

Councillors' Bios

Tracy Barker (Footpaths, Free Gardens CIO Trustee & day to day ops, Notice boards, Signpost articles)

I have been a resident of Great Somerford since 2017, previously living in Callow Hill and Royal Wooton Bassett. I was a secondary school teacher for 25 years and prior to that worked for Southern Electric. Recently retired I have been able to work with the Parish Council in the development of the New CIO for the Free Gardens and liaise between the two committees. I am a trustee for the Free Gardens and also responsible for day-to-day operations including managing yearly agreements and managing the area. I also walk the footpaths and report on issues and have done some clearing of brambles and nettles to re-establish access.

Hywel Evans (Best kept village, highways and Parish Steward liaison, school liaison, planning)

I am a relative newcomer to the village having lived here for 3 1/2y years, my wife's association with the village however goes back many decades with her past relatives (the Wakefield's) having been Malmesbury School Headmaster and another who worked on the Dauntsey railway station). I currently manage national critical infrastructure and previously to that I managed Bristol City's housing stock (over 28,000 properties). I also worked as an Environmental Health Officer for over 15 years. I am one of the more recent Parish Councillors, however in my short tenure I have assisted in the Village Plan, Best Kept Village, liaised with the local Police over concerns raised by parishioners, and am currently looking to invest in the school and its facilities in ways that would benefit the local community. I would dearly like to be able to use my time and experience to further benefit the village and the people that call it their home by continuing my role as Parish Councillor.

Humphrey Gravell (Emergency planning, Parochial church council liaison, footpaths and bus shelters)

I have lived in the village for over 20 years and was a regular visitor for 10 years prior to that. My children are fourth generation in the village, and I would be thrilled if this could continue for another generation. For many years I have worked in International Film sales. I have not been on the Parish council very long, during which time I have re-written the Emergency plan, replaced two perished grit bins, and have recently sought designs to replace the Bus Shelters with more attractive timber frame versions. We are currently awaiting to discover about planning permission for these from Wiltshire council.

Meriel Griffiths (Chair, CIL planning, street champions, Free Gardens CIO trustee)

I have been the chair of Gt Somerford Parish Council for the past two years, responsible for coordinating and spearheading the activities and initiatives of my fellow parish councillors, as well as taking the lead in a number of projects. I have lived in the village for 20 years and work as a commercial manager for an international electricity organisation. I wanted very much to contribute to my local community, and so I have been a parish councillor since 2019. Achievements to date include the refurbishment of the Winkins Lane playground with the wooden climbing frame and new slide and mound, setting up the Street Champions network during the COVID19 pandemic, and maintaining this network in case of future emergencies. I led the transformation of the Free Gardens Unincorporated Charity into a modern Free Gardens Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and am also the chair of that organisation. I am currently working on a number of projects to make best use of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds that the parish received as a result of the new housing developments.

Councillors' Bios (cont.)

John Harper (Finance, risk and governance)

I have been a Parish Councillor since 2022, shortly after I moved with my family into the village. I have worked in the financial services industry for 30 years and currently hold the Finance role for the Parish Council, including setting the 3-year budget and supporting the Parish Clerk, who is the Financial Officer. I have helped my colleagues on the council to prioritise spending on village projects, supported by funding associated with the new housing developments, with more to come over the next few years. My family and I have been overwhelmed by the welcoming and social nature of the Parish and the diligent stewardship, consisting of a group of people with a wide range of interests and backgrounds, of the Parish Council.

Trevor Harrison (Speed cameras, Startley cemetery)

I am a retired Chartered Accountant and spent a 38 year career in finance. Having lived in Great Somerford for over 30 years I wanted to contribute to village affairs and joined the Parish Council last year. I have responsibility for promoting road safety and recently oversaw the installation of a 3rd Speed Indicator Device. I am also responsible for upkeeping the cemetery in Startley. Having canvassed the opinions of local residents, I organised the commissioning of a major refurbishment of the cemetery which is presently underway. I feel privileged to be a member of such an effective and committed Parish Council.

Tim Phillips (Winkins Lane Playground, website, Free Gardens CIO trustee and treasurer)

I am a recently retired Engineering Director who worked for a large multinational electrical company for 39 years. I live with my wife, Andi, in one of the new homes off Dauntsey Road. As a fairly new villager, I have only had the honour of being a parish councillor for 9 months. I am currently responsible for the playground on Winkins Lane, and for our website content. My main achievement to date is the replacement of the rotten toddlers climbing frame, but I also have plans this year to add an agility/exercise trail to enhance the area for older kids and adults. In addition, I am a Free Gardens CIO trustee and treasurer.

Toby Sturgis (Vice-chair, planning, drainage/ditches, housing developers, recreation group)

I am a retired Chartered Surveyor having been elected to represent Great Somerford and the Brinkworth Division as a Wiltshire councillor for over 20 years. I stood down at the 2021 elections and was then co-opted onto the Parish Council. Having farmed Brook Farm since 1969 I have used my local knowledge to prepare a flood plan for the village and am working with Wiltshire Council to mitigate the flooding risks on access roads. I have also submitted consultation responses on behalf of the Parish Council for the LimeDown solar farm, which will drain into tributaries of the River Avon immediately to the west of the village. I have worked for many years to provide a kick-about area for football and now the licence is in place and goal posts ordered. If elected, I would continue to use my experience to continue this work for the whole community.

David Todd (Community room, defibrillators and first aid, war memorial maintenance)

I have been working in the IT industry for over 37 years. My wife Sarah and I moved into one of the new houses in Broadfield Farm in May 2022. I have been a Parish Councillor for 18 months and I am responsible for the War Memorial, Telephone Box book exchange, the two defibrillators/ first aid training courses and the community room. My main achievements to date have been repainting the telephone box and re landscape the war memorial with the help of a number of village volunteers. Great Somerford is a real community village, and I am proud to be part of a very committed team of Councillors.