

Report to Ringsfield Parish Council meeting 17 Oct 2019

My name is Judy Cloke. I have lived in Bungay for 40 years with my husband and we have two daughters in their 30s who were educated in the town until 6th form.

I became a Town Councillor when our elder daughter resigned to take up a Masters in History at Durham -she was elected at 19 and was the youngest Councillor Bungay had had.

I have been deputy Mayor twice and Mayor once. My focus has always been on the playparks in the town and as Mayor I undertook a parachute jump with the Town Reeve, to raise money for them. I hated every minute of it, but the Churches Conservation Trust wouldn't let us abseil down the church tower – what else could we do?.

Currently, I am chairman of Bungay Community Centre trustees, I am a feoffee of the Town Trust , a Trustee of Bungay Community Library and a Town Councillor, as well as being involved with other charities in the town. My hobbies are gardening, cooking , especially baking - and reading. I have been a Civil Servant at the DWP for most of my working life and currently I work 2 days a week.

I have never had political ambition and have always regarded myself as a free spirit, voting usually for the person I thought would do the best for my town or - on a national level – for my country. I was surprised, shortly after the sudden and very sad death of John Groom, who had planned to stand, to be called by David Ritchie to become a Conservative candidate for the East Suffolk Council elections. I wavered. Peter Aldous rang. He is very persuasive and a man I admire hugely because he is a very hard working and committed constituency MP. I agreed to join the Conservative party and stand. Because I already had two holidays booked, canvassing time was limited, but we did our best and were fortunate to be elected at a very exciting time, with the development of the new Council.

You are given a choice of committees to join and I opted for Scrutiny, as a result of which I seem to have been placed on most of the NHS scrutiny panels locally. I have also been appointed to the Audit & Governance committee and the steering group for Member development, something in which I believe passionately. You cannot even attempt to do a job properly unless you have the right tools and appropriate training is so important. I have also been appointed to the East Suffolk Drainage Board and have been learning about different types of pump.

My intention is, now I have introduced myself , to report for each meeting on the happenings at East Suffolk. One of the most important things on the horizon, I believe is the formation of the Community Partnerships, which are being developed because of concerns regarding the size of the wards in the new Council. The first meeting for this area - which covers Bungay, Beccles and Halesworth, is on 11 Nov at the John Leman High School and your clerk should have received an invitation , but I see from the list you are not sending a rep. I can send the link, if you wish.

I am trying to visit each Parish Council, to meet councillors , to learn about parish issues and to participate in events and I am sorry it has taken me so long to get here – weddings and other things have got in the way a bit. Do please contact me if you think I can help in any way.

JC 17/10/19

