

# Newsletter



**REMINDER:**

**STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS** are on **1st May**, so please remember to vote for your **CONSERVATIVE** candidate on 1st May! And if you have a postal vote, please make sure to return your completed ballot papers!

For those members who receive a print copy of our newsletter, you will find a '**Vote Conservative**' poster enclosed with this month's newsletter and we'd be grateful if you'd display it prominently in the run up to the election. For those who receive our newsletter by email, if you'd like a poster, please get in touch. It would be great to see Staffordshire flooded with '**Vote Conservative**' posters on display!

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/](http://www.gavinwilliamson.org/)

25th March 2025

### Gavin joins Stone Spring Clean

**Sir Gavin Williamson joined dozens of Stone residents as part of the Town's Spring Clean to bring communities together and maintain appeal for visitors and residents.**

Volunteers collected equipment and spent a Sunday morning across the Town to collect litter and improve the local environment.



Following the spring clean, volunteers were provided with free tea, coffee, and other refreshments at Bod on the High Street.

Each year, Sir Gavin participates in Spring cleans across the constituency – joining schools, local businesses, faith groups and others to help make a difference to local areas.

Wendy Lewis, who organised the Spring Clean said: “This is what our amazing community in Stone is all about. Volunteers coming together to ensure the town remains a wonderful place to live and work.”

Sir Gavin said: “I was delighted to join residents for the Stone Spring Clean. It is ever so important to bring the community together and it was amazing to see so many people doing their bit for the area they live and work in.

“I am extremely grateful for the hard work of volunteers, who organised the spring clean meticulously – providing equipment and tips to those participating. I look forward to participating again in the future.”

## Gavin backs community pharmacies in Staffordshire

Sir Gavin Williamson recently met with Staffordshire based pharmacies in Parliament to support their work and to campaign for greater transparency regarding future contracts.

The sector faces uncertainty regarding the contractual framework, with the consultation unlikely to report initial findings until 2026 at the earliest.

Organised by Community Pharmacy England, the Parliamentary event showcased how residents in Staffordshire and across the country benefit from a range of healthcare services provided by pharmacies. 56 million people a year go straight to pharmacies as their first port of call.



Sir Gavin spoke with pharmacy owners and representatives who discussed their community orientated work including medicine dispensation as well as offering a range of support and a strong retail service.

A spokesperson for Community Pharmacy England said: “We were really pleased that Sir Gavin could join this event. Whether they are dispensing medication or providing timely healthcare advice, pharmacy teams are an integral part of the local healthcare system.”

Sir Gavin said: “I welcomed the opportunity to attend this important event, which further highlighted the significant role that pharmacies play in communities across Staffordshire and indeed further afield.

“I hold regular meetings with pharmacists in my constituency, and it is clear there is very real concern regarding the future framework and therefore their ability to deliver vital services effectively.

“I will continue to work closely with pharmacies to ensure they have sufficient resources to keep their doors open.”

## **Gavin explores new cutting edge facilities at Rodbaston College**



**As part of Colleges and Careers Week, Sir Gavin Williamson visited Rodbaston College to explore the new cutting edge facilities on offer to learners.**

Colleges and Careers Week is designed to highlight the impact that colleges have on students, communities and the economy, whilst also emphasising career guidance and learning resources.

During the visit to Rodbaston College, Sir Gavin was given a tour of the new state of the art Net-Zero Training Facility which was formally opened earlier this year as part of the £1.6 million Getting Building Fund. The Net-Zero Centre is equipped with the latest advancements in energy efficiency such as photovoltaic panels, electric vehicle charging, air and ground source heat pumps, hydrogen boilers, as well as energy distribution and management systems.

Following this, Sir Gavin was given a tour of the Rodbaston Animal Zone to explore the new T Level teaching facility and spoke to students regarding their experiences of the new Level 3 animal care T Level programme.

Claire Boliver, Chief Executive Principle of South Staffordshire College said: “We would like to thank Sir Gavin for visiting our college during Colleges and Careers Week. We are committed to equipping our students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their chosen careers. Today’s visit highlights the importance of ensuring that our students can learn in industry standard facilities to ensure a smooth transition to the workplace post college.”

Sir Gavin said: “I was delighted to visit Rodbaston College as part of Colleges and Careers Week. The state of the art facilities have the ability to transform education for so many learners and assists with a vibrant curriculum to help students move into their chosen careers.

“As someone who is extremely passionate about skills and development, it is great to see the college investing in students.

“I was really impressed with the wide range of courses on offer at the college, as well as the brilliant facilities, expert teaching and the welcoming learning environment.

“I look forward to seeing students’ progression in the years and months ahead.”

## Gavin Opens Bri-Stor Centre of Excellence



**Sir Gavin Williamson unveiled Bri-Stor Centre’s new Centre of Excellence – a new facility serving as a dedicated resource for training as well as development.**

Bri-Stor Systems, part of The Hex Group, are a Hixon based company that specialise in the transformation of light-commercial vehicles and serve some of the UK’s largest fleet operators.

The Centre of Excellence offers a hub for new skills development through practical learning that will equip apprentices with the skills to launch their careers. The Centre will offer three distinct training modules, and support its three pillars of development: initiate, rejuvenate, and elevate.

