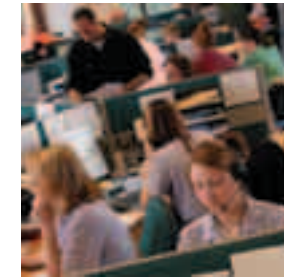




- \* **Readily available**  
untapped labour market.
- \* Excellent **business infrastructure.**
- \* The UK's most **cost effective**  
location for business.
- \* Cost of living **25% lower** than  
London and the South East.



## Stoke-on-Trent & North Staffordshire - leading the UK in shared services opportunities

The area has a population of over 450,000 within the travel to work area. The labour market is untapped and flexible. Business infrastructure is excellent. Property options are diverse. Located at the heart of the UK, the area is highly accessible.

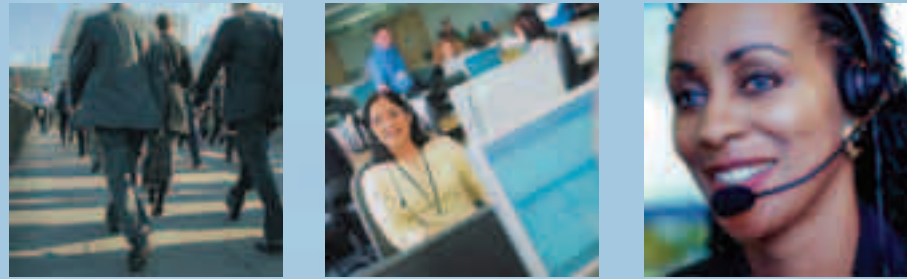
With many UK locations experiencing labour market saturation, Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire is one of the few areas able to offer readily available people for shared service activities.

Uniquely located at the UK's centre, the area is highly accessible, with superb road and rail links to all parts of the country.

It is estimated that companies locating to the area could achieve a 20% reduction in operating costs compared to London and the South East. Property costs are considerably lower than neighbouring cities, over 50% less than in Manchester and Birmingham.

Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire is a rising star location that is being transformed by one of the largest investment programmes in the UK.

The area is home to some major headquarter operations and iconic brands, including Wedgwood, Michelin Tyre plc, JCB and the Britannia Building Society. You will be in good company.



## Our people

The area has been identified by King Sturge as ideally suited to both shared service and contact centre operations (King Sturge, 2004). This confidence is echoed by KPMG, who have identified Stoke-on-Trent as an emerging location for shared services and IT software design and development.

The area has a large travel to work profile of over 450,000 people and is acknowledged to be particularly suitable for accommodating large scale operations of over 1,000 people. A benefit of Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire's history is the established culture of shift-working and flexible work patterns.

As the employment base moves increasingly towards service sector operations, different skills are required. Dedicated programmes, such as the Digitel-i facility within Stoke-on-Trent College, have been particularly important in equipping people coming from the manufacturing industry with a range of service based skills such as IT and customer communications.

Started in April 2002, the employer-led programme has supported over 1,500 people in a variety of ways, expanding to incorporate supervisory and teamleader service skills. Such programmes ensure that the pool of available people matches employer demand, and has a positive impact on employee retention rates.

Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire has been identified as the most cost effective region in the UK to locate (KPMG, 2005), with wage levels over 15% lower than the national average for business and administration (Reward Group, 2005).

While the area has existing operators within the telecoms, utilities, finance, outsourcing and retail markets, Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire is one of the few locations that is still able to offer a readily available and untapped employment market (OMIS, 2004). Companies with a presence in the area include Vodafone, n-Power, Royal Mail, Britannia Building Society and Phones 4 U.



Working well **in** North Staffs



## Education provision right on your doorstep

**Staffordshire University has one of the UK's largest computing and new technology schools, involving over 10,000 students.**

In North Staffordshire we're developing not just nationally but internationally recognised standards of training, and it begins early.

