

Press Release

**From Councillor Barry Stamp
Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
Stafford Borough Council**

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Latest Figures Could Mean More "Garden Grabbing" House Building

News that Stafford Borough could be forced to find land for 12,900 houses over the next eighteen years has been described as devastating by Leader of the towns Liberal Democrats.

Barry Stamp said that if the proposal was approved by the West Midlands Regional Assembly Stafford and the surrounding area would be unrecognisable in a few years time.

"While the proposal could see more homes being built on greenfield land surrounding the town and outlying villages there will also be overwhelming pressure to build on every piece of available land within the town itself. Over the last few weeks there has been growing unrest with the steady rise in the number of houses being built on garden plots. Indeed many residents are saying that enough is enough and the Council should stop this kind of development taking place. Indeed Liberal Democrats nationally have recently started a campaign to make it more difficult to get permission to build on these garden sites. However the news that if the Government gets it way Stafford Borough would be expected to find land for nearly 13,000 houses will make it almost impossible to prevent this "garden grabbing" development from taking place."

"While I realise there is a growing need for homes to be built I do think the West Midlands Regional Assembly, who will make the final decision on housing numbers, must take another look at the allocation they are proposing for rural counties like Staffordshire. More effort must be made to redevelop brown field ex-industrial sites in the West Midlands conurbation before other areas are considered. It will be very easy for the Borough Council to sit back and allow every small piece of land to be developed or indeed large areas of farm land to be covered in concrete and brick, but neither of these will improve the quality of life for people already living in Stafford and the surrounding area."

"Liberal Democrats will continue their campaign to prevent "back gardens" from being unnecessarily developed and will fight to ensure Stafford Borough Council's housing

allocation is not only fair but also when built will enhance and not distract from the pleasant environment in and around Stafford. This certainly will not be the case if “garden grabbing” developments are allowed to continue,” said Councillor Stamp.

Further details from:

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