



# Newsletter

happy new year

*The officers of  
Central Staffordshire Conservative Federation  
would like to wish  
all our members and supporters a  
Happy New Year*

### Theo Clarke MP speaks at #AskHerToStand



On Tuesday 21st November, Stafford MP Theo Clarke continued her brilliant work on encouraging women into politics by speaking at the 50:50 event in Parliament, hosted by Caroline Noakes MP. Ms Clarke drew on her own experience getting in politics and becoming an MP, as well as the life of a female representative.

The Stafford MP also spoke about her work on Birth Trauma and spoke passionately about the importance of inspiring women to stand in elections.

### Theo Clarke MP Wins Parliamentary Speech of the Year



Well that was unexpected!

I am deeply honoured and very surprised to have won Speech of the Year at the prestigious Spectator Parliamentarian of the Year Awards.

Thank you to everyone who supported my birth trauma campaign. I dedicate this award to all the mums who have bravely shared their stories with me and I will continue to fight for you all.

You can read my speech in Parliament here:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/.../D9DC6BAC.../BirthTrauma>

### Gavin Champions Small Businesses in Staffordshire

Sir Gavin Williamson took part in Small Business Saturday on the 2nd December, a celebration up and down the nation of local businesses in the run up to Christmas.

Sir Gavin took to the high streets in Stone, Penkridge and Kinver on Saturday to support local retailers in Staffordshire as part of a national campaign which has taken place every year since 2013. Sir Gavin visited the farmers market in Stone, market in Penkridge, and the high street in Kinver, where he marvelled at the wonderful local produce and gifts on display. In recent years it has been particularly important to support small businesses in the aftermath of Covid-19, which struck small businesses owners particularly harshly.



Small businesses like the community pub, local butcher or coffee shop make up over 99% of UK business and account for over half of business turnover and employment. In South Staffordshire particularly, the pub industry accounts for a large proportion of employment. Small Business Saturday has made a big difference to these local employers, accumulating over £1 billion in revenue in recent years.

Sir Gavin said: “Small businesses lie at the heart of Staffordshire communities, and the friendly faces of local business owners are the constant which keeps community spirit alive. I always try and shop locally, but in the lead up to Christmas there is such an opportunity to find unique gifts and sample local foods made just around the corner. I had a really enjoyable day on Saturday visiting the markets and would highly recommend a festive day out meeting and celebrating the families that sell such wonderful produce.”

### Gavin Supports Pensioner Manifesto

Sir Gavin Williamson attended a parliamentary event organised by Later Life Ambitions, an organisation which voices the interests of pensioners and future pensioners to politicians and policy makers.

Sir Gavin was keen to meet with the campaign group as it set out its manifesto for 2024. The group represents over 250,000 people and has asked for the government for a series of measures to protect the rights of pensioners. In particular Sir Gavin was eager to discuss investment in local bus and rail services and improved accessibility for older people. This is something that Sir Gavin has been campaigning for himself within Staffordshire, recently having strenuously campaigned for the 5 and 5A bus service in Codrall.



Sir Gavin said: “I represent many pensioners and future pensioners in my constituency, therefore I’m always encouraged by discussions about what we can do to further ensure the safety and stability of retirees. The event with Later Life Ambitions was a great opportunity to ask about what more I can do to push for LLA’s mission and support pensioners in Staffordshire. I’ve been working with the council to secure improved bus services which are a life-line for older people, and I’m keen to continue my work to improve accessibility for pensioners.”

### Gavin Supports Family-Owned Farm Shop

Sir Gavin Williamson was given a tour of Canalside Farm Café in Great Haywood, situated alongside the idyllic Trent and Mersey Canal, by the manager Geoff Barton.

Sir Gavin visited the family run farm café and shop that has been running since 1983. The farm shop sells its own produce from strawberries in summer to pumpkins in the autumn, and offers a Christmas market during the festive season, as well as graze boards and breakfast boxes for other special occasions. The farm shop was one of the first in Staffordshire, and has expanded several times due to its popularity with local communities.

Sir Gavin is a keen advocate for family owned businesses in South Staffordshire, and recently championed Small Business Saturday in the run up to Christmas to highlight how important it is to celebrate our local vendors.

