

# Press Release

**From Councillor Barry Stamp  
Stafford Borough Councillor  
Church Eaton Ward**

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**Use: Immediate**

## **Haughton Post Office Praised At National Conference**

The success of Haughton's Village Post Office was highlighted at last weeks Liberal Democrat Conference in Harrogate.

Stafford Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group Leader and Councillor for Haughton told the conference that hard work and willingness to expand the business which runs alongside the post office ensured a viable long-term future for this much needed Village facility.

"I was extremely pleased that during a debate on the future of post office services I was able to tell conference members of the way Haughton Post office was being developed. It is clear that the entrepreneurial skills of the present owners have ensured it has a bright future. By expanding the facilities and the level of service offered by the newsagents, which occupies the same premises as the post office, the future of the post office has been secured. However many would argue that post-offices should be able to survive on their own and not have to rely on subsidies from other parts of the same shop. This has certainly not been the case with many other post offices. Indeed over the years a number of villages to the west of Stafford, including Bradley, Seighford and Church Eaton, have lost their full-time post offices and now even areas of the town such as Doxey are suffering a similar fate. What is clear is that Government policy is a major factor in these failures. Two simple steps could be taken immediately to give these businesses fighting chance of survival. Firstly the plan to scrap pension and benefit payments using the post office card account planned for 2010 could be shelved. This would not only ensure a steady income stream would be maintained by sub-post offices, but also this vital service would be maintained for thousands of people who rely on this method of collecting their payments. Secondly more freedom could be given to postmasters. This could see smaller sub post offices being used as a pick-up and drop-off point for parcels from carriers other than Royal Mail, a practice that is currently banned," said Barry Stamp.

Small sub-post offices are the life blood of many communities and they must be supported. It is important that post offices like Haughton are given the opportunity to develop and grow their business rather than face a bleak future struggling with unfair government rules," added Barry Stamp.

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