As well as offering hands-on experience, Bri-Stor Systems’ Centre of Excellence integrates modern technology with practical learning. The company has launched the use of virtual reality into its van conversion process in order to minimise prototype waste and reduce vehicle lead times by up to 75%, all while improving sustainable practices due to less travel and manufacturing emissions.

Karen Barnacle Group People and Culture Director, said: “The Centre of Excellence is just one example of how we are investing in our people, ensuring they can face new challenges and continuously develop.

“With a dedicated Learning and Development Group Leader, responsible for the centre, we are able to offer industry-leading mentorship and provide the business with a continuous flow of highly skilled workers.”

Sir Gavin said: “I was thrilled to open the new Centre of Excellence which is turbocharging the development of apprentices and equipping them with the skills necessary to excel in their careers.

“As someone deeply committed to skills development, it is highly welcome to see the company’s dedication to facilitating continuous learning throughout their employees’ career journeys.

“This new training centre will provide invaluable opportunities for staff at all stages of their journey – empowering them to grow, adapt, and build fulfilling careers.”



## Gavin joins 'Pancake Day' farmers rally protest



Sir Gavin Williamson has joined the latest farmers rally (4th March 2025) to protest against Labour's 'Family Farms Tax.'

Attendees marched from Whitehall at around midday toward Parliament, as part of the 'Pancake Day' rally. The pancake has been used as a symbol to demonstrate the investment needed in agriculture to produce something as simple as a pancake.

Labour continue to plough ahead with a 20% inheritance tax rate on agricultural land and businesses worth more than £1 million, essentially scrapping the exemption which removed tax when farms were passed down to family.

Sir Gavin has been inundated with correspondence from farmers across Staffordshire raising concerns regarding the future viability of their farms, the possibility of land sales, and stalling investment – potentially threatening job security and local economies.

The policy has also sparked serious anxiety regarding the future of domestic food production as well as restoring nature and tackling climate change.

Sir Gavin said: "Labour's dereliction of duty to protect farmers and food security is continuing unashamedly without any sign of Ministers using their common sense.

"I have met hundreds of farmers across Staffordshire and they are unequivocally clear that Labour are threatening the future of farming in this country and it is taking a huge emotional toll on their wellbeing.

"I recently visited a farm in my constituency, where they have decided to pull the plug on investment worth millions. This is having a devastating impact on the local economy, suppressing job opportunities, and creating conflict between family members who are concerned regarding their future livelihoods.

"I will continue to stand up for farmers and call on the Government to urgently remove this damaging tax to prevent further destruction to the farming industry.

**Gavin fights against Acton Trussell development**

**Sir Gavin Williamson has called for the rejection of plans to build 81 houses on farmland at Weeping Cross which would see the village of Acton Trussell merge with Stafford.**

Sir Gavin recently joined local residents, Councillors, and other groups to formulate further objections after the plans resurfaced.

Following new Government directives, South Staffordshire District Council is tasked with meeting a target of just over 4,700 new homes across the District up to 2041. Concerns have been raised that if the plan to build 81 homes is approved, it could open the possibility of kickstarting plans to build 2,500 homes which are already included in prospective initiatives by the District Council – further increasing the pressure on already stretched infrastructure.

Sir Gavin said: “It is highly disappointing that yet more of our green belt is under attack – destroying our green spaces, and concreting over our countryside. I am working tirelessly with local Councillors and other groups to strongly oppose the destruction of our green fields.

“The plans to build 81 houses in Acton Trussell will merge the village with Stafford – affecting the character of the village and heaping pressure on infrastructure.

“As a small village, Acton Trussell simply cannot cope with further development. The infrastructure cannot support increases in population, whilst the local road network will not be able to withstand further congestion. There is also the very real concern of overloading capacity at schools and GP practices.

“I also note that Stafford Borough Council oppose these plans, and therefore, there is universal objection from all sides with the exception of the ideological driven Government.

“Labour are keen to alter the character of Staffordshire and further urbanise the County for their policy benefits. I will stand alongside residents, Councillors, and local groups to oppose further encroachment and protect the unique identity of our green spaces.”

## **Severn Trent and county council work together to tackle flooding in Eccleshall**

**Severn Trent and Staffordshire County Council have made significant strides in tackling ongoing flooding issues in Eccleshall.**

The flooding, which is happening in and around the Castle Street and Stafford Street areas, is being caused by a combination of surface water collecting on the ground and the sewer system becoming overwhelmed during heavy rainfall.

Staffordshire County Council is responsible for the highway drainage system, while Severn Trent manages the sewer systems in the area. Because Eccleshall's surface water system involves assets owned by multiple parties - including local landowners - effective management of heavy rainfall is a shared responsibility.

To date, more than £350,000 has been invested by Severn Trent and the county council to reduce the risk of flooding in the town.

This funding has supported key improvements including upgrades to drainage systems, the installation of debris screens to prevent blockages in storm drains, extra stormwater holding tanks at the pumping station on Stone Road, and detailed flow modelling surveys to investigate the underlying causes of the flooding.