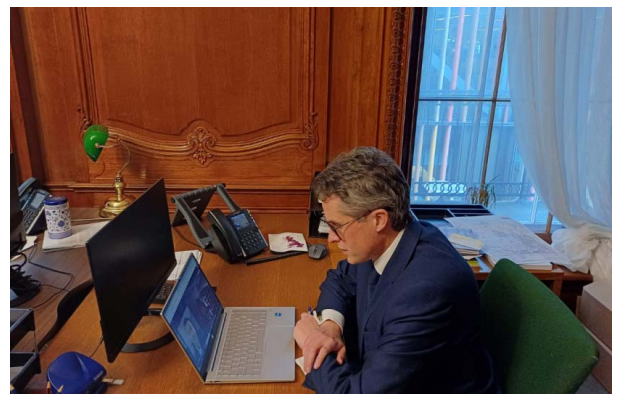
Sir Gavin said: “It was great to visit Canalside, a picturesque location for a great day out, to see all of the wonderful local produce for sale, in particular the products grown on their own family farm. I’d encourage anyone who can to support local farmers in the run up to Christmas, as it is great to see family businesses thriving in Staffordshire.”



### Gavin Fights to Save Staffordshire Trains

Sir Gavin Williamson has demanded that cuts to train services between Stafford and Birmingham be urgently addressed and reversed.

Sir Gavin arranged a meeting with West Midlands Railway to challenge plans to withdraw the Birmingham-Stafford section of the Birmingham-Stoke-Crewe service, and will continue to push for the retention of this service for the people of Staffordshire, who don’t deserve such an imposition on their mobility, particularly as the south of the country is levelling up with HS2. The new plans would improve the journey times to London Euston from Birmingham, but at the expense of direct connectivity between Stoke, Stone and the West Midlands. Sir Gavin arranged the meeting in order to campaign for local services, and is determined to keep applying pressure until West Midlands Railway reverse their decision.



Sir Gavin said: “It is all very well to improve the connections between Birmingham and London, but to do it at the expense of regional connections would be to put strain upon other regional transport services and weaken the ties between the great cities of Staffordshire. I’m ardent in the belief that cancelling HS2 was the right call, as I fully believe that further investment and development in our regional services will be a far more beneficial use of tax-payer money. However, I will not stand for a reduction in local services. We want and need to have good services running between Stone and Birmingham and that is what I will keep fighting for.”

### Gavin Supports Restoration of Historic Canal

Sir Gavin Williamson joined volunteers working on the Stafford Riverway Link project which hopes to renovate the old Stafford Branch Canal.

Sir Gavin met with those who have been working hard to repair the old Stafford Branch Canal, a major restoration project to resurrect the 18th century canal which has been in disrepair since the 1920s. The canal historically linked the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal at Baswich with Stafford town centre, a link which if restored, would extend the canal network in Staffordshire for the benefit of the local tourist industry and the community of narrowboat enthusiasts. Volunteers have uncovered the site of the lockhouse, restored its foundations, and excavated the basin of the canal, supported by funds from Staffordshire County Council and the International Water Association. Most recently the team have started lining the bed of the riverway. Sir Gavin visited the site to view the progress of the project and to support and commend the team of volunteers that have embarked upon this historical restoration project.



Sir Gavin said: “It was wonderful to meet the team at Stafford Riverway Link who have volunteered time, resources and put in hard work to restore such an important part of Staffordshire history. The canal industry is something that I’m always keen to support, as its traditions are part of the local identity, and I’ve enjoyed many narrowboat journeys myself. There’s so much value in restoring Staffordshire’s historic features, and this is a key policy for me, whether that be local hotels, railway stations, or waterways.”

A spokesperson of the Stafford Riverway Link said: “The Project Board were very pleased that Sir Gavin wished to visit the Stafford Riverway Link site and see at first-hand what had been achieved by such dedicated volunteers. Chair Paul Bryan outlined the links we have made with Stafford and Newcastle College, and how we are looking forward to working with some of their apprentices when we begin work on the towpath bridge next year. Volunteer co-ordinator John Potter showed Sir Gavin how much environmental planting has been undertaken.”

