the Council always remains open for emergencies out of hours - call **01902 696000**.

- **COVID-19 helpline**

If you are over 70 or under 70 with underlying health conditions, self-isolating but have no friends, family or neighbours to help, please contact the South Staffordshire COVID-19 helpline, your dedicated community support helpline. The helpline will be open over the Easter holiday weekend, 9am to 5pm.

Tel: **01902 696499**

Email: Covid-19@sstaffs.gov.uk

Please only use this telephone number and email address if you are considered vulnerable and in this category. For any other customer enquiries, please contact our Customer Services team on **01902 696000** or email info@sstaffs.gov.uk, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

- **Small business grants**

Officers at the Council are working hard to process all applications for small business grants to ensure all eligible firms receive their funding as soon as possible. We will be making payments on a daily basis, in the order applications were received, and the first BACS payments commenced on Wednesday 8 April 2020. We hope to process each individual application within seven working days of submission, although there may be another two days before funds are cleared through the banking system. We will ensure no applications are omitted and that every single eligible firm receives the funding they are due as soon as practically possible. Thank you for your patience whilst we work to process several hundred separate applications.

For more information about business support and how to apply for a small business grant, click [here](#).

- **Beware of fraud and cybercrime**

We're continuing to see an escalation in cybercrime and fraud in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Criminals are experts at impersonating people, organisations and the police and taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe. Please be on your guard and don't click on links or attachments in suspicious email or text messages. Click [here](#) for more information or visit www.actionfraud.police.uk.

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- **Domestic abuse - support available**

Domestic abuse can often get worse during times of stress and uncertainty. If you are in an abusive relationship and need help, there are a number of organisations who can help and here are some useful telephone numbers.

National Domestic Violence Helpline: **0808 2000 3778** (24 hours)

New Era, a domestic violence abuse service offering help to all those affected by domestic abuse in Staffordshire

Tel: **0300 303 3778**

<http://www.new-era.uk>

- **Health and wellbeing in the home**

A dedicated web page has been created on the Council's Leisure website where customers and staff can access free online home workouts. The information contains advice and links signposting to other websites such as the NHS as well as links to YouTube channels including videos showcasing some of our own instructors delivering sessions. For home workouts click [here](#). We will be extending the list as our instructors continue to develop videos of home workouts.

In addition, this section includes additional pages to support people in general at home with advice on mental health and wellbeing, how to keep children active at home and how to work safely from home. Content is being developed and added all the time so please check back regularly. Click [here](#) to view.

- **South Staffordshire Connect service now available**

The South Staffordshire Connect dial-a-ride bus service is now available. This local, bookable bus service is once again helping many people who struggle to get out and about and it is aimed at residents who live away from regular bus routes or who find it difficult to use a standard bus. The new Connect service operates between 10am and 3pm to three zones. For more information, please click on the following for more information - [Zone 1](#), [Zone 2](#) and [Zone 3](#).



Everyone is encouraged to submit news items, please email: comms@sstaffs.gov.uk