

Uniting our communities.
Our manifesto for change.



Conservatives

Staffordshire County Council Elections 2009

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Uniting our communities.

Our manifesto for change.

Staffordshire County Council Conservative Group

June 2009 Election manifesto

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Uniting Staffordshire, our plan for change



On June 4th 2009 the people of Staffordshire will elect a new County Council for the next four years.

Staffordshire is a diverse, dynamic and beautiful county. We believe it is an excellent place to live; its rich heritage, historic towns and cities, vibrant villages, idyllic landscape, dynamic economy and strong communities make it the ideal location.

With recession, jobs, homes, savings and security the issues that are of concern to everyone, our role in local government is to ensure that we get the most out of taxpayers' money by reducing waste and prioritising the services the Council provides to the all the people of Staffordshire.

Council Tax in Staffordshire has doubled since Labour took control. But services have become more expensive and our roads have deteriorated. We know that Council Tax is a burden on everyone, so we are committed to keeping it low.

Our purpose is clear. A Conservative County Council will offer fresh ideas, release our essential services from years of old-Labour interference, raise standards in our schools, improve care for the elderly, invest in our roads, make communities safer and unlock the potential in our local economy.

We want to create a County Council that looks outward and focuses on the people it serves.

Our ambition is to make Staffordshire a competitive county, packed with innovation, winning new investment and employment and to see communities having a greater say in how the services they pay for are delivered, and those services being more responsive to you.

It is a time for a new beginning.

Philip Atkins

Leader of Staffordshire County Council Conservative Group

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Training & Economic Development



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Performance & Organisation



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Fire & Rescue Service



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Group Communications and Media

Health and care services based on trust and not targets

- Personalised care, more options, less worry
- Care services for vulnerable adults and children a top priority

Low Council Tax - every year

- Target 2% maximum over next 2 years
- New council tax discounts for the over 85s

Getting Staffordshire moving

- Major new investment to repair the County's roads and footpaths
- A major review to improve public and school transport provision
- Tackle the problems of inappropriate routes for lorries

Safer communities

- Zero tolerance of all anti-social behaviour
- 20 mph safety zones around schools and vulnerable communities
- A bigger say in your local road safety
- Effective Community Policing

Review services, cut waste and reshape for the future

- Where we can't find a reason for it or a need, then we will stop it
- Scrap the silly stuff

Listening and responding to young people

- A new young person's travel card
- Crack down on bullying in all our schools
- Youth services that offer a new menu of choice for all young people
- A new summer holiday fun scheme



Our first steps

- We will undertake an immediate review of the Council and where necessary restructure to focus on our priorities as well as cut council waste while protecting vital frontline services
- We will discuss with our District Council partners new ways to work together for improved and better-value services
- We will start a major £30m new capital investment programme for highway improvement
- Create a new Community Action Fund which will provide direct local support in every area of the County
- Work with the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide more 'Money Advice' services
- Help families by introducing a school holiday play scheme which will offer a place for all young people – starting in 2010
- Start to introduce 20 mph speed safety zones around schools and vulnerable communities
- Introduce new Community Roads and Paths Maintenance Teams to keep our communities neat and tidy
- Fight crime and work with Police partners to help PCSOs increase their effectiveness in making communities safer
- Explore the opportunity to develop a 'Staffordshire Business Support Fund' to help small businesses
- We will support local Post Offices by exploring ways in which they could provide some council services to local communities
- We will adopt the 'Sustainable Communities Act' embracing the principle that local people know best.
(This will provide a simple process by which the ideas generated by local communities are fed directly through to central government.)



Our Core Principles.

We believe that effective leadership is essential for a better run council, value-for-money and superior services.

We will lead a Council that will ensure local needs take priority. Conservatives believe local government should work with, and for, its communities and local councillors should play an active part in supporting the communities they represent.

We are committed to low taxation with high quality services.

We will deliver the essential services but reduce the waste and cost in providing them. We will look carefully at all services and ensure that they are relevant and appropriate to the current needs of our communities. Where possible we will also develop new services that focus on improving the quality of life for the people of Staffordshire.

Listening and responding.

Our approach is to ensure that as far as possible the County Council meets the needs of local communities. We will therefore develop new ways to engage locally and to allow choices on local expenditure to be made locally. This will be an important change that will allow people to take part in local decision making.

The Challenges Ahead

We will not be afraid to challenge un-necessary interference by Central Government and regional Quangos. We believe in less bureaucracy, and so will resist initiatives which try to create more. Our stand will be to protect what is best for Staffordshire. We will reject and fight to stop government agencies trying to impose plans and demands that we see as unfair or unreasonable.

