

Meet the Team **Councillors**



Councillor Cliff Bassett

Committee Member: Accessibility and Highways

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Chief Petty Officer in the Royal Navy I have lived in Somerton since 1990 and I am married with 4 grown up children, 3 dogs and a cat named Dave. I am a keen squash and football player and have completed a number of marathons and half marathons. I play for a local skittles

team where I have played for twenty years but still trying to improve! I am also an active member of the Somerton Music and Arts Festival and Recreation Ground Management Committees trying to enhance recreational and music activities in Somerton.

I am proud to be associated with Somerton Town Council and was co-opted onto the council in May 2017 and I hope to help make changes that will benefit Somerton and for the greater good.

Councillor Tim Bown (Chair of Planning Committee)

Committee Member: Planning and Land and Properties

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I was born in Cornwall and lived in Perranporth until the age of 18. I went to school in Truro. After 40 years working for Clarks Shoes I retired in 2014. I moved to Somerton in 1976. My interests in Somerton over that time include Somerton Twinning Association of which I was a founder committee member in 1986. Since then I have been secretary, chairman and now treasurer. I was a governor at Monteclefe School for 18 years and I am now chairman of Somerton Educational Trust that is based at King Ina Academy. I am married to Jenny who many Somerton parents will know through King Ina Academy. Between 1994 and 2007, I was a Somerton Parish councillor (Somerton Town councillor since 2000). I joined the Town Council again in May 2015 and I am currently Chair of the Planning Committee and a member of the Land & Property Committee.

I would like to concentrate my term as a councillor on improving facilities and services for all Somerton residents and ensuring that Somerton is not "sold short" by planners and developers, particularly with regard to recent housing applications.





Councillor Laura Briggs

(Chair of Promotions and Communications Committee)

Committee Member: Promotions and Communications

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I moved to Somerton from Sherborne in 2005 with my husband Guy when I was news editor for the local newspaper group Mid Somerset News & Media. After having a family I chose to go self-employed, and set up my own journalism and PR consultancy.

With two children, my husband and I wanted to become more involved with the school so I put myself forward as secretary of the school's PFA in 2016. I was honoured to be co-opted onto the town council in July 2017.

My interests are varied, and include environment and conservation - I write regularly for The Ecologist. I also attend weekly "bootcamp" sessions to keep fit and I dabble with a bit of sewing.

My job has always meant that good relationships with people and the community are a top priority and Somerton is such a community-spirited town that it seemed only right to become as much a part of that as I could.

I'm proud to be part of Somerton Town Council and to represent the community in the best way I can. I hope that I will be able to serve the town's residents for many years.

Councillor Pete Frayne (Chair of Land and Properties)

Committee Member: Planning, Promotion and Communications & Land and Properties

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I arrived in Somerton in 1963 at the age of 17 from my home town of Manchester and I have loved the town ever since. I have raised five children in the town and now have five beautiful grandchildren who love coming to visit the local parks.

In 1989, my wife Terry and I first took on the Somerton Hotel where we were publicans for the next 20+ years. We have many a fond memory from our time in the pub and have made many lifelong friends in the local community.

During our time in the pub, we organised several different charity events to raise money for good causes including the local Yeovil Hospital. We were overwhelmed with the support from our customers getting involved with truck pulls, three-legged races and design your own pram races. More fantastic memories stem from the many years we were fortunate enough to host the Somerton Arts Festival.

Nowadays, I am happily retired and enjoying making use of my time as a member of Somerton town council. As councillor, I am chairman of the L&P (Land and Properties) committee, which covers the cemetery and play & recreation areas. I am also a member of the planning committee and the Promotions and Communications committee. I am very grateful to have been given this opportunity and hope to continue giving back to the local community that gave my family so much support over the years. I look forward to being part of the promising plans for Somerton.



Councillor Jo Gale

(Vice Chair of Promotions and Communications)

Committee Member: Promotions and Communication & Accessibilities and Highways

Email: joanne.gale@somertontowncouncil.gov.uk

I have lived in Somerton for nearly 37 years. My son and daughter have both grown up in Somerton.

I have been asked countless times to join the council, eventually I did and was co-opted.

I wanted to be the voice for the residents who feel they are not heard. I help as a volunteer with the Lights Brigade, Forces March, Poppy Appeal, Archies and the Youth of Somerton within our community.



