

Press Release

**From Barry Stamp
Liberal Democrat Prospective Parliamentary Candidate
Stafford Constituency**

Date: 4th January 2005

Use: Immediate

Lib Dem Hopeful Visits Stafford Hospital

Stafford's Liberal Democrat Prospective Parliamentary Candidate will be visiting Staffordshire General Hospital, Weston Road, Stafford tomorrow (Wednesday) as part of his fact finding tour of the constituency.

Barry Stamp will be starting his visit at 11.00am, and will be meeting with Mr David O'Neill the Hospital's Chief Executive and other senior members of staff before touring the hospital proper.

"Stafford should be proud of it's hospital and the hardworking and dedicated staff that make it an indispensable part of the local community. Just before Christmas my mother was a patient in the hospital for some weeks and I was a daily visitor to the site, so I have certainly seen what a wonderful service the hospital provides. However with every organisation of this size there are problems, and it is normal these that are talked about. My visit tomorrow will not only allow me to express my thanks to Mr O'Neill and his team, but will also give me the opportunity to discuss with him and his staff the problems and challenges they face. I am particularly interested to discover just how much time is taken up in "form filling" and chasing Government targets, and to explore ways this time could be used to provide better services to patients. I will also asking how the medical staff view the Governments plans for all hospitals to gain Foundation status and whether of not they see this as a good and efficient way of ensuring all patients get the very best care," said Barry Stamp.

Further details from Barry Stamp
Tel 01785 822723 Mobile 07771688331

Notes to editors:-

- i) Barry Stamp will be at Staffordshire General Hospital, Weston Road, Stafford between 11.00am and 12.30pm. A photo opportunity can be arranged, either with Barry and members of the senior staff or Barry on his visit around the hospital.

ii) Staffordshire General Hospital is run by Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust. The trust is the principal Acute provider for the population of Stafford, Cannock, Rugeley and surrounding areas. Care is provided from two modern hospitals in Stafford (410 beds) and Cannock (166 beds). It also provides clinical support in neighbouring hospitals. The Trust provides a broad range of medical and surgical specialties treating patients on both an elective and emergency basis, working principally with the Stafford and Cannock Primary Care Groups. It also provides and is developing further, a comprehensive, long established range of open access services to support Primary Care. There is also an integrated private healthcare suite.

The Trust delivers its services to a population of around 320,000 for most specialties with the Rheumatology service covering a wider geographical area that includes South East Staffordshire, Sutton Coldfield and North Birmingham. The Trust principally covers a geographical area of 325 square miles.

The catchment area has a number of population centres at Stafford, Cannock and Rugeley. There is a large rural population spread amongst small villages around these three major centres and in parts of South Staffordshire. The Trust employs around 2,500 people.

Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust is part of the NHS. There are over six hundred NHS Trusts,