There are many things that will have an impact on Staffordshire over the next few years, not least the implications of serious economic down-turn and the effect this will have on public expenditure and the Staffordshire economy generally. In addition there are some important decisions and investments that need to be made to ensure that the County is fit for the future.



Major impact issues.



Future funding and changes

Staffordshire County Council Elections 2009

New investment in our schools and colleges.

The Government's school building programme promises much, but has so far delivered very little in Staffordshire. We want to ensure that we obtain Staffordshire's fair share of the Government's cash for schools and where we can, increase this through our own resources in order to create modern teaching and learning environments.

We will also work with schools and encourage new forms of governance which give schools and communities more control over the way their schools operate. This may include Academies, Trusts, Foundation and other models.

Rising number of people aged over 80years

Its obviously great news that more people are living into their 80's and 90's. The number of people aged over 80 in Staffordshire is set to double over the next 20 years.

However this will mean that we will also need to make sure that people are properly cared for as they get older. It means that the people will need to be helped to stay fit and healthy as they reach their older years and that services and support are designed to facilitate this more active lifestyle for the elderly.

We would like to make independent living an option for everyone, where this is possible, and to offer different care options where it is not.

As the problems of mental health are amongst the most difficult for carers and sufferers in older people, we want to develop the highest quality care provision, and support for carers.

We want to ensure that we invest in the right facilities and technologies that help older people, and make sure that personal care, choice, family support and quality of life are paramount.

Our commitment is that we will only make changes to care provision if we can offer and provide a better alternative.



Vulnerable people need special care.

Children, young people and the elderly often have special needs and their families need support too.

The County Council has a primary responsibility and it is a top priority for us.

It's our aim to make care as personalised as possible, to spend money as directly as possible to the benefit of the individual and to minimise the often over-burdening administration that can complicate the care that is required.

We will endeavour to work more closely with community groups, the private sector, voluntary organisations, faith groups and charities to provide high quality care, education, leisure, social activities, employment and other opportunities.

We will focus renewed attention to ensure care services for children are especially strong and offer the highest level of care, support and protection.

That will again require further investment to make certain that staff, standards, systems and agency partners are all effective and appropriate.

A new final-waste disposal operation.

The County Council has to deal with the waste created by household bin collections and the threat of Landfill Tax on the council taxpayer.

There is no easy or cost-free way to manage waste. We aim to encourage more recycling to reduce overall waste and dispose of what is left in the most responsible and affordable way.

We favour an optimised environmental solution that is affordable and which will serve the county well into the future.

A waste to energy plant options is our preferred choice as it provides a comparably lower cost way to dispose of waste that we can't recycle, and which helps to generate useful electricity.



The Regional Assembly has failed.

The Labour Government forced an un-elected Regional Assembly upon the West Midlands. It is ineffective, expensive, unaccountable, meddling and unnecessary.

We will continue to work to bring more powers and funding back to local County level and to seek a fair distribution of grants and support funding.

The environment can't wait.

The County Council is a major user of energy, through its buildings vehicles and operations. There is already a corporate agreement to reduce its carbon footprint, but we want to do more.

We will use our resources to invest in clean, renewable energies wherever possible. We will invest in more public transport and incentivise the use of cleaner fuels in our public transport system. We will encourage our schools and partners to maximise available funding to introduce greater fuel economy measures and renewable energy installations.

We will not however automatically support alternative energy where this is clearly in conflict with the natural environment.

Staffordshire already has a large number of companies involved in manufacturing technologies for alternative energy, energy efficiency and emission reduction. We want Staffordshire to encourage and welcome more similar companies to the County and to create centres for shared knowledge and development in environmental technologies.



Keeping tax high.



down and service quality

Better value for your money

- **We will make low council tax one of the council's top corporate priorities over the next 4 years.**

County Council Tax has more than doubled since 1997 shifting the burden of taxation on to the householder and affecting everyone from people on fixed incomes and pensions to young families and people living alone.

We will undertake an immediate review of the budgets for 2010/11 and beyond to find ways to keep tax low and to seek extra resources to support priority services. Our target is 2% maximum over next 2 years

- **Working smarter**

Savings are available from improved efficiency through new processes and new technology. Better procurement of goods and services will also produce savings.

By listening to you and the County Council's employees and encouraging you to become more involved in the way we design services and the way they are delivered, we believe that we can become more productive council and a better employer.

