

Staffordshire Local Community Fund 2015 Report



Introduction

County Councillors play a vital role in their communities - being local leaders, as advocates of the County Council and in making sure that the views of constituents influence priorities and services.

The Staffordshire Local Community Fund is one of the most direct and flexible ways that County Councillors can respond to local needs.

The Fund gives every Staffordshire County Councillor a sum of money - £10,000 in 2015 - to spend on supporting community projects in their area.

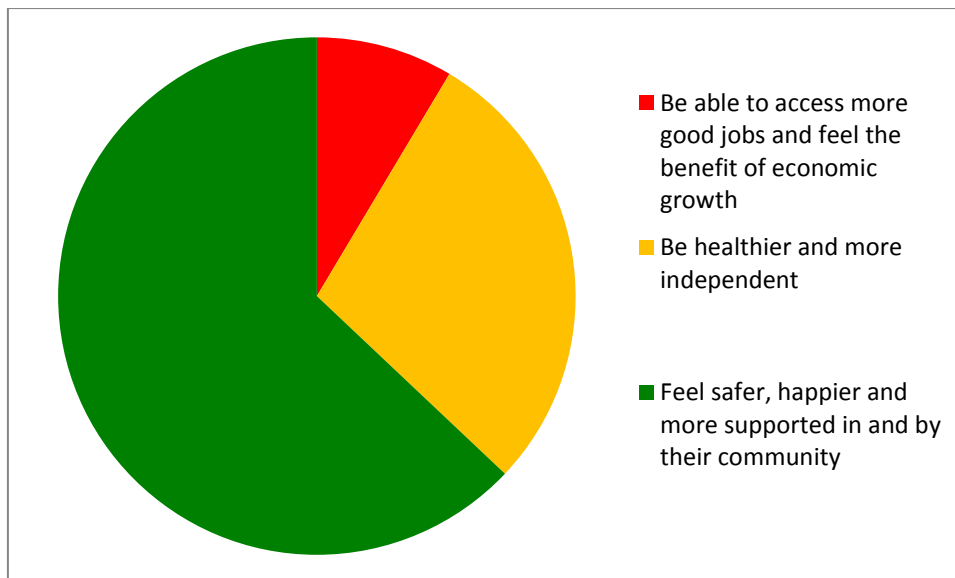
For maximum community benefit, County Councillors are encouraged to support projects happening that year which contribute to one or more of the County Council's three priority outcomes which are:

- Be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefit of economic growth
- Be healthier and more independent
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community

This report gives the Council the opportunity to reflect on how the Fund is making a difference to Staffordshire communities. It highlights the breadth of activities supported through the Fund from promoting healthy and active lifestyles, activities and equipment for children and young people, celebrating national and community events to projects to reduce social isolation.

The story so far in 2015/16

- The number of projects supported is 676
- The funding committed to projects so far is **£579,987** with **£27,696** payment pending.
- Approximately **£1,157.257** of match funding has been generated in 2015/16, against total project costs of over **£1.8m**
- The following pie chart shows how the funding is distributed across the County Council's three priority outcomes.



A selection of Projects supported by members

Cannock Chase

Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets (Hednesford)

A grant of £900 was allocated towards mini-bus hire and the cost of various activities, courses and camps for 16 members of the group. Activities included a flying day at Tatenhill Airfield, Snow sports day, weekend training at Waterbeach, visit to rifle range to gain marksman awards, Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions at bronze level, Aviation activity and a camp at Norfolk. In addition money was put towards buying items of uniform for members.

Hednesford Valley High School

A joint councillor grant of £2,000 enabled the school to buy five planters and plants to install at the front of the school to enhance the environment and showcase the horticultural work carried out by the students.

Community Life Church – After School Club

Three councillors joined forces to provide funding of £865 to set up a weekly After School Club where children from three primary schools in Heath Hayes receive a freshly prepared meal and spent time doing activities including art and craft, board games and reading. The money paid for a food hygiene course and DBS check for each volunteer and a store cupboard, large freezer and kitchen equipment.

