

## **Melissa Schofield – Application for Town Councillor Vacancy**

### **Affinity to Southwell**

I did not grow up in Southwell but my father lived here for almost 40 years, so I was a frequent part-time resident.

I lived in the town myself from 1998 until 2004, when my husband's work took us elsewhere. We chose to return to Southwell in 2021 to continue raising our family and intend to stay here into retirement.

I recognise that Southwell is arguably the most attractive and most frequently visited town in Southwell. However, as a resident here I also recognise the need for tourism to be balanced with the needs of local businesses and residents.

### **Balancing representation on the Council**

As a working female with children at home, I would represent a different demographic to most current council members. I am raising a family whilst in full-time professional employment, so I feel I would be able to provide additional and alternative viewpoints, with an awareness of the needs across the generations.

### **Representative views**

My family contains children at both infant and junior schools within the town, and also two teenagers. I therefore understand the needs of children of all ages, and also the needs for young people who will, at some point, require affordable housing in the town. All my children love living in Southwell and plan to stay here.

I am passionate about children and families, and making Southwell a positive place to live for more than just the highly rated educational establishments. I would like to see safer streets, safer pavements, safer crossing points and more, to return Southwell to the 'walkable' town it used to be.

Having been a foster carer for 10 years with the local authority, I have a deep knowledge and understanding of the disadvantaged in society and believe their needs are as important of those who are have not experienced similar hardships.

Finally, having been a wheelchair user for several years in my 30s, I recognise the needs of those with disabilities and their rights to access facilities and have a voice as strong as their more able peers.

## **Active links**

I am an active member of Southwell Minster, where one of my daughters is a chorister, and also of Riverside Church, where my teenage sons attend. I am a member of Green Southwell, and my family are regular users of the leisure centre and many local clubs and amenities.

## **Background and skills**

I have a background in Management Consulting, and currently run a Mortgage (Re)Insurance scheme for Gallagher Re, the country's second largest reinsurance broker, that helps buyers access the housing market.

I am proficient at stakeholder relationships and proficient in all MS applications. Perhaps most importantly, my strengths lie in strategy, planning and gaining buy-in, which are transferrable skills between business, community and charity work.

I have degrees in Engineering and a Masters in Environmental Architecture and Renewable Energy. I am also a qualified school teacher.

## **Interests**

I have an interest in the town of Southwell, its businesses and the people it serves.

Whilst being passionate about the environment, I take a very balanced view with a realistic outlook regarding green matters and future sustainability.

I have an interest in conservation of an area and of buildings, maintaining them for future generations to appreciate and in order to retain their historic character and significance. However, again I take a balanced view, with making changes that may be deemed necessary to protect the buildings and users from changes that the modern world has produced. Therefore I believe in maintaining the lifespan of historic buildings whilst reducing their environmental impact.

## **Summary**

- I am committed to Southwell
- I can represent a broad spectrum of needs
- I have strong business and stakeholder skills