

General Election Priorities Stafford

Priority 1: Clean up and restore Stafford's rivers and streams

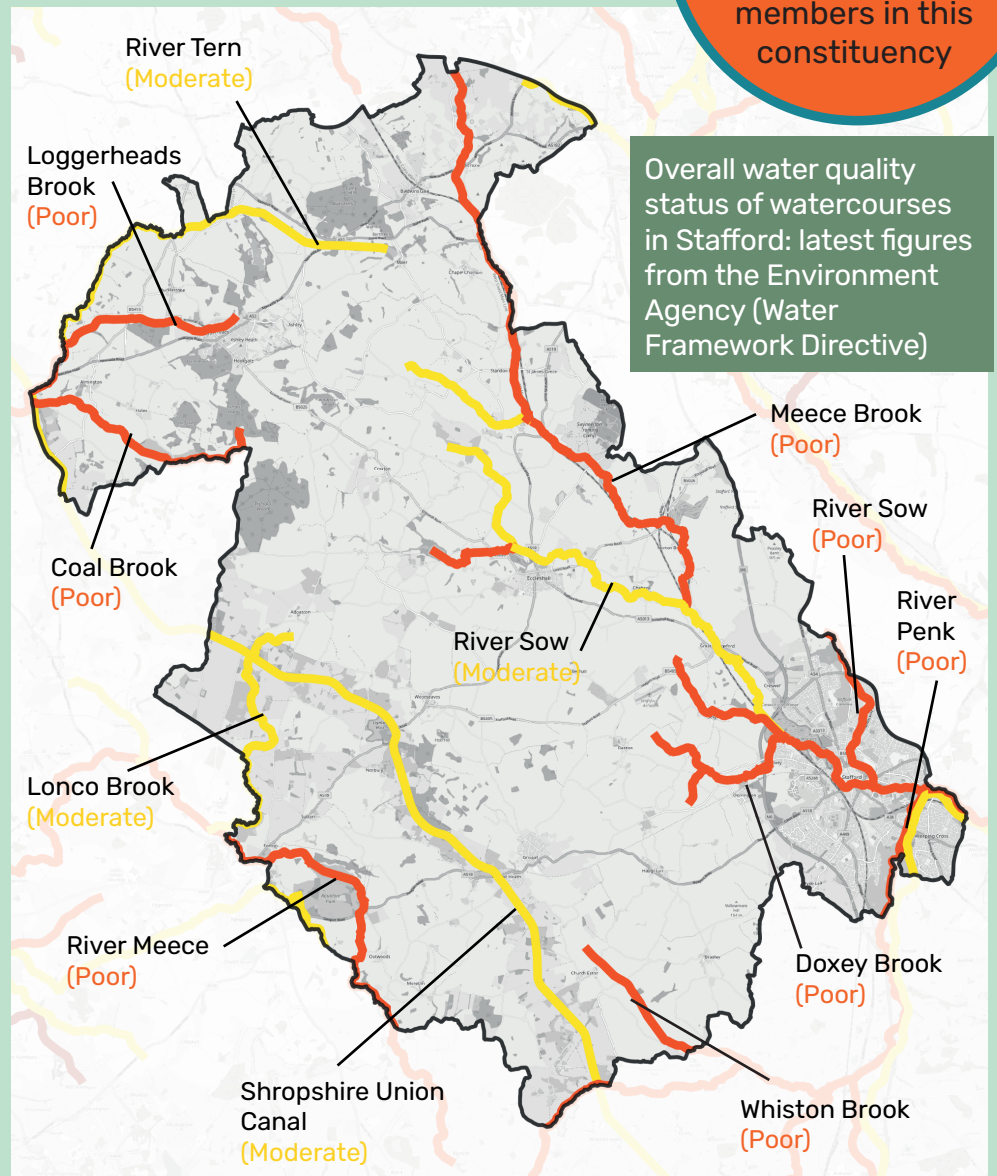
3417

Number of
Staffordshire
Wildlife Trust
members in this
constituency

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

Many watercourses, including stretches of the River Sow and Penk, are classified as being in poor ecological health.

Physical modifications to the watercourses, sewage discharges, abstraction, agricultural runoff and pollution from industry, development and transport are the leading causes of poor water quality in the constituency.



In 2023, untreated sewage was discharged into Stafford watercourses 404 times, for a total of 3,318 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 Stafford'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 Stafford.

Over the last two decades, the number of water voles recorded in the constituency has fallen by 97%, while records of bulfinch have declined by 37%.

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

*State of Nature report 2023



Terry Whittaker/2020VISION



John Bridges

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 Stafford¹

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.

18,079 people living within the Stafford 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

96% of survey respondents from the Stafford 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 'falling numbers of wild species' and 'losing wild places to development'.

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