



Newsletter



*The Chairman and Officers of
Central Staffordshire Conservative Federation
would like to wish
all our members and supporters a
very Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year*

Member of Parliament for Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge:

The Rt Hon Sir Gavin Williamson, CBE MP

For news and other information visit: www.gavinwilliamson.org/

25th November 2024

Gavin supports Blymhill Breast Cancer Now Event

Sir Gavin Williamson attended a Breast Cancer Now charity event at Blymhill Village Hall which raised almost £1,500 for the charity.

The event is organised every year by local resident Mrs Mary Buka with the aim to raise funds as well as to increase awareness of the signs and symptoms of breast cancer. A selection of cakes, hot drinks, soup, and other treats were sold to raise funds.

Breast Cancer Now funds 80 cutting-edge research projects worth over £27 million which focusses on: secondary breast cancer, develop better treatments, prevent and diagnose breast cancer early, as well as improve people's quality of life.

Sir Gavin said: "It was fantastic to attend the Breast Cancer Now charity event and I would like to thank Mrs Buka for all of her hard work and effort to organise such a fantastic event.

"We need to do all we can to support those living with breast cancer. A person is diagnosed with breast cancer every ten minutes, and it is ever so important that we continue to research and fund charities who make a real difference."

Mary Buka, who organised the event, said: "I would like to thank Sir Gavin who dedicated some of his valuable time to attend and support The Breast Cancer Now Charity Lunch Party on Friday 15th November in Blymhill Village Hall. It was a great success thanks to the stall-holders and all the people who attended, donated and helped.

"This is the third time that I have organised this event and look forward to doing the same next year. The money we raised will help support both men and women with breast cancer and research."



Gavin condemns decision to house migrants in Roman Way Hotel

Sir Gavin Williamson has lamented the Government for their “utter disregard and total contempt” for the people of Staffordshire, after it was announced that the Roman Way Hotel on Watling Street, A5 will once again house asylum seekers.

Sir Gavin campaigned tirelessly earlier this year to ensure that both the Roman Way Hotel and the Hatherton Hotel in Penkridge would no longer be used to accommodate asylum-seekers. However, the Labour Government has confirmed it will be used for this purpose once more from Friday, 15th November.

Labour claims the decision was made due to “challenges across the system” but the lack of a credible deterrent following the scrapping of the Rwanda scheme, is creating unnecessary additional capacity on the whole system.

The Government also add that hotels to be used as asylum-seeker accommodation is needed to clear “tens of thousands of cases in the asylum-backlog.” But independent statistics show the previous Conservative Government cleared the legacy asylum backlog in 2023 by processing 112,138 cases – thus saving the taxpayer millions of pounds on expensive hotel costs.

Sir Gavin said: “Labour has demonstrated utter disregard and total contempt for my constituents, and I understand the anger and total frustration shared by residents who will be impacted by these plans.

“Hotels are not suitable places for asylum seekers as they reduce the offering of places for people to stay – therefore, affecting local tourism which subsequently has a direct impact on the local economy.

“Let me be clear: Labour has absolutely no plan whatsoever to tackle immigration, and will continue to use poor excuse after poor excuse to the detriment of communities. They simply take the easy option and write cheques the country cannot afford to pay.

“I will continue to do everything possible to ensure the practice of using hotels for asylum-seeker accommodation ends once and for all.”

Gavin to attend NFU Rally opposing Inheritance Tax changes

Sir Gavin Williamson will attend the NFU Rally in London on Tuesday, 19th November to show his strong opposition for changes to inheritance tax that will hit farmers across Staffordshire.

The Government announced at the Autumn Budget that from April 2026, farms worth more than £1 million will face an effective inheritance tax rate of 20% - half the usual rate of 40%. This could cause significant impacts on the viability of some farms, with many farmers lamenting a lack of consultation leading to unpreparedness with possible effects on food security and agricultural industry.

To demonstrate strong opposition to the plans, the NFU has organised a ‘mass rally’ where more than 1,800 farmers have confirmed their intention to attend and lobby their respective MP’s on the important matter. Sir Gavin will be in attendance to speak to constituents and express his support for a reversal to any increases in inheritance tax.

Sir Gavin said: “Not content with stripping away pensioners’ security of Winter Fuel Payments, and imposing further National Insurance contributions onto businesses, Labour are now going after farmers too.

