

Support from the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS - NALC

Membership of the Staffordshire Parish Council Association give you access to the services and advice of NALC.



Established in 1947, the National Association of Local Councils is the only national body that represents the interests of 10,000 local (parish and town) councils in England. NALC works in partnership with county associations to support, promote and improve local councils.

WHAT DOES NALC DO?

- **Campaigning** - lobby for the issues that are important to local councils and communicate those views to government and a range of influential organisations, in the private, charity and public sector.
- **Legal, accounts and audit advice** - Written, telephone and digital advice from NALC's well-experienced solicitors.
- **Publications** - A quarterly magazine, LCR, fortnightly DIS, guides on being a good councillor, employer, finance and transparency, neighbourhood planning and a range of toolkits.
- **Conferences, events and training** - NALC's national events and training sessions are opportunities to bring our diverse membership together to learn about new or topical initiatives and share ideas.
- **Publicity** - Raise the profile of local councils and the sector beyond a regional level
- **Media** - Guidance on how to deal with a media crises, how to deal with reporters and media outlets and writing a media policy.
- **Standards, awards and recognition** - Opportunities all year round for local councils to take up the chance to celebrate and be recognised for achievements through the Local Council Award Scheme, Council Spotlight and Star Council Awards.

Staffordshire Parish Council Association contacts:

County Officer:
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Training Officer:
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Health and Wellbeing Officer:
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Chairman
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"I have attended SPCA training courses and I found them useful. I look forward to joining more SPCA courses."
James, Parish Councillor

Email - sPCA.parish@staffordshire.gov.uk

STAFFORDSHIRE Parish Councils' Association

Staffordshire Parish Councils Association - Eastgate House, 79 Eastgate Street, Stafford, ST16 2NG. Telephone 01785 276536

The Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association

IS HERE to SUPPORT YOU.

We are the association for all the Parish and Town Councils in Staffordshire. We are your first point of call when your council needs advice or support.

With the sector seeing high Clerk turnover and with many new councillors, we can support the council when it may need advice and support, training and development opportunities for new or experienced councillors and Clerks.

Over 160 of the 188 councils in Staffordshire have joined and this number is growing. This gives the Association a wealth of information and views to draw on as it represents the interests of councils at the first tier of local government.

The association assist lobbying of government for the sector through NALC and it speaks for Staffordshire Parish Council's on a national stage.

Why join?

- **Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association (SPCA)** is a membership organisation which supports and advises Parish and Town Councils. Through membership your Council also benefits from affiliation to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).
- **SPCA** provides advice to Councils and Clerks on legal matters, finance, policy and procedures and much more. We are also able to access indemnified legal advice from NALC's team of solicitors when dealing with complex legal situations
- **SPCA** also provides training for both Councillors and Clerks. This is key in a fast-moving sector. At present we have around 25 courses on offer, and this continues to be enhanced. Our courses range from general Clerk and Councillor courses through to specific courses such as social media and Finance. To view our full list or book a course please visit our website
- **Member Bulletin** - we provide a regular update, emailed to Clerks and Chairman. This is designed to update you about

"We had a difficult issue that required us getting independent advice, the SPCA was able to support us and help the councillors understand what to do."
Alex, Parish Councillor

news and inform you promptly on developments in the sector. This assists Clerks in identifying areas of Council work requiring regular confirmation or revision such as policies. The newsletter is designed to be passed by the Clerk to all members of the Council

- **Peer support & Networking** - Many councils find themselves doing projects or in situations they are unfamiliar with. We can help provide a way to network with other peer councils. This enable you to seek best practice when you are trying something new
- **Latest news** - Be it changes to financial rules, legal requirements, funding opportunities or other useful/essential information. The **SPCA** ensures that you are kept up to date about what is happening to the sector and what you need to know.



www.spcaonline.org.uk

RESOURCES



"The SPCA have been fantastic helping me get settled in as a new clerk. The training and support have made a real difference"

Kate, New Parish Clerk

- **Advice and support from Association staff** with experience and backgrounds in the sector, as well as advice and guidance from a range of very experienced specialists in HR, Finance, Communications and Media, and Fund Raising
- **Legal Topic Notes** - available as part of your subscription via SPCA or on the NALC website (please contact SPCA for log on details)
- **Good Councillor Guides on various topics including finance, employment, neighbourhood planning, cyber security etc.** - available as part of your subscription via SPCA or on the NALC website (please contact SPCA for log on details)
- **Finance - Practitioners Guide** - supporting preparation of the AGAR (Annual return) and general finance guidance
- **Website accessibility and Transparency Code** - guidance on what Councils MUST do in relation to their websites

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Suggested Training Routes for Clerks

Suggested Training Routes for Councillors

Induction Training Clerks 1-1 Induction (2 hours)

Further Knowledge Clerks The Knowledge (5/6 hours)

Specific Skills Courses (2/3 hours each)

Examples:
Clerks Toolkit Sessions

Examples:
Planning Data Protection, Finance

SPCA provides training mostly through its in-house qualified training officer who calls on specialists where necessary. The Clerks main training course, the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) is also provided each year. Much of the training is provided via Zoom, although on-site and in person options are available where these work better.

