

# Keele Parish Council

## Residents' Bulletin

Updates from the Chair and the Environment and Assets Sub-Committee for the Council meeting on  
13 April 2026

### Thank you to councillors

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The Council records its thanks to councillors whose term of office is ending and who are not standing again. Their work for the parish over recent years is greatly appreciated.

### Pepper Street noticeboard

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The Council has been seeking funding from the Welcome Break Community Fund to replace the Pepper Street noticeboard. The preferred option is a larger noticeboard, located next to the Pepper Street bus stop, subject to the necessary permission from Staffordshire County Council Highways.

- The estimated project cost is £1,744, including removal of the old board, purchase of the new board and installation.
- The grant application was approved at the extraordinary meeting and submitted before the deadline.

### Website and hosting

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The Parish Council website experienced an outage from 3 April after the security certificate expired. The site was restored promptly after contact with Moon Creative, the current host.

The Council is considering moving hosting arrangements to 123-reg, which is expected to reduce costs and give the Council more direct control over its own web hosting.

### Neighbourhood Plan

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The Regulation 14 consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan closed on 31 March. Responses have been compiled and passed to Urban Vision, who will consider whether amendments are needed. Once the plan and consultation statement are finalised, the plan will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for validation, followed by a six-week Regulation 16 consultation.

### Parish Council election

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The parish election is uncontested because fewer than 12 candidates were nominated. This means there will be no poll for the Parish Council. The Parish Council will start the process of co-opting additional members at the first meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> May. This process will start with an invitation for anyone interested to join the Parish Council to apply. There will be further details in our next bulletin.

The nominated candidates are: Graham Bibby, Susan Hughes, Clive Ashton, Jeremy Lefroy, Andrew Rowe, Wenslie Naylor and Antony Arnold.

### Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer recruitment

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The HR Sub-Committee received five expressions of interest for the post of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and shortlisted two experienced clerks for interview. The Council has also been considering continuity arrangements to ensure that Council business can continue smoothly during the transition.

### Highways, signs and parish assets

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- The vehicle activated sign on Station Road, opposite Top Farm, has been repaired by Steve Hough and returned to its position. The Council thanks Steve for his work.

- The Pepper Street lay-by issue remains under follow-up. The Council has now received a letter from the M.P which copies a response from Staffordshire County Council. SCC are undertaking a review of the order to remove the layby in the light of the bus service now serving Pepper Street.
- The road sign for Lymes Road remains broken despite having been reported previously. The Council will consider how best to follow this up.

## Environmental matters

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The Environment and Assets Sub-Committee continues to monitor fly tipping, litter, pavements and drainage issues across the parish.

### Fly tipping

- Concerns about delays in dealing with fly-tipping reports were raised with Borough Councillor Dave Jones.
- Further fly tipping has occurred along Quarry Bank, Hollywood Lane and Lymes Road near its junction with Three Mile Lane.
- The Quarry Bank report was dealt with very quickly by the Borough Council. A member of the Borough Environment team was also seen investigating fly-tipping issues in the parish and agreed to deal personally with an incident on Hollywood Lane.
- The Lymes Road incident, which included household waste and tyres, has been reported through the Borough Council's website.

### Litter

- The litter issue near Welcome Break is currently not as serious as previously reported, but it will continue to be monitored.
- The Council thanks the newly appointed litter pickers. Their work is already making a noticeable difference throughout the parish.

### Pavements, grids and drains

- The Council continues to monitor pavements and grids along Three Mile Lane, Pepper Street and elsewhere in the village.
- Tree debris, recent heavy rain and high winds have left some grids blocked. One drain on Pepper Street, near lamppost 34, is also blocked with debris.
- A sweep of affected areas is suggested to help prevent longer-term drainage problems.

## Planning update

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No new April applications had been received at the time the Chair's report was written. The Council continues to monitor current applications affecting Keele.

### Pepper Street / Hollywood Lane field

Six Permission in Principle applications have been submitted for land north of Pepper Street. The Chair's report notes that, taken together with a previous permission in principle on the field, the applications could amount to development of up to 63 homes. The Council has objected strongly, raising concerns about the subdivision of applications into smaller schemes and the potential avoidance of the National Planning Policy Framework's Grey Belt 'Golden Rules'.

- The Council has written to Adam Jogee MP and to Simon Tagg, Leader of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council.
- The matter has been discussed with Borough Councillor Dave Jones, who has indicated that it has been referred onward as part of wider concern about the application of Grey Belt policy.

- The application is expected to be called in to the Planning Committee, and the Chair hopes to speak when it is considered.

### **Other applications being monitored**

- 26/00100/FUL: temporary teaching building for Prosthetics and Orthotics at Keele University - pending consideration.
- 26/00146/PLD: lawful development certificate for a proposed children's residential care home at 9 Newsam Close - permitted as expected following the legal process.
- 26/00066/TDC: technical details consent for two dwellings on land between Station Road and the A525 - permitted.
- 25/00910/FUL: retrospective application for an attenuation storage pool at Leycett Farm - pending consideration.
- SCC/25/0035/MDPO: proposed modification of a Section 106 obligation relating to Etruria Marl from Keele Quarry - awaiting decision.

### **Keeping Keele tidy and safe**

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Residents can help by reporting fly tipping, blocked drains, damaged signs and other local environmental issues through the relevant Borough or County Council reporting channels. The Parish Council will continue to monitor reported issues and follow up where needed.