

TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS – 2 September 2025

Sunday 15 June – Biddulph Town Mayor's Civic Service

It was wonderful to attend Biddulph's Civic Ceremony, and to meet familiar faces as Councillor Nigel Yates handed over to Councillor Adrian Lawton. I had the pleasure of meeting them both at their civic dinner, and they were as cordial and friendly as I remembered. In addition to celebrating the year ahead, the town also celebrated the great work that the pair had accomplished during their past year as Mayor and Deputy. They are both clearly dedicated to their community, and Adrian seemed enthusiastic for his year ahead. Sarah and I were similarly pleased to enjoy the company of our Past Town Mayor's brother, John Leason who was there as a contingent of Biddulph in Bloom, and to see their town bench, as designed and built by the same artist that designed the Westbridge bench in Stone. There is a clear community spirit in Biddulph, and we wish Adrian the best for his mayoral term.

Sunday 22 June – St Michael's 10K Road Race

The Stone 10k race starts just outside the town centre at the far side of the priory. It was interesting to visit and to see the whole street bustling with athletes. I had the great pleasure of starting the race, and I was quickly left in the dust of a much emptier street as the runners sailed past. I appreciated this invitation, as did the children and families on the estate who seemed happy to see such a spectacle on their very doorsteps. I extend my gratitude to the event organisers for inviting me along, all of whom seemed glad to see a member of the town council at their event.

Sunday 29 June – East Staffordshire Mayor's Civic Service at St Modwn's Church, Burton on Trent

Having previously met Kim Smith at the last Stone Civic Dinner, it was great to get to know her better following a wonderful service at St Modwen's Church. Kim is well known in her community and well regarded. Following the service, guests had the pleasure of attending the old indoor market which is still operational whilst faithfully holding on to tradition. I look forward to attending future events with the Mayor of East Staffordshire and her Consort, and appreciated the kind hospitality that Burton-on-Trent displayed towards all guests attending the civic service.

Wednesday 2 July – Community Open Day at Stone Station Community Centre

Whilst I only managed to attend the end of the event due to work commitments, members and volunteers of the community rail partnership were kind enough to showcase some of their projects, including bee friendly planters, landscaping, and gardening projects. The railway station is sometimes the first impression that visitors to our town will receive, and similarly with those commuting through Stone. It makes a world of difference to have a positive first impression of our town and it was great to learn more about the work that they do. I was particularly impressed by the art projects inspired by our railway.

Saturday 5 July – Stone Choral Society's Summer Concert at Holy Trinity Church, Eccleshall

On Saturday the 5th I was welcomed warmly by Councillor Jim Davies who ensured that I was comfortable and in good company for the duration of this fantastic event. I was blown away. The voices of the visiting choir and Stone's Choral Society created a true symphony

experience with guest singers that are befitting of the world stage! I could not believe the quality of the performance, complemented wonderfully by the acoustics and aesthetics of Holy Trinity Church. Eccleshall and Stone locals were welcoming and friendly, and I look forward to attending future events by the Stone Choral Society. I encourage anyone who has not yet had the pleasure of the Stone Choral Society to attend. I would like to thank Jim for his diligence in attending me upon my visit, as well as his absolutely top tier performance.

Sunday 13 July – Civic Sunday & Mayor Making in Stone

Sarah and I were delighted to attend the Mayor Making ceremony in the company of new friends and old. After our great apprehension all morning, attendees were very supportive, and we quickly felt at ease in good company. The civic guests were incredibly supportive, and Rugeley's Town Crier demonstrated his oratory skills for the event by delivering a traditional proclamation - an experience that I will not soon forget! The event was very well attended with the building very full. A special thanks to everyone that attended, and to those who had an acting role. I felt very humbled by the occasion and hope I will continue to perform the role in a way that befits our wonderful town. It was no easy feat to endure the formal clothing on one of the hottest days of the year, however all in attendance looked fantastic. Sarah and I will look back on the photos of this day with fond memories.