“I have spoken to many farmers who are very worried for the future of their farms, and their ability to pass it down to future generations.

“This is a politically motivated decision from Labour, as they show once again their contempt for rural communities and their lack of understanding of farming. I will be attending the NFU mass rally to show solidarity with those farmers who will be seriously impacted by this disastrous policy.

Gavin joins traders in opposing Penkridge pedestrianisation

Sir Gavin Williamson has joined Penkridge Traders in strongly rejecting any future proposals to pedestrianise Penkridge High Street.

A 'Vision 2050' document has been shared with traders which highlights the 'beneficial impact of pedestrianising Penkridge.' However, Sir Gavin shares the concerns of such a move, which may reduce business' footfall and create empty units.

Sir Gavin, alongside Rachel Bower, owner of units in the village, recently convened a meeting at the Golden Oldies Antiques shop to offer his full support against any move to pedestrianise the village. Sir Gavin said: "I welcomed the opportunity to meet with traders in Penkridge as well as other local business owners regarding the proposal for pedestrianisation on the High Street. Traders could not be any clearer with their opposition to pedestrianisation, and as far as I am concerned there is very little appetite for it amongst residents.

"This speculative plan could have unintended consequences for our local economy, especially as there are many shops in close proximity, whilst it would create increased diversions, congestion, and frustration for motorists.

"Penkridge has a thriving retail offering, and any proposals to restrict vehicle access are not welcome. I am calling on the County Council to emphatically rule out pedestrianisation in Penkridge."

Rachel Bower, owner of the units which house Jasper's and Golden Oldies added: "I am incredibly delighted to see Sir Gavin support the local shopkeepers. We keenly expressed our thoughts and fears through letters and in person, and he was quick to be attentive.

"I strongly feel like the plans would impact the trade of shopkeepers negatively. We say this from a place of experience and observation as to how local towns and villages with pedestrianisation are struggling. Sir Gavin, we deeply appreciate your support, thank you."

Projects helping people remain independent with support from their own communities

Lunch clubs for older people, befriending groups, healthy eating projects, exercise and dance classes are some of the projects making a real difference in Staffordshire communities.

Funding worth £245,000 has been made available by Staffordshire County Council to 18 voluntary, community, and social enterprise groups. Grants were awarded to groups to help support existing activities, develop new projects and meet gaps identified to meet the needs of local residents.



The funding supports local communities through the county council's Supportive Communities, Better Health Staffordshire and the Five Ways to Wellbeing initiatives. It's all about improving people's health and wellbeing and enabling people to remain independent and healthy within their local communities.

The New Vic Theatre in Newcastle-under-Lyme received funding towards their Open House café project, which helps connect people in the local area and improve wellbeing.

Paul Northcott, Cabinet Support Member for Public Health, Integrated Care and Safeguarding at Staffordshire County Council, visited the theatre to see the project first hand.

Cllr Northcott said: "We have a vibrant voluntary and community sector that has a real positive impact on local communities and it's important that we support them. This is important funding that supports voluntary and community organisations who deliver vital support in local communities. It was great to see some of these projects first hand and to speak to some of those accessing the local support."

Jill Rezzano, Head of Education at the New Vic Theatre, said: "We could never have dreamt how successful Open House café would be.

"The chance to connect with other people, enjoy free refreshments and feel truly welcome has become the cornerstone of many people's week. We are truly grateful for this funding and the chance to provide this essential wellbeing in our community."

Other groups receiving funding included Methodist Homes Association Communities - South Staffordshire, for their 'Sustain and Expand' project. This delivers weekly social groups, lunch clubs, a dementia focused day centre, befriending, exercise and dance groups.

In East Staffordshire, new projects include a 'Grow it, Cook it, Eat It' course for people recovering from mental ill health and a new holistic exercise and lifestyle programme by Burton Albion Community Trust.

In Staffordshire Moorlands, focused activity sessions are supporting people with healthy aging, helping them to access nutritious food, and enhance physical and mental wellbeing and reduce loneliness. Project Indi is launching a new, inclusive, weekly social group for adults with disabilities to connect, have fun and enhance their wellbeing in Newcastle Under Lyme. In Stafford, Beam is launching a new project supporting adults with learning difficulties, aimed at reducing loneliness and isolation. A number of districts will also benefit from the innovative 'How to Feed your Dragon' programme, aimed at developing healthy relationships with food.