### Gavin Celebrates Run-Up to Christmas with Local Church

Sir Gavin Williamson was pleased to attend the Christmas Tree Festival this year at St Michaels Church in Penkridge.

Sir Gavin took part in the Christmas Tree Festival, a showcase of many trees dressed by various local organisations. The event was arranged by the Penkridge Parish Church, who supplied mulled wine and mince pies for the festive crowd. Sir Gavin was keen to get involved in the community festivities, which included a Christmas trivia quiz, messy Church Christmas banner painting, and local singers singing Christmas carols. In true Christian spirit, there was also a Christmas food bank collection.



Sir Gavin said: “I was really grateful to be invited to the festive celebrations at Penkridge Parish Church, where it was wonderful to see the Church community coming together to commemorate the birth of Christ and to spread the warmth that this season represents. The trees that I was invited to view were wonderfully decorated and I commend the efforts of all those that got involved. I hope the event was able to raise support for the Church and that the food bank collection can provide some comfort for those in need this Christmas.”

### King's New Year Honours for Staffordshire announced

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent residents have been recognised in His Majesty the King's Honours List for New Year 2024. Fifteen residents have been honoured with CBEs, MBEs and BEMs for their services to communities, public service and for their professional contribution.

Among those recognised in the New Year's honours are Dr Chandra Mohan Kanneganti from Stoke-on-Trent, who is made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE), for his services to General Practice and Kenneth Newton from Stafford who is made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to public service as Governing Governor, HMP Birmingham.

Alan White, Leader of Staffordshire County Council, said: "It's wonderful to see so many Staffordshire residents recognised for their hard work and commitment to their communities in His Majesty the King's Honours List.

They have again demonstrated that this county is a place where our residents can make a considerable contribution to the lives of others, whether this is through their own expertise or by volunteering to make a difference. We'd like to congratulate local government colleagues Dr Chandra Kanneganti, Roger Lees and Abi Brown for their honours."

Mr Ian Dudson CBE, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, said: "Once again His Majesty's Honours recognise those who contribute to our communities in a significant way, either through professional achievements, or voluntary work. The theme of these awards is 'giving' and we are delighted that local individuals are recognised for their fundraising and for selflessly giving their time and support to important causes.

I send my warmest congratulations to them and thank them, on His Majesty's as well as my own behalf, for their outstanding contribution."

The Honours recipients are:

#### **Commanders of the Order of the British Empire CBE**

Dr Chandra Mohan Kanneganti, Stoke-on-Trent, for services to General Practice

#### **Officers of the Order of the British Empire OBE**

Ms Catherine Jane Parry, Stoke-on-Trent, services to Political and Public Service

Mr Kenneth Paul Newton, Stafford, services to Public Service

Councillor Abigail Margaret Brown, Stoke-on-Trent, services to Local Government

Professor David Foskett, Burton-on-Trent, services to Hospitality Industry and Inclusivity

#### **Members of the Order of the British Empire MBE**

Mrs Jacqueline Mary Gange, Cannock, services to Community in Cannock

Mr Rowan Edwin Crozier, Lichfield, services to Manufacturing and Enterprise

Mrs Jill Alcock (Clewes), Staffordshire Moorlands, services to The Arts and Charity

Professor Miriam Bernard, Newcastle-under-Lyme, services to Ageing Research and to Older People

Dr Catherine Emma Baxter, services to Higher Education

#### **Medallists of the Order of the British Empire BEM**

Mr Martin Peter Wild, Barton under Needwood, services to Community in Tamworth

Mr Herbert Proctor, Stoke-on-Trent, services to Community in Audley

Mr Stephen Roger Lees JP, South Staffordshire, services to Community in Himley, Swindon and South Staffordshire

Mrs Elaine Hutchings, Lichfield, services to Community in Lichfield during Covid-19

Mr Peter Stewart Clemson, Burton-on-Trent, services to Performing Arts and the Community in Burton

## LOCAL NEWS SNAPSHOT

### Northend Community Centre receives donation

by County Councillor Jonathan Price



It was my pleasure to accompany Borough Councillor Bryan Cross as he presented a cheque to The Northend Community Centre.

