



Newsletter

You are invited...



Conservative Party Conference 2024

**Briefing for members at our Castle Street HQ hosted by
Sir Gavin Williamson**

Hear all the news from the recent Party Conference.

Saturday 9th November, 10am at Castle Street

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/

29th October 2024

Gavin Slams Winter Fuel Payments Cut

Sir Gavin Williamson, MP for Stone, Great Wyrley and Penkridge, has joined forces with other MPs and called for the Government to reverse its decision to scrap winter fuel payments for millions of pensioners.

In September, Sir Gavin voted against the measure, expressing his horror at the “cruel and frankly unnecessary” plans to change the eligibility criteria for Winter Fuel Payments to pensioners who receive pension credit. This change would affect almost 20,000 pensioners in the Stone, Great Wyrley and Penkridge constituency, as many people would narrowly miss qualifying for the benefit.



The Government has been lambasted for refusing to publish official estimates for how many pensioners will be affected, and for not providing an impact assessment for the policy. Experts including Age UK and the Social Security Advisory Committee have criticised this decision and claimed that the policy may not actually save any money.

Meanwhile, the Chancellor has announced up to £50 billion in further borrowing, a figure which dwarves the widely disputed “£22 billion black hole” and the estimated £1.3 billion this policy will save.

Sir Gavin said ““Utterly disgraceful”, “angry”, “shocked”. This is just a snapshot of my inbox. Pensioners across Staffordshire feel that they are being used as pawns in a political game.”

“If the Government can justify spending £22bn on uncosted Net Zero projects, and £4m a day on opening new asylum seeker hotels, I am sure they can find the money to keep our pensioners warm this winter.”

“This is not about “preventing austerity” – it is about priorities. I urge all those concerned to sign our petition and show the Government that our pensioners should not be an afterthought.”

You can sign the petition at www.keepwinterfuel.com, and can find further details on applying for pension credit at www.gov.uk/pension-credit or by calling 0800 99 1234.

Gavin works to improve ovarian cancer survival rates



Sir Gavin Williamson attended a Parliamentary reception hosted by Target Ovarian Cancer as he works with colleagues and others to drive improvements in care as well as survival rates.

According to statistics from Cancer Research UK, there were 7,538 new cases of ovarian cancer between 2017/19, whilst there were 4,142 deaths during the same period. Sir Gavin is keen to highlight the symptoms of ovarian cancer which include but are not exclusive to: persistent bloating, feeling full quickly and/or loss of appetite, pelvic or abdominal pain, and urinary symptoms.

Sir Gavin: “I welcomed the opportunity to meet with Target Ovarian Cancer representatives in Parliament to discuss how we can work together to improve survival rates and raise the signs and symptoms of this devastating disease.

“It is vitally important that people with ovarian cancer are supported and I would like to pay tribute to Target Ovarian Cancer for their continued work in highlighting the challenges that people with this type of cancer face.

“I would encourage anyone who is experiencing symptoms to contact their GP. Early diagnosis is crucial to better outcomes.”

Gavin Supports Staffordshire Voluntary Groups



Sir Gavin Williamson attended events run by Staffordshire Community Foundation in Stone to show his support for voluntary organisations.

Sir Gavin visited the Frank Jordan Community Centre alongside Steve Adams the Chief Executive of Staffordshire Community Foundation, where he met with volunteers who run a range of groups including a wellness café, fitness classes, and internet support facilities.

The Community Foundation is the largest independent grant provider in Staffordshire, awarding more than £3 million every year to community groups. The charity manages more than £10 million in investments, along with a small property portfolio. Their funding comes from: private individuals, local businesses, fundraising events, public sector grants, police and crime commissioners, and Government.

Sir Gavin said: “It was fantastic to be able to see the wonderful volunteers who do so much across Staffordshire to put on a range of classes and events which are thoroughly enjoyed by the local community.