- **Better value from Council-owned property**

The County Council owns thousands of properties around the County worth many millions.

If we use these properties more efficiently, by consolidating some and disposing of others, we can release cash to invest in the future assets of the County in order to benefit more people now and in the future.

We will also make better use of the County's assets and connect them with Staffordshire's economy, to support growth and security.

- **Better use of County Farms**

The County Council is one of the largest owners of farms in the country.

We want to make our farms a real benefit to food production in the County.

Our aim is to make Staffordshire County Farms a recognised national brand, a Centre of Local Excellence and through a new Rural Academy, provide a high quality training and development base for future generations of Staffordshire farmers.



Excellence in

Raising



Education

attainment and aspirations.

-
- **Our approach to schools and education is simple.** We put pupils and students first. Their needs are paramount and we will provide the learning resources and quality of teaching they need.

This means that whilst buildings are important we will ensure that schools have new investment. We believe that the quality of teaching and learning is the most important factor in achieving success.

- **We will therefore focus on school improvement,** protect the right of every child to attend lesson not disrupted by other pupils or bullying, support schools to monitor and manage lesson quality, involve parents in pupil progress, but also challenge parents who fail to support their child. We will also support schools to reduce both pupil and staff absenteeism.
- **We are ‘open minded’ about Academy schools,** where they are proven to be of benefit, we will support them. We will also encourage schools to look at new ways of governance and collaboration. We will remain open to all suggestions that provide better management of schools and more opportunities for our children.
- **The wider involvement of schools in community learning** is a key part of our plans. We want to see every community offering a wide range of learning and ‘edutainment’ opportunities with the widest possible appeal, maximising the use of school buildings and facilities
- **Our commitment to small rural schools** is that we believe they are a vital part of rural communities and we will always ensure that these schools are treated as such. It is our intention to offer a level of ‘protection’ to these schools to ensure that they are sustainable.
- **The County Council provides a significant amount of home-school and community transport.** We will review this to provide a service that is both fair to children and their families but also offers greater access to school transport for as many children as possible at a reasonable cost and with sensible payment options for families. We also plan to introduce a young person’s travel card that allows greater use of public transport for all young people.
- **Cutting school bureaucracy is high on our agenda.** We will reduce the burden of unnecessary information gathering and form filling on schools. Our approach will include the better use of ICT and to encourage a questioning culture around school

administration – “is this really necessary ?”. We will also challenge national schemes that fail to show valid benefits to schools, but involve large amounts of work and form-filling.



- **Schools play a very important role in the health and wellbeing of children** and young people. We support the Healthy Schools programme and will provide new ways to ensure that all primary children receive a healthy balanced meal at their school.
- **There is a growing concern that the number of unplanned teenage pregnancies and terminations is far too high.** We will begin an investigation into why previous plans to reduce this have not been effective and look to develop new strategies

In summary

- Early Years is excellent and we support its further development
- A review of post-16 education to ensure high quality learning and training opportunities.
- We support school-based 6th Forms as well as 6th Form Colleges – both have a role.
- A review of the 14-19 curriculum to provide the widest choice
- Encourage more young people to enter higher education
- Tackle under-achievement with strong school improvement teams
- Robust action against parents who allow persistent truancy
- Better Home to School Transport
- Young Persons Travel Card
- Better learning and training opportunities for all school leavers
- More support to help children in their early years at school
- Zero tolerance of bullying and class room disruption in all schools
- New community learning and meeting activities for adults
- A new rural schools policy that support their retention
- Support further outdoor education – develop centres and encourage school trips and exchanges
- Recruitment of more high quality governors
- A fresh approach to youth services based around opportunities to participate, engage, volunteer and experience



Looking

***Our
citizens***



after children

commitment to our most vulnerable

Children with special needs

- **The spectrum of children with special needs is extremely broad.** This includes children with a disability or learning difficulty, gifted and talented pupils and children that require all kinds of special help to allow them to enjoy their education and access as many opportunities as possible.
- **Our intention is that provision should be of the highest quality,** with the greatest level of personalisation possible.
- **We want to ensure that access to services is as simple as possible** and that resources are not diluted by unnecessary administration. We also want to speed up the time it takes for children to be assessed and support packages agreed.
- **New resources through ‘Aiming High’ are very welcome** and we will ensure that these are targeted to provide the level of personalised support and opportunities that both children and their parents and carers need.

Vulnerable children.