Pye Green Youth and Communities – People in Need - Portacabin

The Group provides food and drink for the homeless and people in need on a daily basis. The portacabin, donated by Cannock Rotary Club has been used by the Pye Green youth and community services for nearly eight years to provide food at lunchtimes five days a week. Volunteers are on hand and the services are available from Monday to Friday, feeding around 25-30 people a day. In winter, they also provide warm clothing. Three councillors provided funding of £2,897 to enable the scheme to continue to run.

Community Engagement Support Services – Community Garden

A grant of £1,000 provided training workshops, large skip, fencing equipment and four large timber planters for young people and elderly residents to plant out a new community garden to reflect Rugeley as a market town. A quiet area and sensory equipment will provide a sanctuary for young people with disabilities and volunteers will replant the area each year.

East Staffordshire

Dove Valley Swimming Club – Presentation Evening



The swimming club holds an annual gala in a presentation evening for all members and their families.

Funding of £500 was used to buy trophies and medals and pay for a DJ and buffet. The club was established in January 1965 and one of its former members was gold medal winner Adam Peaty who started his swimming career with them in 2010.

Burton Albion Community Trust

A grant of £977 was used to set up a weekly drop in football session in partnership with Anglesey Academy and Uxbridge Mosque, specifically targeting Asian Football programmes. The grant will pay for first six months of the programme which will enable engagement with target audiences.

Uttoxeter Heritage Trust

Funding of £580 was put towards essential basic first aid training by St. John's Ambulance to include a training session in fire safety awareness by Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service for the volunteers who run the Redfern's Cottage - Museum of Uttoxeter Life.

Abbots Bromley, Uttoxeter and Burton NFU – Uttoxeter renewal project

A grant of £3,739 was used to support a marketing programme to raise awareness of the town as part of the Town Deal as a place to shop, do business and visit. The funding was used for marketing and promotional materials with the local NFU Branch acting as fund holders for the partnership.

Pulse for Music

A grant of £500 was put towards a 12 week Arts Café at the Burton Brewhouse Café. The funding was used to pay for three artists and projects managers who provided two workshop sessions which included photography, digital arts, sculptures, ceramics, mosaic, song-writing and percussion. These sessions were aimed to equip vulnerable adults with new skills and to build confidence.



Lichfield

Cherry Orchard Garden Services (COGS) CIC

The group received funding of £800. This was put towards a Sage barista express, hygiene training, signage, tables and chairs and kitchen sundries for a new coffee shop 'Burntwood Beans' which is run by a small group of volunteers. The coffee shop, situated in the library provides a café service for 15 hours over the week and one weekend day. In addition Bromford, the local social housing provider, run a weekly support day for unemployed adults who help to run the coffee shop.

Whittington Tapestry



The project, to create a mixed media tapestry, which depicts the history, present and future of the Whittington site, received funding of £1,000. This was put towards the purchase of craft materials, session workers, printing of patterns, postage, and stationery and funding of the opening ceremony in partnership with the local community, schools and cadet forces. The project brought together a number of different elements of the military community with a range of individuals and community groups. The finished tapestry will be displayed at the entrance to the newly completed Defence Medical Services (Whittington) Training Wing.

Lichfield Scrap Barn - Saxon Hill School Connect CIC

Lichfield Scrap Barn was set up in 2012 by Saxon Hill School to provide genuine work based learning opportunities for its pupils. The Scrap Barn collects clean business waste from local businesses and sells these items to community groups and the public as low cost arts and craft equipment. The business has grown and joint councillor funding of £2,000 was put towards the installation of a mezzanine floor, which will create extra workshop space. The store is also undergoing a major transformation with a focus more on a traditional craft shop as well as on recycling. Some of the funding was used for the design and printing of new signage and stationery.



Newcastle

Newcastle Community Transport

Three councillors joined together to provide funding of £2,750 to be put towards the purchase and adaptation of a wheelchair accessible Mini-bus to provide a door to door community transport service for the people of Newcastle and Kidsgrove areas mobility problems or find it difficult to use public services.

