

Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council – Profiles

Updated 17th February 2020

Jim Donahue, Chairman

Jim joined the parish council in 2011 after moving to Whitchurch from Pangbourne in 2008. He was elected chairman in May 2018. He runs a small Programme Management consultancy focussed on the telecoms industry and also works as a part time photographer. Jim can often be seen mountain biking through the Chiltern Hills with local cycling groups or on walks down Hardwick Road and through Hardwick estate with his son William.



Rachel Hatcher, Vice-chairman



Rachel and her husband Ben have lived in the village since 2013 and have two small daughters. She works as a marketing project manager in the telecoms industry. Rachel joined the Parish Council in December 2015, having already joined the Traffic & Parking Advisory Group (TAPAG). Often walking around the local area with her children, she is keen to slow vehicles down and to help us all make the most of the lovely village we live in. As well as going out cycling as a family, Rachel also enjoys running, reading and playing the piano.

Jean Marc Grosfort

Jean Marc settled with his wife Ann in Whitchurch in 2012 after 44 years in the hotel industry and 13 moves in different countries, stepping down from his executive role in the Middle East and Africa with Marriott International in 2014. Jean Marc first joined the village plan committee and since 2019 has taken the challenge to renovate the village hall and to convert it into a warm, welcoming community centre for the residents of the village. When not baking for the monthly afternoon tea, Jean Marc is working part time on a beautiful hotel project in London Covent Garden, or playing golf, or painting, or cooking, or working on the landscape of his garden.



Katherine Higley

Katherine has lived in Whitchurch for over 20 years and spent most of her childhood in the village. She joined the Parish Council in November 2018. Her ancestors were first recorded here in the 1600s so the family have a long association with the village. Katherine studied Environmental Management, Planning and Law at university and is a qualified Coach. She is a Trustee of Whitchurch United Charities and also is part of the brass cleaning team at St. Mary's Church.

Diana Smith

Diana moved to the area in 1985 and to Whitchurch in 2003 when her husband Peter retired. She has worked in local government administration and education and most recently was a volunteer and then an employee with Citizens Advice in Newbury, Thatcham and lastly in Henley. She has two daughters and four grandchildren who live locally. Her interests include singing with the Pangbourne Choral Society and helping with a variety of village activities.

Jon Steward



Jon re-joined the council in May 2019 after a two year break. He says: "I am a sheep farmer and I am committed to doing what the majority in the village want, not just the loudest voices. I want to make sure that the council is efficiently working in the background. It is a passion of mine to make sure that we look after the people and families of the village and do the basics right before we do anything else."

Hanna Ferguson

Hanna has lived in Whitchurch since 2016 with her husband and two sons after working in Kenya and Myanmar for the UN. Currently she is supporting global development and poverty reduction through Development Alternatives Inc, engaging in interesting projects in countries such as Lebanon, Pakistan and Myanmar. She has had connections to Whitchurch since 2004 through extended family. Her children attend the local primary school and preschool which she has been involved in supporting since relocating to the village. Hanna enjoys walks with family and friends in the beautiful local surroundings, and enjoys playing Ukulele in her spare time.



Parish Clerk: Jane Yamamoto



Jane Yamamoto moved to Whitchurch in 2002. She has been working for a local renewable energy company on the Hardwick Estate since 2008. If she is not in the office or on the farm, she is out playing tennis or eating, which is her favourite pastime. She joined the Parish Council as Clerk in December 2019.

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