Staffordshire schools receive funding boost to expand before and after school childcare

Schools across Staffordshire are set to benefit from funding to expand before and after school childcare to support working parents.

Staffordshire County Council has awarded grants totalling £282,000 to 17 schools in the first phase of a £2M funding programme.

Earlier this year, schools in Staffordshire were invited to apply for a share of the funding to increase the quantity and quality of 'wrap-around' childcare places.

The money awarded in this first phase will be used to create 300 childcare places and to extend the hours of existing places. The funding is part of a move to make sure every school offers wraparound childcare, either 'in-house' or in partnership with a childcare provider.

Schools in Staffordshire are invited to apply for a second round of funding by 31 December 2024. They can use the funding to create new or enhanced physical spaces, or to train and equip people and places to offer high quality wraparound childcare.

Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Families at Staffordshire County Council said: "Many parents told us that reliable, quality, before and after school childcare wasn't available in their area, making it hard to manage work and family life.

"I'm delighted that 17 schools have already been awarded grants and will create 300 additional places, so that local parents can return to or continue to work. If your school hasn't applied, it's not too late, please come forward and apply for a share of the funding. We want to support you to take the pressure off working parents when it comes to finding childcare they can depend on."

Bramshall Meadows First School in Uttoxeter were successful in their bid for £25,000 to expand their wraparound childcare service, creating 16 new places and taking on two new members of staff.

Andrea Cairns, Head teacher at Bramshall Meadows first school said: "I am delighted to be awarded the cash boost we need to expand our wraparound service. As a growing school, our existing before and after school places are in high demand and we often have a waiting list, so the funding couldn't have come at a better time. Parents tell us that our wraparound childcare allows them to balance their work schedule with family life, knowing their children are in a safe, happy environment and engaging in various activities.

"An additional 16 places will enable us to support more parents with childcare, that's both reliable and high quality. It will make a huge difference."

To help parents with the cost of childcare, the government offer a tax-free childcare scheme, which in effect reduces the cost of childcare by 20%.



Conservative Candidates for the County Elections 2025 now selected

With elections due on 1st May 2025 for Staffordshire County Council, we have been working to select Conservative candidates to fight the elections.

Following a round of interviews with the Federation's Approvals Committee and a Joint Executive Council Meeting of the general membership in each division and the Federation's Executive Council, the following candidates have been confirmed as the candidates for each of the Divisions listed below.

Newcastle Rural	Paul Northcott
Brewood	Mark Sutton
Cheslyn Hay Village, Featherstone & Shareshill	Robert Duncan
Penkridge	Wendi Sutton
Eccleshall & Gnosall	Jeremy Pert
Stafford Central	Paul Startin
Stafford North	Mike Newton
Stafford South East	Ann Edgeller
Stafford South West	Roy Clarke
Stafford Trent Valley	Jonathan Price
Stafford West & Rural	Mark Winnington
Stone Rural North	Ian Parry
Stone Urban	Steve Walley

We have one more selection to determine, for Great Wyrley & Essington Division, and this should be finalised during December.

Your local candidates will be contacting members in each Division. Please offer them all the support you can during their campaigns. It's crucial we win these elections and we are very grateful for any support you can offer to help us return these excellent candidates.

PENKRIDGE SUPPER CLUB

Our friends at the Penkridge Supper Club are launching their first supper club of the 2024/2025 season on **Friday 11th October 2024**.

Peace Memorial Hall, Penkridge
Doors open 6:30pm for 7:00pm

Tickets: £20 per person for members and £22.50 per person for visitors.

To book: please email penkridgesupperclub@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS AT CASTLE STREET

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!

Bookings are now open for our Christmas Luncheon at Castle Street.

Sunday 15th December 2024 (1:30PM for a 2PM start)

TICKETS: £30 per person

BOOKINGS CLOSE MONDAY 9th December 2024

To book: please go to: <https://buytickets.at/centralstaffsconservatives/1421752>
contact the Federation office on 01785 252 273 or by email to
contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk

100 Club

NOVEMBER'S WINNERS ANNOUNCED

1st Prize: **NIGEL COOPER**

2nd Prize: **ROY WHALLEY**

3rd Prize: **ANN FOSTER**

Congratulations!

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

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>

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

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

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

15th December 2024 - Christmas at Castle Street - 1:30pm

Key Contacts

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