Kidsgrove and District Angling Association

The association leases the fishing rights to Bathpool Lake but Canadian pondweed, a highly invasive species, has become so prolific it has rendered the lake unfishable for many months of the year. Funding of £936 was used to buy Dyofix blue dye which eradicates and suppresses the growth of the weed. The natural based dye is widely used in fisheries and is non-toxic to fish and other animals and stops the penetration of UV light which the weed depends on. The funding also paid for two life jackets.

Buddies 4 Foster Carers

Funding of £1,600 was used to form a 'Coding Club'. The project is aimed directly at children in care and foster carers. The money was used to buy six Raspberry Pi (Starter Kits) which are low cost, credit card sized computers that plug into any normal TV or monitor and enable people to explore computing and teach computer programming. The funding also paid for gamepads and other add ons. The project also linked in with the Forest Skills project with the aim that Coding Club members took the lead in using technology to capture and monitor wildlife on Cannock Chase and share it with the wider population of Children in Care.

Turner Hodgkiss Community Nature Reserve

The Nature Reserve is a haven for local wildlife covering habitats including freshwater, marsh/bog, grassland, hedgerow and woodland. A grant of £500 was used to buy a bat detector, moth trap guide books and wild bird feed for the nature reserve.

The bat detector and moth trap will greatly improve the surveys and enhance the enjoyment and education of visiting members of the public and school children and the guide books will aid identification. The wild bird seed will attract a range of birds to the reserve and ensure that the birds who have come to rely on the feed continue to be fed.



South Staffordshire

High Flyers (South Staffs) Ltd

Funding of £700 was put towards the MyChoicePad for ten iPads. The app enables those without speech to be able to have the word they choose spoken for them, or be shown the appropriate Makaton sign, or show a picture or photo so they can communicate. There is also an associated programme that records the progress made by individual members so that appropriate support work can be given.

Friends of Barnfields Sandbeds



The Barnfields Sandbeds is a 15 acres site to the north of Brewood. Formerly sand quarry and then used for many years as site for indiscriminate dumping, it was acquired by South Staffordshire District Council (SSDC) in the early 2000s. The site is a tremendous natural resource and haven for wildlife.

Funding of £200 was used to buy native British plug plants and bulbs to improve the quarry.

Home alone at Christmas

A grant of £500 was put towards Christmas meals, small gifts and entertainment to help the lonely, isolated and vulnerable older generation who have no family or friends.

A visit from Father Christmas and live music kept guests entertained.



The project was founded in 2010 for local elderly residents who were spending the Christmas period alone and isolated from their community.

Harrison Recreation Ground and Welfare

Joint funding of £1,594 from two local councillors was put towards improving access to 'green' areas and providing children's' play equipment for families and people with mobility issues at the Harrison Sports and Social Club. The grounds to the Club are readily accessible for use by community members virtually every day of the year.

Stafford

Baswich Canal Group

Two councillors supported a grant of £600 for a noticeboard and towpath mooring rings to promote local shops and amenities in Baswich and Weeping Cross to canal and towpath users it was installed along St. Thomas Bridge to enable visiting boaters to easily stop to visit the local shops, pubs and restaurants.



Barlaston Herons WI

The WI group received a grant of £902 which was put towards the cost of room hire, guest speaker fees, literature printing and six delegate places to Spring and autumn council meetings to provide educational opportunities to group members and to build new skills and take part in activities to enhance their local communities. The Group, founded in 2013, currently has 40 members and meets on a monthly basis.

Cerebral Palsy Computer Suite



Funding of £765 was put towards the rent of a room at the Northfield Centre and to pay for services, stationery, the provision of a lead tutor and support assistants to provide training sessions in IT and computer skills to persons over 19 who have cerebral palsy or associated disabilities.

Stone Lions Club Mobility Scheme

A grant of £1,000 was put towards funding for shop walkers and wheel chairs to loan to members of the community who are referred to the Club by local clinics all part of the Lions mobility scheme charity.