The cheque presented was on behalf of the Roger Hinton Charity ( now absorbed into Staffordshire Community Foundation), who takes care of the funds and investments.

The Roger Hinton Charity raises charitable funds from investments and the lease of land left by Roger Hinton. £300 was raised and presented to Chairman Gerald Darcy, who was delighted to receive it and will discuss with the committee on the best way to spend the funds.

Its use as a vaccination centre certainly took its toll on the building, but it's had sensitive renovation work done recently and upgrades, making it a welcoming space for all the groups who use it. we look forward to seeing the how they decide to spend this donation and know that however it's spent, it will be for the benefit of everyone.

## FEDERATION NEWS

### COULD YOU BE A COUNCILLOR?

If you are interested in becoming a Conservative Councillor Candidate, please see the information in the next couple of pages in our newsletter.

For further information please get in touch with Jonathan Price, Deputy Chairman Political on 01785 252 273 or [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk)

Application forms are now available.

# COULD YOU CHAMPION YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY?

Do you want to stand up for your local community and the interests of local residents?



Central Staffordshire Conservatives are looking for Councillor candidates who want to serve a local community. We welcome all candidates who care about representing local people's views and looking after the interests of their local area.

You could be part of our strong, supportive and friendly team of Councillors and campaigners. If you are interested in finding out more about what might be involved, we want to hear from you. **The next COUNTY COUNCIL elections are on 1 May 2025.**

To find out more please email Central Staffordshire Conservative Federation or contact Jonathan Price, Deputy Chairman Political at [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk) or call 01785 252 273

More information about being a councillor can be found at [local.gov.uk/be-councillor](http://local.gov.uk/be-councillor)



Conservatives



## Who may be a candidate?

**To stand for your local council you must be over 18 years of age AND a British citizen; a Commonwealth citizen; a qualifying EU citizen; or an EU citizen with retained rights, AND resident in the UK.**

In addition, one of the following criteria must apply to you:

**You must be and continue to be a local government elector for the area of the local authority.**

**OR**

**You must have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding both nomination day and the day of the election, occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the area of the local authority.**

**OR**

**Your principal or only place of work in the twelve months preceding your nomination day and the day of the election must have been in the area of the local authority.**

**OR**

**You must have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding both your nomination day and the day of the election resided in the area of the local authority.**

**To find out more please email Central Staffordshire Conservative Federation or contact Jonathan Price, Deputy Chairman Political at [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk) or call 01785 252 273**

## Do I know enough to stand for election?

Don't underestimate your own abilities. Each councillor will have something different to offer the council and you will not be expected to take direct responsibility for running the council on the first day that you are elected.

Your main qualifications are a genuine concern for the community and a willingness to learn. Knowledge and experience will soon follow.



## Have I the time to be a councillor?

The time commitment involved in being a councillor will vary depending on the responsibilities you decide to take on.

Many councillors have work and family commitments as well as other interests which they successfully balance with their role as a councillor.

More information about being a councillor can be found at [local.gov.uk/be-councillor](http://local.gov.uk/be-councillor)

# IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

## DO YOU PAY FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP BY CHEQUE? DO YOU PAY BY STANDING ORDER OR BANK TRANSFER?

Members play an active role in the Party, can attend our annual Conference and receive voting rights in Party elections after 3 months of Membership.

From 1st January 2024 the membership fees have increased. The new rates for all members are:

**Standard: £39 per year**  
**Armed Forces: £25 per year**  
**Under 26: £10 per year**

Our preferred method of payment is by direct debit. It means less administration for the local team and you benefit from the direct debit guarantee scheme.

But, if you pay by cheque, standing order or bank transfer, please remember that the new subscription rates are now in effect. If you have a standing order set up, you'll need to amend the amount as we can't renew a membership if we receive less than the required amount.

And, as we've mentioned in previous newsletters, the bank details have now changed.. Most importantly cheques need to be made payable to '**Central Staffordshire Conservative Federation**' and if you were previously a member of the former Stone or South Staffordshire Associations and paid by bank transfer or standing order, please remember the old bank account details you previously used are no longer valid.

