



Staffordshire

Ambassador of the Year 2023 Nominees

1. Philip Carter - [Ornua Foods/Love Cheese Live](#)

Phil is the Commercial Controller for Ornua Foods, based in Leek. Ornua supply over 40% of the hard cheese sold in UK retailers and are category leaders. He is also on the organising committee for Love Cheese Live, which took place in Staffordshire for the first time last year. It is one of the UK's largest Cheese, Food & Drink Festivals and around 10,000 people visit the two-day event.

Phil is a Staffordshire Ambassador who is passionate about the county and promoting Staffordshire. He attends every ambassador event without fail and spoke at our 'A Taste of Staffordshire' event last year as well as giving away produce during the event. He engages regularly with us on social media to promote and amplify our work. He ran a promotion for discounted tickets to Love Cheese Live for Staffordshire County Council employees and Staffordshire Ambassadors and submitted a video testimonial in our bid for 'Place Brand of the Year' at the City Nation Place Awards.

2. Simon McEneny - [Newcastle Borough Council](#)

Simon is the Executive Director for Commercial Development and Economic Growth and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council. Through our commitment to working closely with our district and borough partners, Simon has been a shining example of collaboration, teamwork and partnership. Simon attended the UKREiiF annual event in 2022 with We Are Staffordshire and our inward investment service, supporting us in putting Staffordshire on the map. Simon was also a key supporter in our bid for 'Place Brand of the Year' at the CNP Awards, submitting a video testimonial for our nomination application.

Latterly, we have enjoyed working alongside Simon's team to support Newcastle-under-Lyme's 850th anniversary celebrations. Simon is true testament to the strength of county and borough partnerships that put our towns - and the wider county - on the map.

3. Josh Chadwick – [The Tawny](#)

Josh is the General Manager at the Tawny, a luxury deconstructed hotel in the Staffordshire Moorlands, which opened in 2021. Josh is a 2022 Acorn Award winner – this celebrates 30 of the hospitality industry's most talented stars aged under 30. The Tawny celebrates its location in the Staffordshire Moorlands and was recently voted in the Top 50 of Boutique Hotels in the UK and the Times/Sunday Times Best Places to Stay 2023.

Josh is a passionate Staffordshire Ambassador who always says 'yes' to any request we throw his way! Josh was one of the first speakers to present at our Ambassador Events, way back in spring 2021, and later supported us in attending the Midlands Together Tourism roundtable in Birmingham, flying the flag for Staffordshire hospitality, as well as providing tours and accommodation to showcase Staffordshire to key national and international stakeholders.

Josh is committed to supporting the work of We Are Staffordshire, regularly working with our team to support our social media campaigns and projects and goes out of his way to accommodate us, most recently supporting our request for filming at different locations at the Tawny. No request is ever too much trouble for Josh and his team.

4. Kim Thorley - [Keele University](#)

Kim is a Marketing and Content Officer at Keele University, under the Keele Gateway brand, which supports businesses to reach their full potential. Kim works closely with We Are Staffordshire to support our initiatives and share information about Keele's work. She is a member of our External Engagement delivery group and is always keen to contribute and spread the wider 'Staffordshire' message.

Kim attends our ambassador events, regularly engages with us on social media and meets regularly with us to share activities and plans. Her enthusiasm for her role is infectious and she is a brilliant example of a Staffordshire Ambassador, who shows how effective partnership working is.

5. Claire Twaites, [Trentham](#)

Claire is the Commercial Director at the Trentham Estate, a nationally valued Staffordshire attraction with 725 acres of spectacular natural beauty and home to award-winning Gardens, ancient Woodland, an outdoor shopping village and live events.

We Are Staffordshire have worked with Claire on a number of occasions, promoting Staffordshire at events large and small. Claire and her team joined us at the House of Commons in April 2022, participating in a key roundtable looking at the recovery of the tourism sector in Staffordshire and promoting Trentham at our marketplace event.

More recently, Claire's team has supported a number of our campaigns such as our recent Christmas campaign and now our 'Place to Thrive', quality of life campaign, including

supporting filming and photography on the estate. Trentham will be featured at our next Ambassador event, once again reinforcing our strong partnership, and Claire's willingness to work with us on whatever new or wacky idea we come up with!