Monday 4 August – Allotment Competition Judging at Mount Road and Newcastle Road Allotments

On Monday the 4th I had the pleasure of visiting the allotments with this year's judges for the competition. Whilst I am no expert in horticulture or agriculture, I do love nature in general, and I was excited to learn more from the judges as they inspected the plots. I could certainly appreciate the aesthetic value and effort that had gone in to cultivating these wonderful green spaces. These plots offer a lot of value to the plot owners, and they are very well loved. David and Hannah were absolutely lovely, and I left having felt like I had been on holiday for a short while. Masters of their craft, and clearly conscientious in the way in which they judged the gardens, recognising the different approaches that people had towards their plots.

Tuesday 12 August – Children's Summer Whale Event in Westbridge Park

I was invited to an event at Westbridge Park which involved a huge inflatable whale that had space inside for an educational experience for our town's children. The staff there were very dedicated to their roles and character, and I am glad to say that they were passionate about the issue of plastic pollution in our seas and environment, an issue very close to my heart.

Friday 15 August – VJ Day 80 Flag Raising Ceremony

The flag raising for VJ day was very well attended, with expert oration by Councillor Jim Davies. It was wonderful to see our Stone Scout and Guides Band there with Councillor Kerry Dawson delivering some inspiring pieces, and Chris from The Wren performing the last post. In addition to our locals, it was nice to see the event attended by guests from various military affiliated organisations around Staffordshire, and the family members of ex-servicemen in attendance too. This is still a very important event to many, and I hope we continue to educate the next generation on the events surrounding WWII.

Saturday 16 August – Summer Street Party

I had the privilege to start the summer street party this year. The event brought a crowd in from outside of Stone, as well as locals. Stone is becoming quite the place to be! Everyone was smiling, and the musicians entertained thoroughly receiving praise by many. The merchants were happy with the increased trade, and the town was bustling with activity for all ages. There wasn't a quiet venue in the town, and the staff at Sanctuary were especially cheerful with such good quality music and interest in front of their window.

Sunday 17 August – Florence Brass Band Concert & VJ Day Commemoration in Stonefield Park

The 80th anniversary of VJ day brought one of the largest crowds to Stonefield Park, and it was clear to see what an asset we have in our town. The event was co-ordinated perfectly with the Florence Brass Band, and I had the great privilege to introduce the event and thank the band and organisers. I stayed a while at the end and spoke to several locals, all of whom were very complimentary and impressed with the quality of the event and how well Stonefield Park lent itself to the occasion. Thank you to all that attended this important event, it was a particularly memorable highlight of town events.

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS – 2 September 2025**Sunday 29 June – Church at the Crossing Community Fun Day**

Today I attended the Church at the crossing fun day, organised by Katie it had everything going on from bouncy slides to Griffin and Gray for lovely food. It was a nice sunny day to help raise awareness and funds for the hard work futures2together and the church at the crossing do. My family and I had a lovely time, and I even had a go on the slide.

See the photo enclosed.

Saturday 5 July – Stone Rocks Festival at Christ Church Academy

This great yearly event was a wonderful example of the talent of both the children of Stone and the teachers. The day was filled with all types of music being performed by the pupils of the school and also their teachers. It was wonderful to be part of such a well organised and inspiring event. If I had my time again, I think I'd learn the double bass or saxophone. I had a great time and although it's a big event I hope it grows and grows as the years go by. Thank you, Christchurch Academy, for inviting me and thank you to the music department for organising the event.

Wednesday 9 July – Celebration Evening at Christ Church Academy

I helped give out some awards and talked for a few minutes about my time as a child at Christchurch Academy. It was a very enjoyable evening, and they all appreciated my time with them.

Sunday 13 July – Stone Town Council's Civic Sunday

It was a great honour to be made Deputy Mayor for this year. Thank you.

The Civic Sunday occasion was well attended, and the weather was perfect.

