Staffordshire Local Community Fund
2014 Report
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 each a year - 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 and projects to reduce social isolation.

- Cover photograph – Saxon & Roman Re-enactors
The number of projects supported is 686.

The funding committed to projects so far is £594,192 with £21,745 payment pending.

Approximately £1,168,088 of match funding has been generated in 2014/15, against total project costs of over £2m.

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

**Hagley Bowling Club**

A grant of £1,000 was used by the Club to buy equipment to remove standing water from the bowling green. The Club prides itself as a family friendly club that offers a range of competitions and activities.

Top dressing, fertilizer and stone chippings were also purchased to improve the condition of the green.

### Miners Get Together

Since 1974 electricians who worked at West Cannock No. 5 Colliery have got together every year socially. 2014 marked their 40th anniversary and a grant of £754 was used towards a hog roast and buffet and commemorative photographs for the 40th anniversary of their ‘get togethers’.

### Norton Canes Family Fun Club

The Club received a donation of £250 which was used towards outdoor play equipment, scooters, pram, seesaw and ride on toys for the holiday club run by volunteers. The Club was launched in 2010 by two local Mums who realised that there was not much to do in the village for younger children during school holidays.

### DADS (Dads and Disability Support) – Sibling Support Group

DADS were awarded £1,000 towards the funding of a flat screen TV, X-box and three computers to provide a youth support group for siblings of disabled children. The money enabled them to put on regular two hour sessions where siblings of disabled children get together to relax either by playing on the X-box and computer or doing crafts whilst offering them the chance to talk about their feelings.

### Cycle - R

£2,000 enabled this charity to improve their workshop facilities. The company recycles bicycles to provide training, qualifications and work experience to the long term unemployed and youth groups. From there, low cost, high quality bicycles are sold on to those who need them.
Three councillors joined forces to give £3,500 to enable 50 Year 4 children to be involved in levels of learning over the summer holidays based on World War One. The children had the opportunity to work with professional theatre students including puppetry and to perform their theatre piece to peers, parents and carers.

Four councillors gave a total of £3,000 to support young parents and families with children up to five years of age. The funding enabled the group to commission specialist training and events sessions for parents covering Paediatric First Aid, music and literacy, staff development and a day trip for service users.

Uttoxeter children now have more to enjoy when visiting Bramshall Park thanks to a donation of £2,000. The funding was put towards Trim Trail equipment which consisted of stepping pods, balance weave, natural play features, a tepee and slide. The equipment ensured that a range of ages were catered for.

Funding of £700 was used to buy mobile vegetable racks to display fruit and vegetables outside the community shop. The shop has 60 volunteers who work hard to entice more local residents and visitors to purchase produce from the shop and encourage more involvement in village activities that are advertised through the shop.

A grant of £490 went towards a directional sign and installation at Mill Holme Pingle a four acre planted forest with open space to raise awareness of the natural recreation area for the residents of Yoxall.
A grant of £1,578 enabled the school to buy a Yahama digital piano to raise the profile and increase the uptake of music lessons and extra-curricular music and drama as well as raising the standards across the curriculum.

Funding of £200 was put towards Saxon and Roman re-enactors and costume hire as part of the Wall Village Open Day. The event included popular children’s events such as dressing as a Roman, training as a gladiator with a resident centurion and decorating a sword.

A grant of £1,200 supported by three councillors provided funding towards wheelbarrows, marketing, printing, publicity materials, entry fees, planters, pots, compost, plants and prizes for the schools planting competition as part of Blooming Lichfield.

£1,500 was put towards tutor costs, the purchase of two tablets to provide Friday night taster computer sessions for the community. Additionally, Skype access will be available to enable the disabled and the elderly to contact their families and friends to help reduce social isolation.

White lines, bollards and increased bins were put in place thanks to a £951.85 grant. The former neglected shopping centre has been transformed into a vibrant functioning space, the shoppers car park has been repaired and resurfaced, potholes have been filled, walkways made safe and lighting has been improved.
Four councillors joined together to support the 2014 Toy Appeal with a grant of £2,421.78. The Toy Appeal has been running for 10 years and provides over 12,000 toys for local needy children up to the age of 16. The scheme was created so that some of the most vulnerable receive a present on Christmas Day.

Silverdale Elim Church Community Centre

Funding of £2,000 was put towards funding for materials to construct a suitable partitioned space within Cornerstones Community Centre for a Police post in the village of Silverdale. The Community Centre had an under-utilised office which was suitable for a police post. The Community Centre has excellent car parking facilities and is in a good location making it easily accessible. There is also a Youth Club held on Friday night attended by 50 teenagers. Having the police based in the same building will help to build more positive relationships and help to alleviate the anti-social behaviour issues that have caused problems in Silverdale.