“I have seen first-hand how vital these voluntary groups are – whether it is supporting mental health, offering financial advice, plugging the digital divide, or offering exercise classes; volunteers do so much for our communities.

“I am grateful to Staffordshire Community Foundation for their tireless work in securing funding for these projects, as well as all the advice and guidance they provide to volunteers and organisations.”

Steve Adams, the Chief Executive of Staffordshire Community Foundation said: “The voluntary and community sector plays a massive part in making Staffordshire such a fantastic place to live and work.

“Often it can be overlooked, and so it was fantastic to meet with Sir Gavin to see some of the local projects we’ve funded. Not only is it good for organisations to be able to chat with their MP about their work, it also opens up conversations between their service users and their local MP. We were delighted that Sir Gavin made so much time available, and was so enthusiastic, to visit some of the work going on in his constituency.”

Gavin supports International Day of the Girl



As part of International Day of the Girl, Gavin was pleased to meet with representatives from the Brownies in Parliament.

International Day of the Girl is designed to recognise girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face, and to promote girls' empowerment as well as the fulfilment of their human rights.

This year's theme is 'girls' vision for the future' and conveys the need for urgent action and persistent hope to ensure girls' voices are heard.

Gavin is committed to doing everything he can to support girls' rights in Staffordshire and beyond.

Staffordshire County Council's Leader, Alan White, responds to Chancellor's Autumn Budget

Reacting to the Chancellor's Autumn Budget, Alan White, Leader of Staffordshire County Council, said:

"With any budget, the devil is in the detail and this one is no different.

"There is some positive news, with extra money for children with special educational needs and disabilities and a recognition of the need to invest in the country's roads, but the reality is that the commitments made are not nearly enough and the increase in the National Living Wage has created extra pressure on the council's budget.

"To give some perspective, nationwide, councils are carrying a £4 billion deficit in providing support for children with additional needs. The Chancellor's £1bn commitment, whilst welcome, is therefore a drop in the ocean when compared to what's needed. There remains an urgent need to fundamentally reform the system so that parents and children can feel the difference.

"When it comes to our roads, we have invested millions into repairs this year and will be looking carefully at how the £500 million commitment made in today's budget will be distributed across the country. What is clear though, is that it is likely to be a tiny fraction of the £472 million previously committed to Staffordshire's roads as part of the Network North fund.

"Looking ahead, we will continue to work with our local MPs and the Government to secure the long-term funding and reform required to put council finances on a sustainable footing."

29th October 2024

Care leavers' prom celebrates young people's achievements

More than 100 young people from across Staffordshire joined together to celebrate their achievements at the county's first ever Care Leavers' Prom.

The event at Stafford Rugby Club on Friday 25 October marked the beginning of celebrations for National Care Leavers' Week, which started yesterday (28 October).

Staff from the county council's children's services team worked with care leavers to make all the arrangements.

This included setting up a dedicated 'prom shop', where young people could choose from dresses, suits, shoes and accessories, all donated by members of the public. Local hair and beauty salons also gave up their time on Friday, free of charge, to help with hair and make-up ahead of the big night.

Care leavers, Ethan aged 20 and Fran aged 19, were among the young people who helped organise the event.

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COUNTY COUNCIL NEWS

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Ethan, who has been in care since he was 12, said:

“It was a great event and I’m glad it went so well. I really enjoyed meeting other people like me and it was a relief to see everything come together on the night.

“Growing up in care can be challenging and you can miss out on a lot of fun things that other young people get to do. I think it’s really important that care leavers get the chance to take part in events like this; it helps us to feel more normal and gives us a sense of belonging.”



Fran, who entered the care system when she was 16, added:

“I was a bit nervous beforehand, hoping that everything would go well.

“We came up with the idea of prom a couple of years ago and with the help of the council and our social workers, we made that idea a reality.

“I’d like to thank everyone who helped to organise it and in particular, I’d like to thank everyone who donated the dresses, suits, shoes and accessories. Everyone looked great and you helped us to feel really special on the night.

