

## Now is not a summer of discontent

In a recent global travel guide Stafford was portrayed as a 'quiet, little' place living in the shadow of more illustrious and interesting neighbours.

Now there is nothing wrong with being quiet, or little, but unfortunately the authors of the guide had not read the script for our summer in Stafford. If they had, 'quiet' or 'little' would not have been the adjective they would have used.

If by quiet they were referring to the Cycle Grand Prix through the centre of the town - the second running of an event in which last year's race was won by an Olympic Champion, Ed Clancy - then they have a point.

And I am sure nobody will be talking about the globally recognised Staffordshire Hoard exhibition at the Shire Hall gallery in July – smack bang in the centre of our 'little' town.

We will also keep quiet about Shakespeare at Stafford Castle – one of the biggest open air events of the Bards work in Europe. And don't tell anyone, but the official opening of the new play area in the glorious Victoria Park takes place next month and piggy-back's on the annual 'Party in the Park' an event attended by thousands.

I suppose we should tell the musicians and singers at Live@ the Castle – part of the Stafford Festival - to keep the noise down in case anyone hears about it.

In fact we are so quiet and little, someone asked me about our inaugural Arts Festival later this year...having seen it advertised on a train platform in LONDON.

Next door in Stone we have had the music and arts festival; the annual festival which kicked off with the traditional raft race boasting one of its biggest ever fields, and a Mid-summer festival to follow. And of course, anyone who has knowledge of Staffordshire will know about the Stone Food and Drinks Festival in a few months time.

Quiet? Little? This seems like a pretty packed and impressive programme of things going on in Stafford Borough. Rather than being 'quiet' I think there's quite a lot to shout about.

Councillor Mike Heenan

Leader of the Council