

# **Stafford Jolly Boys 30 August 2018**

## **About Stafford :**

According to my research on the Jolly Boys website Stafford has not been visited since 19th August 2004. So time to put that right. The county town of Staffordshire has a pleasant compact town centre with some very nice olde buildings among them the Ancient High House which is Elizabethan and the largest timber-framed townhouse in England. This is quite close to the Swan Hotel which is one of our venues and itself a very nice building. The Borough of Stafford was created by King John in 1206. There are the remains of a castle, originally built by the Normans about 1090, to the west of the town which we won't see. The railways arrived in the form of the Grand Junction Railway in 1837. That's enough history - Ed.

## **Itinerary :**

Crossing the road from the station a nice 5 mins or so walk thro Victoria Park leads to Mill Bank with the River Sow on the right. There is an aviary in the Park which is worth a look. Along Mill Bank to a mini-roundabout where we turn right down Bridge Street. Not far on the right is **The Picture House**. This is a conversion of an old cinema and is JD Wetherspoons at it's best, a brilliant renovation and very well run.

Leave at 11.00 Back along Bridge St across the roundabout and along Greengate St, a couple of hundred yards on the left is the **Swan Hotel**. (46a Greengate St). Handily this opens at 10 and was fairly busy with folk having coffees and whatever in various rooms. There are 2 bars serving Hobgoblin, Slaters and Wainwright when last visited. Leave at 11.35.

Retrace our steps back past the Picture House and left into Lichfield Rd. Just on the left is the **Sun Inn** (7 Lichfield Rd). Confusingly they do not open the front door until 12.00 (although I am assured they are usually open from about 10!) so JB's should not despair as access can be had thro the car park at the rear, which can be reached via a cut-through about 20 yards past the front door. It's a Titanic pub with at least 6 ales from their range and about the same number of guest beers. It is also the only real candidate for a food stop, having a good menu including most of the pub lunch favourites. Leave at 12.40.

Back along the well-trodden path to Greengate St, turn right down Tipping St and on the corner where Tipping St meets Eastgate St is the **Shrewsbury Arms**. (75 Eastgate St). This is a recently renovated and re-opened Black Country Ales pub with 4 or 5 of their ales and also about the same number of guest beers. Leave at 1.15. Continuing along Eastgate St, past the Gateway Theatre and left into Market St, and just on the left is **Ye Olde Rose & Crown**. (10 Market St) This is a Joules pub with their full range of ales and one guest beer. Leave at 1.45.

Left along Market St and across Market Square then left down Greengate St and right by McDonalds, passing by the Church of St Mary and on the corner of Earl St is the **Bird in Hand**. (1 Victoria Square). This is also a Black Country Ales pub with the full range of their beers (4/5) plus at least 3 guests. About 5 mins for the return walk to the station. Cross Earl St along the path with the Court buildings on left and on reaching the main road the station is visible ahead at the end of Victoria Rd.