

## One man's noise is... a national issue it appears

We get a lot of complaints from our community about scrap metal collectors who seem to be coming in to Stafford from elsewhere and making a huge din.

Many residents - including a lot of shift workers trying to get some sleep - have said they are coming around four and five times a morning. They of course announce their visits with the traditional bugle sound, in some cases played through a loudspeaker.

But I was surprised to hear, pardon the pun, just how much of a national issue this was until I was listening to one of our council officers talking about the subject to Jeremy Vine on BBC Radio 2. Jeremy then read out a number of emails or texts he received with people also annoyed by the noisy 'Rag and bone' men. The borough council prosecution even made The Sun!

In fact readers of the Stoke Sentinel praised us for taking court action. In the last few months we have prosecuted scrapmen from Bilston, Wednesbury and Hednesford who have been using loudspeakers to play trumpet noises around Stafford.

We are not trying to stop people making a living. We are trying to protect our residents who don't want to have their peace disturbed several times a day. Especially the nurses, fire-fighters and paramedics who we all hope get a decent sleep - it's the type of work you need to be alert to do the job properly.

Anyway, last month the man from Hednesford was fined £100 and ordered to pay £280 costs. I just hope the message gets around and Stafford residents are shown a bit more consideration in the future.

Councillor Mike Heenan  
Leader of the Council