Councillor David Harrison (Vice Chair of Planning)

Committee Member: Planning & Land and Properties

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I have lived in Somerton since 2004. I have been interested in local government for over 20 years and have served as a District Councillor. I have been on Somerton Town Council from 2007-11 and again since 2014.

I was born into a Yorkshire & European Wool Textile family but chose a different career. I was first in Somerset in the early 1960s then went to University. I was in the Oil Industry for 15 years to 1984 when I became a specialist

offshore financial consultant initially mainly in the Middle East and latterly in Switzerland but with a home base in UK. Pam and I married in 1979 and we have two grown up children and three NZ based grandsons.

I retired from my main occupation in 2004 but worked locally part time in market research, at Stourhead, in Education and with a local business. More recently I have been involved with Somerton U3A (Treasurer) Somerton Probus (Secretary), Political campaigning (Treasurer) St Michaels Church, and have hobbies outside home such as horseracing, walking - and Geology, which is roughly where I started!

I have been proud to serve on Somerton Town Council, including having stayed on board with the Council in the difficult period of 2009-11. I supported Edgar Hall at every stage and am still a Member of the "Friends". Currently my main interest is planning in which I have had a special interest for many years - but nearly every week find I am learning something new.

Councillor Emily Janas

Committee Member: Accessibility and Highways

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I grew up a few miles away, in Long Sutton, attended Huish Episcopi Secondary school and Yeovil College, then spent 4 years at Aston University in Birmingham where I gained my Honours Degree in Psychology and Business Studies. I returned to Somerset in 2002, living in Kingsbury Episcopi, Ilchester and Martock before moving to Somerton in 2012.

One of the main reasons for moving to Somerton was the excellent reputation and Ofsted report for King Ina Academy and I was keen for my children to attend. I now raise my 2 boys as a single parent but remain in part-time employment with the Probation Service (now known as a Community Rehabilitation Company), where I have worked since 2004.

As a parent, I am keen to support local youth services and facilities available to families in the town. By being a member of STC, I hope to offer a voice in future developments of Somerton that will affect other families, as well as ensuring the needs of all residents are considered. The amount of new building in the town is both concerning and exciting and I am keen to ensure local health, education and leisure services are also being considered and developed at the same rate to support the growing community. I love Somerton and want it to continue to be a thriving market town and a pleasant place to live.



Councillor Brian Raybould

Committee Member: Accessibilities and Highways, Land and Properties & Planning

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I live in Waverley and have lived in Somerton for 55 years. From the age of 16 I trained to be a H.G.V Mechanic and have been employed and self employed in this trade until my retirement.

I am married to Vanessa and two years ago we celebrated our Ruby Wedding Anniversary. I have two Sons and five Grandchildren all of whom attend or have attended King Ina Academy before attending Huish Episcopi Academy.

In my profession, I was responsible for keeping up to date with all training and carried this out throughout my career with continuous professional development including regular legislation changes, HR and new skills relating to H.G.V maintenance to Ministry of Transport Standards and I have conducted H.G.V for testing for 50 years.

Councillor Fiona Richardson

(Chair Accessibilities and Highways)

Committee Member: Planning, Land and Properties & Accessibilities and Highways

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I have lived in Somerton since September 1998, initially working at B&Q in Yeovil as a store manager and subsequently thirteen years with MENCAP.

I joined Somerton Town Council in May 2014 after retiring in 2013. Born in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, I spent all my early life there before marrying my husband Peter and travelling with him during his time in the Armed Forces. Hobbies include gardening and reading.

I care deeply about Somerton and the surrounding countryside and enjoy life in our beautiful town. I chair the Access and Highways Committee and also serve on Land and Property and Planning. I have also taken up the organisation of the annual "Clean up Somerton" which takes place in April each year. Having been on the town council for two years, I have gained much experience to enable me to serve the community better. I am passionate to keep our town a safe, vibrant and thriving place, ensuring, as far as possible, the needs of all residents are met.

I am proud to be associated with Somerton and hope that I will be able to serve the community fully for many years to come. I am fortunate to be supported by my husband who gives his time freely to help me in some of my council duties. I am honoured to be a member of the truly great team that makes up Somerton Town Council.



Councillor Peter Richardson

Committee Member: Promotions and
Communications & Planning

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Employed as an Air Ambulance Helicopter Captain, I have lived in Somerton for 19 years and have been a member of STC for six months. Prior to my current job, I served in Her Majesties Armed Forces for just short of forty years, leaving with the rank of Squadron Leader.