Staffordshire Women's Aid

Members from across the County joined forces to support a project to provide furniture for new purpose built facility with 12 self-contained flats. The flats will be used as a refuge for women and children suffering domestic violence and accommodation for more complex needs including substance misuse and mental health issues. The project received a grant of £2,426.49.

Staffordshire Moorlands

Wetton Village Hall

A grant of £250 was used to fund the printing and display of historic photographs on local agriculture and industry; the village school; village life and houses and farm buildings in the village.



35 photographs were mounted in seven frames and displayed in the Village Hall and once again generate memories amongst the older villagers and give an impression on how life used to be for the younger generation.

East Midlands ROSPA – Cheadle Fire Station

Funding of £400 was put towards the purchase of a laptop to give PowerPoint lessons on the Highway Code to train anyone with a full driving licence to become more confident, safer and better drivers. All tuition is provided free of charge.

Kingsley Village Hall

A grant of £500 to replace the central heating boiler with a new a rated energy efficient boiler making the facilities more comfortable for users and to reduce heating costs also attracting new groups to hire the facilities.

Sandy Lane Centre

A grant of £918 provided a ramp, handrail and a bin & scoop for rock salt which will provide a safer access to the front of the community centre. The centre offers facilities for families, all age groups and senior citizens and is regularly used by various groups, parties, community meetings and a polling station and for church services.

Norton House Community Centre for Older People

Funding of £800 was put towards a programme of refurbishment of a former Red Cross Centre in Leek which was registered as a community asset and purchased by the group for community use.

The funding was put towards painting and redecorating, upgrading to emergency lighting and fire alarm systems, improvements to the disabled toilets and disabled access and repairs to the front stone wall.

Tamworth

Tamworth Scouts and Guides Gang Show

All six Tamworth councillors joined together to provide a grant of £1,650 to put towards hiring the Assembly Rooms, costumes, make-up and technical hire to enable the scouts and guides to put on a Gang Show running over four nights. The show gives youngsters the opportunity to learn new skills in theatre production and performance which gives them a confidence boost.

Manna House/Elim Church

Five Tamworth councillors joined forces to provide funding of £5,200 which was put towards an architect, a structural engineer, building regulation fees, building works and carpeting to provide the Manna House/Elim Church with increased space for their work with children, teenagers and families. The scheme runs a range of children's and youth activities during the week as well as a thriving Parents and Tots group.

Tamworth Amateur Boxing Club

The club was awarded £2,000 to be used as part of their project to convert a small part of their gym into two community meeting rooms/classrooms. The funding was used to buy an Interactive White Board to provide classroom support.

As well as a gym and meeting and learning spaces, the Cornerpost Education Centre also includes a kitchen, café and beauty room which is available for local small businesses to hire.

Community Together CIC



A grant of £450 was used to fund Firework Art and Christmas School Lantern Workshops. The project carried out workshops in local schools to create Firework Art Pictures which were displayed at Tamworth Castle. The funding was also used to pay for materials for pupils to decorate Christmas Lanterns to form a lantern parade as part of Tamworth's Christmas Lights switch on event.

Fund arrangements for 2016 – 2017

- **In 2016 each councillor will have allocated to them £7,500.**
- Applications may be submitted from 1 April 2016. The deadline for all applications is 16 December 2016. Please allow sufficient time from submitting the forms to any deadlines that may apply to each project.
- All projects must be in a position to be completed in the financial year from April 2016 - 31 March 2017.
- The Staffordshire Local Community Fund remains a positive way of encouraging social action and responding to the community engagement agenda which reinforces the role of councillors alongside the need for councils to be bold and decisive for the benefit of their communities.
- County councillors who are standing for District or Borough elections on 5 May 2016 will be unable to submit applications for approval until 6 May 2016

Assistance for Members

- **Contact officer** Heather Collingwood, Support Officer, Member and Democratic Services - 01785 276019 or heather.collingwood@staffordshire.gov.uk
- Advice on supporting community projects is also available to County Councillors from the Community Partnership Officers.

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Community Fund web page includes lists of projects supported.

- <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/yourcouncil/slcf/home.aspx>