Keith Flunder, Staffordshire County Council's Cabinet Support Member for Highways North, said: "We recognise the challenges that flooding has caused for residents in Eccleshall, which is why we've been working closely with Severn Trent to find a long-term solution.

"With warmer and wetter winters becoming more common in recent years, we're also investing an additional £45 million to improve and maintain our highways over the next three years, with £1 million specifically allocated to improving highway drainage across Staffordshire."

Jeremy Pert, Staffordshire County Councillor for Eccleshall, added:

"We fully understand the concerns raised by residents about the ongoing flooding in Eccleshall, and we will continue working closely with Severn Trent until we have developed a lasting solution to this very complex issue."

Bob Stear, Chief Engineer at Severn Trent, said: "It's essential that we continue to work together with Staffordshire County Council to develop the best and most effective solution for the local community.

"Our combined work is focused on developing a number of options based around capacity upgrades of the surface water drainage and sewerage systems. We will continue to update everyone as the work to find a permanent fix continues."

The organisations remain focused on developing a long-term solution to increase the capacity of Eccleshall's surface water drainage and sewer systems to prevent future flooding.



## County council announces £21 million boost to care for adults



*Pictured: Jeremy Pert, Staffordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Health and Care.*

### **Staffordshire County Council has allocated an extra £21.2 million investment in adult social care.**

The funding boost will help care providers to increase staff pay as the National Minimum Wage for employers rises next month, as well as meet the cost of rising national insurance contributions.

Jeremy Pert, Cabinet member for Health and Care, said: “We want to pay a fair price for adult social care in Staffordshire to make sure there is support available to those who need it most.

“Our care staff do an amazing job, and we want to keep experienced, knowledgeable and passionate people in the adult social care workforce.

“We hope this extra funding for care providers will help recruit and retain staff and support them during a period of sustained financial pressures.”

The council spends more than two thirds of its budget on adults’ and children’s social care, and with a growing elderly population, we continue to press the Government for a long-term funding solution.

The additional funding will support a seven per cent increase in fees for community-based services, such as home care, Supported Living and Extra Care services. Residential care and nursing care fees will be increased by between two to nine per cent. All will come into force from April.

Staffordshire’s council tax is one of the lowest in the country for a county authority. For every £10, nearly £7 is spent on keeping vulnerable children and adults safe and cared for.

## SUPPER CLUB



Supper Club is back and this year we're going to be at The Moat House, Acton Trussell.

Come and join us for a evening of delicious food (*2-courses plus tea or coffee*) and great company with some fascinating guest speakers.

Tickets cost **£22** per person and you can make your reservations by either calling the Federation Office or by email to [contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk](mailto:contact@centralstaffsconservatives.org.uk).

### **Supper Club Schedule for the 2025 Season:**

24th April

22nd May

19th June

24th July

28th August

25th September

30th October

**Please reserve at least a week before the date of the supper club.**

**Starts at 7PM**

### STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 1st MAY 2025

#### **GOOD LUCK TO ALL OUR CONSERVATIVE COUNTY COUNCIL CANDIDATES!**

The elections for Staffordshire County Council on 1st May are crucial for the future financial stability of the County and for the well-being of us all. Please remember to return your postal votes, if you have one, or go out and vote in person on 1st May.

We have some great candidates seeking election or re-election on 1st May and the Federation wishes each and every one of them the very best for their election!

***County Division:***

***Conservative Candidate:***

Brewood	Mark Sutton
Cheslyn Hay Village, Featherstone & Shareshill	Robert Duncan
Eccleshall & Gnosall	Jeremy Pert
Great Wyrley & Essington	Peter Kruskonjic
Newcastle Rural	Andrew Turnock
Penkridge	Wendi Sutton
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	Darren Woodward

***GOOD LUCK TO YOU ALL!***

### MEMBERSHIP

#### **DO YOU PAY YOUR MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION BY CHEQUE OR STANDING ORDER?**

Our preferred method of managing membership subscriptions is by direct debit, it's far easier and causes less administration, plus you benefit from the direct debit guarantee scheme. So, if you do pay by standing order or cheque and would like to switch to direct debit, please get in touch and let us know and we'll help you set it up.

### IN MEMORIAM

#### **Mr Royston Wright**

Our friend and strong supporter of the Conservative Party, Mr Royston Wright, passed away peacefully recently. Roy, who was a member for more than 30 years, will be fondly remembered by all who encountered him.

Roy's funeral service will take place at 10AM on Thursday 10th April at St Mary the Virgin & St Chad's Church, Brewood, ST19 9BT.

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### 100 Club

#### MARCH WINNERS ANNOUNCED

1st Prize: **HELEN ADAMS**

2nd Prize: **ANN FOSTER**

3rd Prize: **VERA WILKINSON**

#### 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](mailto: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](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

24TH APRIL - SUPPER CLUB, THE MOAT HOUSE ACTON TRUSSELL, 7PM

31ST MAY - PRESIDENT'S DINNER WITH THE RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP, TBA

## Key Contacts

Central Staffordshire Conservative Federation  
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Stafford ST16 2ED

Telephone: **01785 252 273**

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