If you have any queries about membership please telephone (01785 252 273) or get in touch by email to [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk)

# Conservative Policy Forum



Everything in politics starts with an idea.

Sometimes it's a burning injustice that has to be fixed. Sometimes it's an inspirational vision of how to make the world a better place.

A single idea can build new societies, new ways of living that are better than before. An inspiring idea will outlast elections, Parliaments and Prime Ministers, leap national borders and change entire countries.

The Conservative Policy Forum is here to find the world-changing, era-defining ideas and shape the policies of tomorrow.

Join us as, together, we seek to develop and advance Conservative ideas and policies within the Party and in Government for the benefit of the whole nation.

Each year we run a series of national policy consultations to understand what people across the country think about the big issues and their perspective on what policies and priorities the nation needs to prosper.

The next meeting of the Central Staffordshire CPF Discussion Group will be noted on our events page of our website and meetings are held at our Castle Street HQ.

All members are welcome but we'd ask that you please confirm your attendance by telephone (01785 252 273) or email [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk)

## EVENTS

### A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Nearly everyone has a treasure tucked away at home that might be worth something.

Haywood & Hixon, Milford and Milwich Branch are hosting a fun evening at Castle Street on 29th February 2024 with celebrity antiques show expert **Richard Winterton**, well known for his regular appearances as auctioneer on programmes such as BBC's **Bargain Hunt** and **Dickinson's Real Deal** on ITV. The Winterton family name has been synonymous with auctioneering in Staffordshire for seven generations since 1864.

So dust off your hidden treasures and join us at Castle Street for 'The Valuation Game'

### THE VALUATION GAME

29th February 2024  
Castle Street, Stafford, ST16 2ED

6:30pm for 7pm start  
Tickets £15 per person  
including buffet

(Bar service available)

To book, contact 01785 252 273 or email  
[contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk)

# 100 Club

## OCTOBER WINNERS ANNOUNCED

1st Prize: **PAM KITTLE**

2nd Prize: **JOHN FOSTER**

3rd Prize: **BARBARA RIDDLE**  
**CONGRATULATIONS!**

### Would you like to join?

Help support the Federation and have a bit of a flutter at the same time!  
Subscriptions are just £4.34 a month or £52 a year for each number entered.

**Join our 100 Club today and you could be our next winner.**

Full details (application forms and other information including the terms and conditions) can be found on our website:

<https://www.centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk/100-club>

Our 100 Club helps raise funds to keep the Federation running.

If you can spare £4.34 a month or £52 a year, you could help us with keeping our Federation going...and you might win one of our prizes!

## PLEASE JOIN TODAY

If you'd like to join, request an application form by calling 01785 252 273 or via email to [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk)

## Contacting the Federation

Your Federation is staffed by volunteers, the office is not permanently staffed. The telephone line is diverted to a mobile number and calls are answered if someone is available to take your call. But please remember that the volunteers who manage your Federation work full-time, so sometimes it's not possible to answer your calls and in these circumstances you are able to leave a voicemail and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

Please note that members can also contact the Federation by email (which is often a quicker way of getting a response) at [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk)

## Car Parking at our Castle Street HQ

The Federation generates important revenue towards the upkeep of our Castle Street HQ by renting car parking spaces to both members and non-members.

Occasional parking at our HQ remains free for members, but we would ask that members inform the office if you will be parking at HQ at least 24-hours in advance, with details of the car registration number so that you do not receive penalty notices. You can get in touch with the office to notify your intention to use our car park, by telephone to **01785 252 273** or by email to [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk)

We would also ask that members please park with consideration for other car park users.

Parking is at the owner's risk. The Federation does not accept any responsibility for theft or any damage, intentional or otherwise, to vehicles or vehicle contents.

## Upcoming events

29th FEBRUARY - The Valuation Game with Richard Winterton - Castle Street - 6:30PM

## Key Contacts

Central Staffordshire Conservative Federation  
Castle Street  
Stafford ST16 2ED

Telephone: **01785 252 273**

Email: [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk)

Promoted by Duncan Sandbrook on behalf of Central Staffordshire Conservative Federation,  
both at Castle Street, Stafford ST16 2ED