We can also deliver bespoke training to a council and its members

See our full list of courses: www.spcaonline.org.uk

Induction Training Councillor Fundamentals (2 hours)

Further Knowledge Be a better Councillor (5/6 hours)

Specific Skills Courses (2/3 hours each)

Examples:
Code of Conduct, Good Employment

Examples:
Planning Data Protection, Finance

SPCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

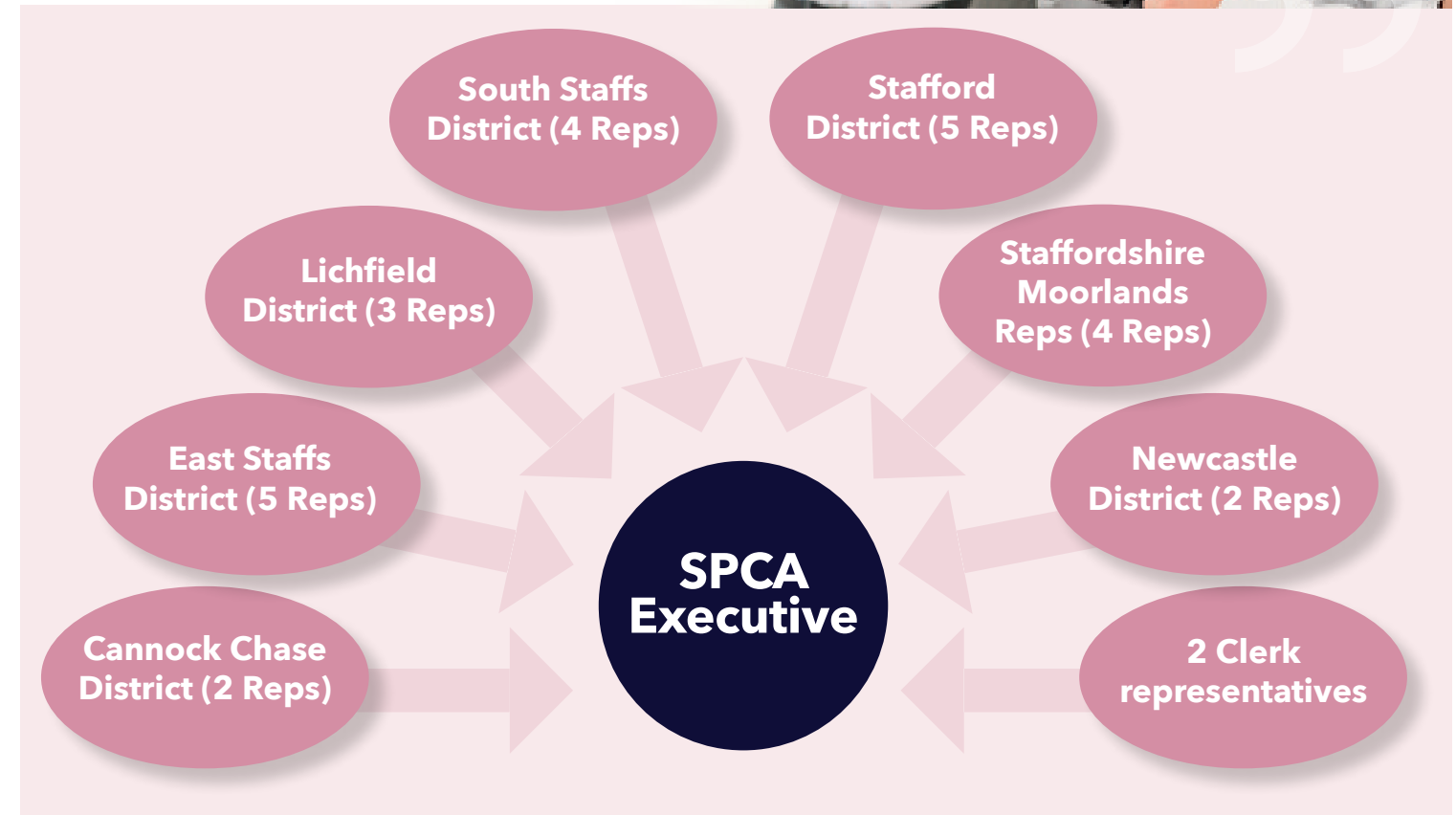


"I would recommend every council joins the SPCA and takes advantage of the benefits of membership. The training is high quality."

Keith, Parish Councillor

The association is run by member councils for member councils. Parish Council representatives are nominated by their Council for each area to serve on the SPCA Executive for a period of 2 years. They are elected at the AGM and are expected to attend quarterly meetings.

The SPCA Executive agree the strategic direction for the Association and raise issues on behalf of member councils.



The work of the Executive is supported by a Policy and Resources Committee (P&R) made up of members of the Executive, working with the County Officer (CO). P&R meets between Executive Committee meetings to support the CO and staff team which consists of the CO, Training Officer, Administration/RFO, and Health and Wellbeing Officer.

The Health and Wellbeing Officer is the product of a joint initiative with Staffordshire Council and Public Health to support town and parish councils to identify ways in which they can contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of the county's residents.

All the staff are part-time and have an office base in Stafford. The Association makes a commitment to its members

to respond to enquires within 48 hours of receipt. Sometimes this will be a holding response while advice is sought, however the experience within the team means that many queries can be answered at first attempt!