“I’m grateful for the help I’ve been given since I entered the care system. Without that support, I’m not sure where life would have taken me.”

Mark Sutton, Cabinet Lead for Children and Young People at Staffordshire County Council attended the event.

Mark said:

“It’s really important that we celebrate all the achievements of our care leavers, and this was a great event that did just that.

“Care leavers do face many more challenges than other young people growing up, so it’s important that they get the support they need. Some can feel isolated and alone, but events like this can really help bring them together, show them that they are valued and give them a sense of belonging.

“I’d like to say a huge thanks to everyone who helped organise such a wonderful evening – the young people, including Ethan and Fran, the teams who support these young people as they become independent, Stafford Rugby Club who hosted the event, and all the people and businesses who donated items or services. You should all be very proud of yourselves.”

Pupils settle in at new school in Tamworth

Pupils and staff are settling into their new surroundings at Garden Village Primary Academy, as the school celebrates its first term.

Located on Eagle Drive in Amington, Tamworth, the new school offers multiple classrooms, staff offices and an indoor sports hall, along with outdoor play areas and an extensive playing field.



The new two-storey 1FE £8m school will provide 210 primary and 26 nursery places to meet the demand for residents in the nearby housing developments.

The high energy efficient design will ensure a good amount of daylight and natural ventilation to the building, whilst reducing its carbon emissions and keeping energy cost low.

The new school is one of 4 opened in Staffordshire this year and part of a wider £30m+ investment in schools by the authority.

Staffordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Education, including SEND, Jonathan Price said: “It was great to speak with the children and staff and hear first-hand how they are enjoying their new surroundings.

“It’s vital that our schools are fit for future learners and having good facilities is proven to aid children’s learning. This new school is a vibrant, modern school with state-of-the-art facilities. It’s also one of the most sustainable in the County, which will help meet our target of reaching net zero by 2030. I look forward to seeing the school grow over the next few years.”

The academy will be managed by the Fiertè Multi Academy Trust.

Vice-CEO, Tony Hand at the trust, said:

“It has been an absolute privilege and delight to see children and staff making use of the fantastic building and outdoor spaces since opening in September.

“Parents and members of the community, who came for an open day, have commented on how wonderful the site and facilities are too. We are enormously appreciative of everyone’s efforts including the builders, local authority and Entrust for delivering on the project in partnership with the Trust.

“We look forward to the school filling with more children over time and to providing the excellent education we strive for every day.”

Midlands-based contractor G F Tomlinson and Entrust’s architect and project manager, worked with Staffordshire County Council to deliver the project.

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Adrian Grocock, Managing Director at G F Tomlinson, said:

“It’s a privilege to have completed our ninth scheme working alongside Staffordshire County Council and Entrust, building on our long-standing relationships and our extensive experience.

“Improving the lives of young people from the neighbouring new housing developments, who require primary and nursery places, the Garden Village Primary Academy provides modern teaching and recreational spaces to enhance the learning environment for pupils in the Amington area.”

The 1,580m² facility has nine classrooms, staff offices, an indoor school hall and catering spaces, alongside an outdoor play area, to enable pupils to take part in a number of sporting activities.

PENKRIDGE SUPPER CLUB

Our friends at the Penkridge Supper Club are holding their next supper club of the 2024/2025 season on **Friday 6th December 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

CONSERVATIVE POLICY FORUM

The Conservative Policy Forum is on hold until after the Conservative Party Leadership Election but will resume after the new Leader is announced. Please keep an eye out for details of our next CPF meeting which will be advertised on our website and in our newsletter.

100 Club

SEPTEMBER'S WINNERS ANNOUNCED

1st Prize: **PAUL STARTIN**

2nd Prize: **BARBARA RIDDLE**

3rd Prize: **JONATHAN KIDSON**

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

6th December 2024 - Penkridge Supper Club, Peace Memorial Hall, Penkridge - 6:30PM

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

Key Contacts

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