I have served as a magistrate on the Yeovil Bench and volunteered as a Scout Leader and Army Cadet Force Platoon Commander and instructor.

I am currently working with the Royal Air Force Association in my free time and intend to give more of my time when I retire from commercial flying in 2018.

I am proud to be a member of the town council and strive to serve the community of Somerton to the best of my ability for the foreseeable future. I am married to Fiona who has managed to put up with me for 37 years. I am pleased to be a member of a pro-active team of councillors who have wide ranging views on many subjects that are important to the community.



Councillor Martyn Smith (Vice Chair of Full Council)

Committee Member: Ex Officio

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Born 1949, Burton on Trent I graduated in Chemical Engineering from Manchester University in 1970 and spent the next 30 years in production management in the Brewing Industry, predominantly with Allied Lyons in the UK, but also with Daniel Thwaites in Blackburn and with Banks (Barbados) Breweries.

I hold a Masters degree in Brewing & Biochemistry (Edinburgh 1972), Diploma in Management Studies (Derby 1975) and a Masters degree in Business Administration (Cranfield 1984).

I moved to Somerset in 1990 and since retiring in 2000, I have enjoyed travelling, photography, gardening, and generally keeping fit with walking and swimming.

Since returning from Barbados in 2000, I served on the Somerton Summer Festival Committee for 10 years including the role of treasurer for 5 years and vice-chair for 2 years. I served as a councillor on Somerton Town Council from May 2007 until October 2009. During that time, I chaired the Footpath Committee and the Publications Committee.

I am currently a Committee Member of Somerton Tourism Partnership, a volunteer in the Local Information Centre, treasurer (and odd-job man!) of the Friends of the Parish Rooms and treasurer of the Charity Trustee Management Committee of LSMI. I also serve as the Parish Paths Liaison Officer for Somerton, Kingsdon and Kingweston.

My current role on S.T.C is Vice Chair of Full Council, editor of Somerton News and I represent the council on MTIG.

Councillor Dean Ruddle (Chair of Full Council)

Committee Member: Ex Officio

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I have lived in and around Somerton my whole life. I have been married for 30 years to Rachael. We have four children and eight grandchildren who all live locally.

I help run my family's business in Somerton and when I am not doing that I enjoy time with my children and grandchildren.

My hobbies are fishing and skiing, but I enjoy all sports and have spent many hours watching my son playing football whilst freezing to death.

Over the past 8 years, I have put all my experience and effort into our beautiful and friendly Town of Somerton. There have been many issues that I have dealt with and I believe that my experience as a Town, District and County Councillor has helped prevail.

I am a keen recycler. I hold a c.o.t.c. in recycling and waste management. I am very keen on renewable green energy and very much care for our environment. I am very proud to be putting something back into the local community where I grew up and where my family have lived for many generations.

I have been actively working alongside the headmaster and the consultants of King Ina Academy to achieve a new combined school in Somerton.

I enjoy walking around Somerton meeting people and helping where I can.

It is an honour and a privilege for me to continue to serve Somerton to the best of my ability.



Councillor Clive Wilson

Committee Member: Accessibility and Highways

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I have lived in Somerton with my family for nearly 45 years. Now retired, I was employed in the aviation world, starting with a five-year apprenticeship and finishing with all aspects of aircraft repair & overhaul. I was very fortunate to travel the world in connection with my work, making many long lasting friends on the way.

Over the years having lived in Somerton, I have personally been affected by local planning issues. Therefore, I have a big interest with 'Planning' generally in and around our town. Being an old and pretty town, we must endeavour to preserve its genuine character at all costs.

My personal interests are many and varied, but our Springer Spaniel and my old Mini Cooper takes up most of my free time.

I have been a Somerton Town Councillor for nearly seven years, and have recently stepped down as Chairman of the Access & Highways Committee after two years.

In that time the Access & Highways Committee have completed many enhancements, these include-

- Paving around the Buttercross and surrounding pavements have now been totally refurbished.
- Resurfacing of the Market Square car park.
- Construction of the new Yarlinton car park.
- Replacement of the diseased Ash Tree in the Market Square.
- The introduction of the Mechanical Path Sweeper on a regular basis that endeavours to keep the town clean.