- **The protection of children living in circumstances which put them at risk has to be our community’s highest priority.** We recognise that no system is ever fault-free and the risk of failure is always present. However through continuous reassessment and training, we will ensure that Staffordshire maintains the highest level of service and care to children and families.
- **Working with partner organisations,** police, emergency services, schools, health professional and third sector organisations we will ensure that as far as possible and practicable, the network of support and care is robust and effective.



Children in care

- **Our objective is to keep families together as far as is possible and safe.** The County Council will provide the support to families and young people to keep them together. Where it is necessary to bring children into the care system the goal will be to offer high quality facilities and family support.

We recognise that foster parents provide a vital service and we wish to develop this provision to ensure that it provides the best support to children. However we will not accept poor standards of provision and will act promptly to withdraw children where appropriate care and support is not being provided.



and



Dignity in care for our elderly disabled

Health care based on trust, not targets

- **Caring for an aging population is the area that places most pressure upon local authority budgets.** New government regulations in recent years have increased the cost pressure further. How we provide and fund high quality services for our elderly and disabled is probably the greatest challenge in local government. It cannot be solved by the use of outdated ideas and overburdening administration.
- **Developing innovative and imaginative schemes in delivering social care.** New care packages based around post hospital (intermediate care), home care, mental health, residential care and 'extra-care' housing, disability home improvements, day care, access to learning, transport, community health provision and carer respite are all key areas where further innovation and improvement are vital.
- **Increase the amount of extra care and supported housing** available for older and disabled people providing more choice, wider social contact and supported independent living.
- **The provision of equipment, adaptation and technology** that helps people live independently in their home. Extend home help services to help people improve their health and fitness.
- **Helping more people take control** of their own care through direct payments and individual budgets.
- **Working with the voluntary sector** to develop a wider range of support services for independent living and a more active lifestyle.
- **Developing services in conjunction with the NHS** that meet the specific needs of people with dementia and other mental health illness.
- **All Carers should be supported and recognised for their efforts in looking after their loved ones.** We would provide a dedicated help line to provide real time support.
- **Day care for adults** needs to be extended to provide more opportunities and social interaction. These facilities can be provided by all kinds of providers, including voluntary, charity and church groups. We want to make certain that facilities for

people with special needs are widely available and able to provide the level of care, facilities and activities required.

- **Local authorities are able to play both an enabling and providing role in social care.** All services do not necessarily have to be provided by a local authority and sometimes high quality services can be accessed elsewhere for better value.



- **Work with Primary Care Trusts to avoid delayed discharges** and the money saved be invested in new preventative regimes. Social Care should work ever more closely with Primary Care and Hospital Trusts to provide a seamless service.
- **We will work with the County's Primary Care Trusts and both private and public partners to deliver re-ablement, recuperation and recovery** and also the prevention of illnesses as well as educating our population in healthy lifestyles and eating.
- **Work closely with Registered Social Landlords and District Councils** to support disadvantaged and those most in need.
- **Care worker training and development** to extend the career opportunities for care workers and broaden the range of professional support that they provide.



A transport system that works

Getting Staffordshire moving - safely

- **Due to cuts and neglect, the condition of many roads in the County is extremely poor.** We want Staffordshire to be a place where people notice the difference in the quality of our roads and infrastructure. We want Staffordshire to be a county where more people want to live and invest.
- **We plan to fund a £30m capital investment programme** over the next three years which will have a significant impact on improving our highways infrastructure. We will target the investment at the repairs backlog.
Investing an extra £10m per year for three years will have a net revenue cost of £0.5m in 2009/10 rising to £1.5m by 2010/11. This will fund the borrowing costs of these capital works – including repayment and interest - but will also generate savings of £1.2m annually by the third year from a reduced need to spend the current reactive maintenance budgets on highways that will be in better condition.
- **Provide a ‘local-choice’ road safety policy** that offers communities more say in how they want local safety issues to be tackled.
- **Review the effectiveness of current community safety partnership** which provides little accountability and justification for investment made. Our priority is the reduction of accidents and fatalities on our roads.
- **Introduce new Community Action Teams (CATS)** to work alongside local parishes and communities to provide minor maintenance and repairs of County Council maintained roads, footpaths and signage etc.
- **Review HCV/HGV routes.** We will also work through national bodies to tackle the problem of satellite navigation systems which often direct HGVs/HCVs via unsuitable routes.
- **Review public transport investment to maximise bus and train provision** especially to support rural communities, access to work, school and college – a new Quality Transport Partnerships.
- **Provide more support to Community Speed Watch** schemes, where communities want to help to address local speeding issues.