Kidsgrove Care Solutions – Brighter Nights Social Club

Two councillors put forward a total of £2,000 to provide funding towards room hire, equipment, stationery and a website for the Brighter Nights Social Club. The Club meets weekly and is aimed at Adults and Young People (14 years and over) with disabilities giving them the opportunity to make new friends and meet new people. Activities include cake making/decorating, crafts and card making, sports multi-skills, aerobic exercises, a health and beauty nail bar, pool, table tennis, skittles and darts.

Almshouse Trust

A £1,000 grant provided funding to replace gas fires with electric fires for the safety of elderly residents living in the Almshouse at Cross Heath.

Newcastle under Lyme College

Funding of £1,000 was awarded to the college to build on the success of the last year’s Primary College initiative. Students will be organising and leading a series of sessions for year 5 and 6 pupils who will visit the college to use its state of the art facilities. Activities planned include robotics, engineering, art and design, digital media, computer programming and games design.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Funding of £720 was awarded to the school to celebrate their Walking Bus Scheme. The funding was used to publicise the scheme and to buy vouchers to reward the walking bus volunteer parents who are vital to the scheme, to hold a ‘Fitness Frenzy’ party to reward walking bus children and further promote health and wellbeing and provide a bike each for the boy and girl who have walked the most by a future date to encourage more children to walk to school each day.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gailey Canoe Club</strong></td>
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<td>Gailey Canoe Club is a marathon and sprint racing club, with an average membership of around 50 ranging from 8 – 60 years of age. £1,000 was put towards the purchase of a racing spec K2 two person kayak to improve skills of the club members. As well as improving skills, the ‘higher spec’ racing boat will give members the ability to be competitive in races.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>South Staffordshire Citizens’ Advice Bureau</strong></td>
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<td>Funding of £462 was put towards the purchase of software to assist Citizens’ Advice Bureau (CAB) advisors to upgrade their skills and knowledge and in turn give a more comprehensive service to clients in need. The CAB offers a free, confidential and impartial advice service on a variety of issues including debt, benefits, employment, family breakdown, housing, consumer issues and neighbour disputes across South Staffordshire.</td>
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<td><strong>South Staffordshire Work Club</strong></td>
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<td>Six members joined together to provide a grant of £2,758.95 to enable the work club to buy 19 laptops to provide career advice, interview techniques, benefit advice, budgeting, volunteering advice, ICT support and free job searches. The laptops will be used across the seven work clubs in South Staffordshire.</td>
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<td><strong>Marches Energy Agency</strong></td>
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<td>Three councillors joined together with a grant of £4,438 towards a range of interventions including draught proofing, secondary glazing, minor heating repairs as part of a winter resilience scheme for vulnerable households in South Staffordshire.</td>
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2014 saw the return of the Barlaston Village Show. A grant of £1,150 was put towards the hire of a marquee and generator. Show attractions included the Uttoxeter Morris Men, a children’s entertainer, a fun dog show, as well as a selection of traditional village fete attractions, various stalls gave the opportunity for local voluntary groups and clubs to showcase their scheme and raise funds. The event attracted over 1,000 visitors. The Show was also used to promote a ‘Totally Locally’ campaign encouraging residents to shop in their local community.

**Independent Community Arts Partnership (ICAP) - ‘As You Like It’**

Local schools participated in the Shakespeare Learning and Participation Outreach Programme – ‘As You Like It’ thanks to a grant from two councillors for £2,000. Several groups including young people in school and adults with mental health issues at a local day centre took part in the programme. The school children had been studying As You Like It prior to the Shakespearian performance at Stafford Castle which was set in the 1960s and were encouraged to create work inspired by artists from the period and their final artwork was on show at the Castle.

**Alleynes Academy – School Showcase**

A grant of £500 was put towards the purchase of a trophy showcase to be displayed in the School Reception area. The showcase will be used to house the Young Enterprise awards and trophies, along with the inventions and photographs from the Young Enterprise competitions.

**Castle Community Partnership**

The partnership received funding of £1,000. The project’s aim is for the Beekeeper Association representative to teach children, from three local schools, about the environment and the importance of growing wild flowers for the local bee population. Stafford Borough Council’s Street scene will plant and maintain the wild flower areas and funding will be used to buy seeds and to provide outdoor furniture for the children use.
The Swim Club is a community based project which can be easily accessed by young disabled people from the local and surrounding areas. A grant of £500 provided pool and lifeguard hire for six months and bought pool equipment. The aim of the club is to increase the participation levels (both recreational and competitive) of young disabled people in an aquatic environment contributing to improved health and social integration.