By 2006, all nursery and primary schools will be renewed, with all secondary schools renewed by 2010. Local education will benefit from a huge investment in science and technology (over £21m for computing alone) to prepare young people for the future.

96% of parents get their first choice of high school within Stoke-on-Trent. The national average is 88%.

Since 2000, higher grade GCSEs in North Staffordshire have risen twice as fast as the national rate, keeping pace with a dramatic increase in the number of young people staying on in education.

When you relocate in North Staffordshire, you'll have the full support and assistance of our colleges and universities. Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle Colleges are both recognised as centres of vocational excellence, and boast a population of over 33,000 students.

The area's two main universities, Keele and Staffordshire, have 23,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students. Both Universities offer excellent management, business and administration training, together with finance, economics, accountancy, human resources, IT and software programmes.



Educated well **in** North Staffs



## Prime communications and business infrastructure – a genuine central location for business

The infrastructure within Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire is ideally suited to shared service operations. Stoke-on-Trent is located along the country's main fibre optic network – a fact that led Vodafone to establish one of its switching facilities in the City.

Within the conurbation there is a wide variety of sites and properties, from the City Centre, Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre and business parks. Many sites have both diverse routing and dual power supplies and the area is fully broadband enabled.

With property rental costs averaging £13 per sq.ft., the area is more cost effective than other UK locations.

Location	£/sqft	% saving
Birmingham	£27.50	53
Manchester	£27	52
Leeds	£23	44
M4 Corridor	£25.43	49
London (West End)	£75	82

(Source: JLL, 2005)

The area is being transformed by a major investment programme in excess of £2bn, that includes developing a 500,000 sq.ft. City Centre Business District, a University Quarter, 70 acre Keele Science Park and building 12,000 new homes. It is an exciting time to invest.

### A transport network that makes the area highly accessible.

Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire offers outstanding road and rail links to and from all parts of the country. Situated along the M6 corridor between Birmingham and Manchester, the area also benefits from the direct A50 East/West link to the M1 and the superb M6 Toll, the UK's newest motorway.

By rail, London Euston is just 1hr 37 minutes away, direct. Manchester and Birmingham can both be reached within 40 and 50 minutes respectively. Peak time frequency of trains to London is around 3 per hour.

There are four international airports within one hour's drive: Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool John Lennon and Nottingham East Midlands. All are easily accessed via the extensive road and rail network.

The local transport infrastructure is geared up for the needs of employees and employers. This high accessibility offers real benefits in recruiting and retaining staff. Over £25m is currently being invested in a conurbation-wide network of safe, attractive off-road routes for pedestrians and cyclists along canals, rivers and disused railways.

Going places **in** North Staffs

## Stoke-on-Trent & North Staffordshire – a hotbed of breakthroughs and achievements

This is a location that attracts major players. Companies operating a professional services network enjoy an excellent business base.



### University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

The University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, which administers over 10% of the UK NHS pension and payroll, has recently opened a fourth office within Stoke-on-Trent City Centre.

*“A combination of cost-based advantages and the range of property opportunities played a major role in our decision to move to North Staffordshire.”*

*“In addition, the excellent skills base and our location at the heart of the City Centre have ensured that the Trust received an unprecedented response to its recruitment programme, especially compared to other offices in Oxford, Coventry and Birmingham, which is very encouraging for our future.”*

Steve Abbotts  
Head of Staff Services,  
UHBFT

### Britannia Building Society

*“The benefits of having our base in North Staffordshire are many and various. Britannia has its roots in the area; 2006 will see us celebrate our 150th Anniversary. With 1800 staff at our Leek headquarters, having good local schools is an important factor. Working in such a scenic environment makes a difference too. We have easy access to the major shopping centres of Manchester and Birmingham, both easily reached by excellent motorway links, as are their airports. In addition, Britannia has established a great rapport with local people, and built an excellent working relationship with the area’s businesses, MPs and local and county councillors.”*