- **Introduce more 20mph safety zones** especially around schools and communities with particular safety needs.
- **Improve the quality of footpaths and cycle routes.** At the same time we will improve the investment in Safer Routes to School to ensure that investment is made to the best advantage of road safety.



Local communities and partnerships

Working

together for better services

- ***We will create a County Council where people in communities have a real opportunity to exercise influence over what is important to them and what is less so.***
- **We believe that together we can get more done.** We will work with all public and private sector partners in Staffordshire to unlock further potential. These can take many forms involving communities in seeking solutions, established network of partners with shared ambitions and lots of good initiatives from small budgets. We will embrace the principles behind the Sustainable Communities Act.
- **We will show our commitment to this agenda by creating a new Communities Directorate** to be responsible for the co-ordination of all areas of the council's work with partners and services to communities. This will be achieved through reorganising existing responsibilities to provide greater focus. We do not expect any additional cost to be involved and would like to see efficiency savings achieved.
- **A Staffordshire brand – 'Made in Staffordshire'**, to accompany goods grown or manufactured in the County
- **A new Community Support Programme** where councillors and council officers work with community organisations to fund local projects and to influence other County Council services. This will extend the old LMIS scheme and will offer a better funding opportunity in which local communities can have a say in services provided.
- **Broadband internet access.** We believe that greater broadband coverage will support communities and businesses. We want to see more open, free coverage in our major towns and will start new initiatives to provide broadband in rural and remote parts. This will assist the rural economy and support micro-businesses, home-working, poor families with no access to school broadband and community networking – all vital for the future.
- **A new programme of events** organised during school summer holidays to engage children and young people.

- **Safer Places.** There are many ways in which the County Council can help communities to be safe, happy environments in which to live. Community Wardens, Rangers and Police Support Officers, Youth Service, new technologies, transport, can all help. We will extend the County Council's funding of PCSOs and press for greater powers and higher mobility to be provided in order to make them even more effective.



- **Working with District Council leisure services, our schools and the Voluntary Youth Sector** we will endeavour to deliver a local service to help all our children and young people, whatever their background or ability, develop a community instinct and to be aware of others, the consequences of their actions and help others of all ages deliver their full potential. Children should not be demonised and adults should be aware of their example to young people.
- **We strongly support investment in the arts** within Staffordshire, including new work and reasonable subsidies to theatre and arts groups to encourage diversity of cultural activity within the county. We will develop the role of Staffordshire Performing Arts to include all expressions of art within schools and youth groups. We will showcase both performance and visual arts through the SPA and encourage a much higher profile for young artists, musicians and youth theatre. We also wish to develop Staffordshire as a national and international centre for major shows and events.
- **Cultural establishments such as libraries play an important part in promoting learning, health and enjoyment of life.** We will identify efficiency savings and add extra cash where appropriate to improve library standards and change library opening hours to meet the real lifestyle needs of local communities. We will also extend the library beyond its conventional format of either a static or mobile facility. We will form partnerships with other organisations and community businesses to provide new access opportunities.
- **We will ensure that the County's historical treasures are properly preserved** and protect the County's heritage, including the safeguarding of collections and buildings of historical interest.



The Staffordshire economy

*Developing skills, providing opportunities,
securing our future*

- **Staffordshire has lost over 5,000 jobs in recent months.** Currently the West Midlands economy lags £15 billion the UK regional average and the gap is widening.
- **Will work with sixth forms and FE colleges to provide more community learning to improve skills.** This will help us to answer the needs of the aspiring new technology based businesses that we need to attract to the county.
- **Support adult education and training** as this not only helps to enhance the prospects for an individual's employment and career advancement, but also has wider social benefits that helps to strengthen the community, as well as having benefits for health, reduction in crime and leading to greater social cohesion.
- **Look to encourage courses which are skill orientated** rather than just qualification based. We will provide the means to identify skills to meet employers' demands and ensure that choice of course goes hand in hand with quality of provision.
- **Encourage young people where appropriate to be involved in real Apprenticeships** in the work place and college based as necessary.
- **We will work with PFI partners and others** to offer more apprenticeship opportunities and encourage local employment opportunities.
- **We will support school sixth forms which help to provide an essential route to higher education and colleges.** This provides the professional and scientific qualifications our society needs to compete internationally.
- **Creative courses.** There are excellent opportunities in service industries, in leisure and sport, in media and creative vocations all of which are growing parts of our diverse economy which will provide exciting employment now and in the future. We will encourage and support such courses and course providers.
- **Will work with all Staffordshire's Boroughs and Districts** to encourage all our towns produce 'Master Plans' which consider how they can support a diverse Staffordshire economy and provide the local services and infrastructure required.