‘Homage to Heroes’ was a four day Flower Festival to commemorate ‘all who served’ during The Great War and acknowledged the Home Front as well as all those who went away to serve. St Peter’s Church, Caverswall was decorated with 23 floral displays created by local artists, each display interpreted lines from war and remembrance poems. Details of men who gave their lives were recorded on wall hangings and a brass band played. A grant of £1,000 was used towards flowers, stands, pedestals, programmes, posters, invitations, hire of brass band, publication of poems of remembrance, tree planting and a plaque to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of World War One.

£707 was used towards the purchase of safety clothing and equipment to allow young people with learning disabilities to participate in landscape gardening to improve team working, confidence and self-esteem and employment prospects.

The club, which has 48 members aged between 65 and 97 years, received a grant of £500 which was used towards room hire and funding of guest speakers for social afternoons. The Club meets fortnightly and their goal is to encourage more ladies to join them.

A grant of £700 enabled the group to install an information board highlighting biodiversity and encouraging the local community and visitors to develop an interest in local wildlife. The community worked together to design the board.
Five councillors joined forces to provide a grant of £1,000 to support the Tamworth Jobs Club. The Club offers a free service and source to jobseekers in Tamworth and operates in five areas. The Club is a free service and totally reliant on grants to keep the service going. The funding was used towards stationery, flyers, phone calls, postage, room hire and volunteer expenses. 60% of people accessing their services have gained paid employment.

Six councillors gave a collective grant of £3,317 to the Tamworth Dyslexia Information Group for funding towards two iPads and two Androids with cases, dyslexia support apps, memory sticks, graphic design, printing, room hire to provide a drop-in centre to enable adults to develop practical and technological skills to develop confidence, improve education, employment and life chances.

Funding of £450 towards gardening tools, fruit trees, plants, seeds, materials for raised beds to further develop the student’s Young Enterprise Market Garden developing their links in the community & using produce for the catering courses.

A grant of £728 was used to buy two Samba match goals, a football mannequin, tug of war ropes, football and cricket balls for those with visual impairments and tennis nets to increase participation in various sports inspired by the World Cup.

Five councillors supported a grant of £1,500 towards a Terrafix on-board communications device for the fast response vehicle providing real time tracking, messaging and reporting between responders and the Ambulance Service.
This year due to the General Election applications may be submitted from 8 May 2015. The deadline for all applications is 16 December 2015. 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 this financial year from May 2015 - 31 March 2016.

The Staffordshire Local Community Fund remains a positive way of encouraging social action and responding to the localism agenda which reinforces the role of councillors alongside the need for councils to be bold and decisive for the benefit of their communities.

Process for applications

1. The organiser contacts their local County Councillor to: find out if the County Councillor has money left to allocate; discuss their proposed project; and establish if the Councillor agrees to support it and the amount of funding concerned.

2. The organiser submits a completed and signed application form direct to the County Councillor.

3. The County Councillor submits their chosen applications to the Director of Democracy, Law and Transformation with a signed record sheet, advising of the amount of funding agreed and identifying the priority outcomes that are supported by the proposed project.

4. The Director of Democracy, Law and Transformation considers each application and advises the County Councillor whether or not it meets the rules about the operation of the Fund (put in place to make sure that the County Council’s legal and financial position is safeguarded).

5. If the application meets the rules, it is approved.

6. Funds will be paid providing all additional funding required for the project has been raised.

7. On payment of the grant the Organisation will receive a letter of confirmation, a certificate and publicity guidance.
• **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.

  Naomi Chesters - 07964331670 - Newcastle and Staffordshire Moorlands
  naomi.chesters@staffordshire.gov.uk

  Sarah Garner - 07807137125 - Stafford and South Staffordshire
  sarah.garner@staffordshire.gov.uk

  Graham Hunt – 07969726571 - Cannock and East Staffordshire
  graham.hunt@staffordshire.gov.uk

  Sarah Jones – 07740437468 - Lichfield and Tamworth
  sarah.jones@staffordshire.gov.uk

**Publicising the Fund outcomes**

• When accepting funding of over £1,000, the organiser is committing to publicising their project, telling people about the community benefits and its association with the Staffordshire Local Community Fund.

• The County Council provides a guide to publicity which covers events, photo opportunities, press releases and contacts.

• Organisers are encouraged to contact and involve their County Councillor/s in any publicity or events and to send in examples, such as press cuttings, of where they are successful in gaining publicity.

**Community Fund web page includes lists of projects supported.**