Neville Richardson  
Chief Executive,  
Britannia Building Society

### Vodafone

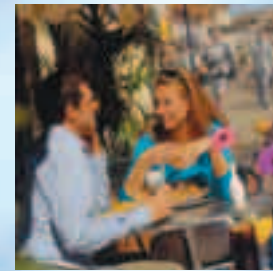
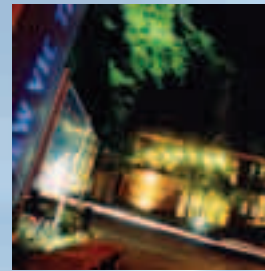
Vodafone is the world’s leading mobile telecommunications company, providing a wide range of services including voice and data communications.

*“Our Stoke-on-Trent operation, employing over 1,200 people is not only a centre of excellence for our UK consumer sales, but also supports our wide consumer service and credit professionals. We also operate our national training academy within Stoke-on-Trent.*

*“Our success relies on our people being passionate about what they are doing, demonstrating great teamwork, thriving on challenge and being eager to take on new responsibilities. Our continued expansion within Stoke-on-Trent is testament that the people within this area support Vodafone culture.”*

Angela Ford  
UK Recruitment Manager,  
Vodafone

North Staffordshire has a wide range of residential options, from city living to country cottages, all offering ease of access to the main centres of employment.



## High quality living with increased spending power

While the cost of living in the area is 25% below that in London and the South East, living standards are high and go hand in hand with a range of leisure and culture opportunities.

Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent are home to a wealth of pubs, bars, clubs, bistros, tea shops and award winning restaurants, besides cinemas and theatres.

For shoppers, the Potteries Shopping Centre in Stoke will suit all tastes. From North Staffordshire you are also ideally located within easy reach of premier shopping experiences provided by Manchester's Trafford Centre and Birmingham's Bullring.

As a well established tourist location, North Staffordshire and its surrounding countryside offers a multitude of diversions, ranging from Alton Towers – the UK's no.1 theme park – to historic houses, canals, Rudyard Lake, Uttoxeter Race Course and the Peak District National Park.

75% of available space is in the form of agricultural land, making this one of the UK's 'greenest' counties, with many market towns and villages.

For leisure activities, the county has something to please everyone. With both Alton Towers and Drayton Manor Theme Parks, we are the undisputed home of thrills and excitement.

Then again we have venues hosting award-winning music and drama, and some acclaimed theatres running West End productions. There's the art-deco atmosphere of the Regent Theatre, the Victoria Hall or Newcastle's stunning Theatre in the round. Even Glyndebourne, renowned for its al fresco operatic productions, has its northern base in Stoke-on-Trent.

For outdoor types we have huge tracts of peace and quiet in the Peak District National Park and Cannock Chase, while the scenic treasures of both Snowdonia and The Lake District are within easy driving distance.

As home to The Potteries, Stoke-on-Trent means internationally acclaimed visitor centres like those of Wedgwood and Spode, with their traditional skills, world renowned quality and outstanding shopping opportunities.

You can enjoy visiting stately homes at Shugborough, Chatsworth House and the atmospheric Haddon Hall.

Our many glorious gardens include impressive Trentham – 750 acres of parkland, woodland and lakes. Bridgemere Garden World, Europe's largest garden centre, has over 5000 plant varieties, award winning show gardens and lifestyle shopping.

Whatever your lifestyle, leisure style and tastes, you'll find that locating to Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire can provide so many opportunities to enjoy life.

Living **in** North Staffs





For more information contact:

Elaine Lawrence

InStaffs (UK) Limited,  
Mill Court, Mill Street,  
Stafford, ST16 2AJ

t: 01785 604060

e: [elawrence@instaffs.co.uk](mailto:elawrence@instaffs.co.uk)

w: [www.instaffs.co.uk](http://www.instaffs.co.uk)