- **Will encourage new green technologies** and business to invest and locate in Staffordshire and help reduce our carbon footprint. With new technologies come new jobs and we will partner investment in the research and development of new environmental technologies, as well as in the waste minimisation sector.



- **Support Business Enterprise Centres** which will deliver opportunities for the people of Staffordshire who are creative, industrious and innovative.
- **Will develop a New ‘Staffordshire Business Support Fund’ to help small companies.** Using the County Council’s access to financial markets we could provide secured loans of up to £25,000 to small businesses in Staffordshire employing less than 50 people. This can offer a further line of assistance to well-run small businesses that need short-term help with operating capital at reasonable and affordable rates.
- **We will resist unreasonable quarrying in Staffordshire** and fight for a reduction in the unacceptably high quota demand placed upon Staffordshire to provide over 60% of the region’s sand and gravel requirements.
- **We will work towards finding ways to use Post Offices in our urban and rural villages** to help deliver services in those communities where the Post Office is a important local community lifeline.
- **We want to explore how Staffordshire’s location** in the centre of the country can be used to our best advantage.



Cutting waste, increasing recycling and disposing responsibly

Limiting the environmental impact and maximising the energy potential of final-waste

- **Our priority is safeguarding the natural resources** and environment of the county.
- **We will encourage better recycling rates** through the 5 Rs: Refuse to use, Reduce the use, Re-use, Recycle and Rethink.
- **We will seek to work with partners to create a Joint Waste Authority** which will achieve both higher recycling rates and more efficient and lower waste collection costs consistently across the county.
- **Ensure targets set on local authorities are realistic and properly funded.** All Conservative local authorities in Staffordshire are meeting their recycling targets or exceeding them. We should work towards ALL local authorities meeting their targets and so free up existing incinerator capacity and use less landfill, saving landfill tax.
- **Seek to retain all of the £millions of Landfill Tax paid by Staffordshire each year** for reinvestment in recycling and waste minimisation.
- **A new waste to energy plant.** We favour an optimised environmental solution that is affordable and which will serve the county well into the future.

A waste to energy plant options is our preferred choice as it provides a comparably lower cost way to dispose of waste that we can't recycle and helps to generate useful electricity. Until a final decision deadline is reached we remain open to alternatives that offer a better package of environmental and economic benefits.

- **Ensure that this Council is at the forefront in support of promoting research** by local businesses into alternative methods of waste disposal. Local Authority powers should be strengthened to allow them to plan for alternative waste management systems and have the power to consider tax incentives for those businesses which use recycled goods as raw materials and/or engage in approved research work promoting alternate methods of waste disposal.



Our Local

A focus on



Police Services

community reassurance

-
- **One of the top concerns of Staffordshire people is feeling safe.** Whilst Staffordshire has one of the best Police services in the country, there can be no half-heartedness, no opting out, in the fight against crime and violence.
 - **We support a more visible police presence on our streets.** However all of us, not just the police, share a responsibility to make our streets and homes safer.
 - **We will not tolerate crime or anti social behavior** at any level of society
 - **Councilor membership of the Police Authority** should influence policy and spending parameters, even though the Police Authority is no longer directly administered by the County Council.
 - **Our policy will continue to support the Staffordshire Police** and its involvement in community life and give a lead in encouraging local communities and councils to prevent crime.
 - **We will provide ways to strengthen the community reassurance** presence on the streets by council employees and Police Community Support Officers.
 - **We actively support the police in the fight against drug abuse and dealing and alcohol-related problems.** We wish to see more active targeting and enforcement against drug dealing within local communities.



Our local
Keeping our



Fire and Rescue Service
communities safe.

-
- **County Councillors form a majority of members of Staffordshire Combined Fire and Rescue Authority** and have a key role in developing policy and setting spending parameters.
 - **Our policy will continue to support the Fire and Rescue Service** as one of the leading F&R services in the Country.
 - **We want to see it further develop its role** and effectiveness in community safety through protective services and risk reduction.
 - **We will give further support to increase its role in fire and safety risks in local business.**
 - **Engaging young people** is a further important role of the fire service. It brings communities and fire and rescue officers together. It is also useful in reducing antisocial behaviour.
 - **Supporting vulnerable people** with safety checks and advice has made a tremendous contribution to reducing dangers in the home. We want to see this extended to all people living alone and single parents with young children.

