

General Election Priorities

Newcastle-under-Lyme



Staffordshire
Wildlife Trust

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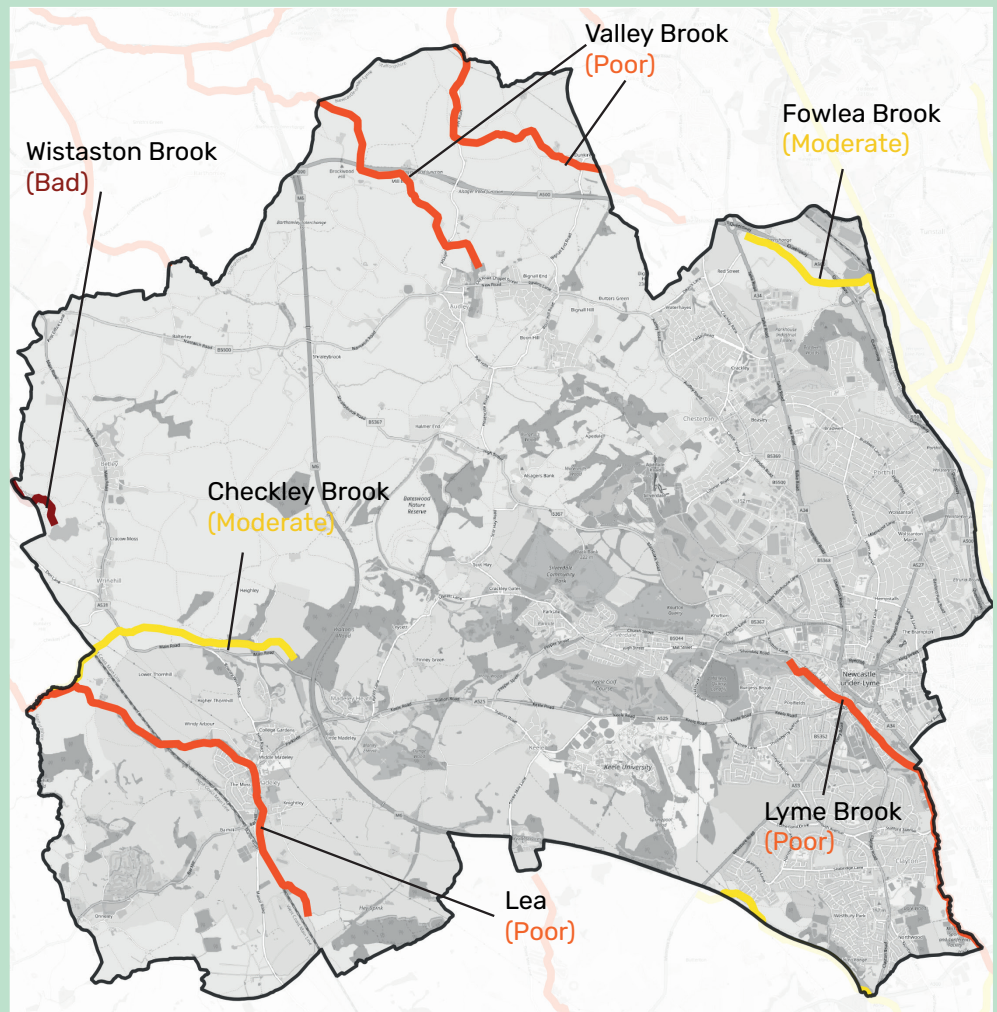
Number of
Staffordshire
Wildlife Trust
members in this
constituency

Priority 1: Clean up and restore Newcastle-under-Lyme's rivers and streams


Every watercourse in Newcastle-under-Lyme is failing to meet legally-binding environmental standards under the Water Framework Directive.

Lyme Brook in Newcastle, Valley Brook in Bignall End and Lea in Madeley are classified as being in poor ecological health, while the stretch of the Wistaston Brook in the constituency is amongst the worst stretches in the county.

Sewage discharges, runoff from farms and pollution from roads, industry and urban development are some of the causes of poor water quality.



Overall water quality status of watercourses in Newcastle-under-Lyme: latest figures from the Environment Agency (Water framework Directive)



In 2023, untreated sewage was discharged into Newcastle-under-Lyme's watercourses 458 times, for a total of 1,925 hours.

What must be done by Government to clean up our rivers

1 Cut nutrient pollution from farming, sewage and development in half by 2030, with proper funding for enforcement agencies to effectively monitor our watercourses and enforce penalties on polluters.

2 Invest in creating and repairing wild habitats to provide a natural solution to flooding, which will protect people's homes and businesses, and improve water quality.

3 Support the reintroduction of beavers living in wild to restore our rivers and wetlands.



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Priority 2: Bring back Newcastle-under-Lyme's lost wildlife

Across the UK, the abundance of wild species has fallen by an average of 19% since 1970*.

Priority species, which have been prioritised for conservation for reasons such as rapid population decline, have declined to 37% of their baseline value in 1970.

Similar wildlife declines are being seen across Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Over the last two decades, the number of water voles recorded in the constituency has fallen by 89%, while records of bullfinch have declined by 24%.

These devastating declines are caused by a number of factors including changes to the way we manage our agricultural land, climate change, pollution and urbanisation.

*State of Nature report 2023



To halt and reverse the collapse of our natural world, we need the Government to put nature into recovery by protecting and restoring **at least 30%** of land and water for nature by 2030.

2%
The percentage of land managed for wildlife in Newcastle-under-Lyme¹

What must be done by Government

- 1 Increase the budget for nature-friendly farming, so farms can be both productive and bursting with wildlife
- 2 Prevent further loss of habitat by ensuring new development both protects and enhances nature.
- 3 Fund the restoration and creation of more, bigger and better natural habitats, to help wildlife recover and protect communities from the impacts of climate change.

1. Figure includes SSSIs, LNRs, nature reserves, Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) overlapping agri-environment schemes. Figure is 15% if LWS, SBIs, National Parks, AONBs and agri-environment schemes that don't overlap LWS are included

Priority 3: Let nature help

Spending time in nature boosts physical and mental health, and healthy habitats protect us from the impacts of climate change, boost our food security and underpin our economic prosperity. We must ensure that everyone has fair and equal access to restorative natural places in their neighbourhood, and that natural solutions are implemented at scale across every community.

10,833 people in the Newcastle-under-Lyme local authority area don't have a park or local greenspace within a 10 minute walk²

What must be done by Government

- 1 Ensure everyone has easy access to healthy natural spaces in their neighbourhood, to support wellbeing and protect them from the impacts of climate change, particularly for those that have the least provision today;
- 2 Fund and integrate green prescribing into community-based health services.
- 3 Ensure all children enjoy regular outdoor learning opportunities at school.

Vote for Nature Survey results³

98% of survey respondents from the Newcastle-under-Lyme constituency said strong policies to tackle the nature and climate crisis are important to them when it comes to voting at the next General Election.

The biggest environmental concerns for respondents from the constituency are 'losing wild places to development', followed by 'falling numbers of wild species' and 'the impact of climate change'.

3: Staffordshire Wildlife Trust's Vote for Nature Survey, Nov '23 - June '24