

# Know Your Councillor

## Charles Bailey

When I heard that a 24 year old was to be one of our SODC (South Oxfordshire District Council) representatives my first thought was 'How can someone still wet behind the ears represent me?' But I have had a complete change of mind since meeting Charles. He has so much energy and enthusiasm for the role (and life) and he impressed me with a refreshing lack of arrogance. He happily admits that he has a lot to learn and will look to the greater experience of his fellow councillors, particularly David Nimmo-Smith, for guidance.

A local man, brought up in Shepherd's Green, he has undoubtedly had a privileged upbringing: he was educated privately and then went to Manchester University to study PPE (philosophy, politics and economics) before going off to live in both New York and then the Far East before returning home to live with his parents.

Charles is a supporter of local causes and local businesses – he is keen to be involved and offer help wherever possible. He is saddened by the closure of so many local pubs and is eager to aid any campaign to keep them open.

He enjoys our countryside and wants to see it kept green but also recognises that more housing is required nationwide. Planned housing can be achieved in a responsible way and he firmly believes that the infrastructure must come first. He thinks that building can be accomplished without affecting the status quo. Some of his views are quite controversial – he did suggest that more traffic could solve the speeding problems!

Charles is only six months into his four year term as our District Councillor and has no idea whether he will stand for re-election in 2019. He says that he doesn't see himself as a career politician – I don't think I actually believe him. Watch this space!

In the meantime he would like to put his own stamp on role. He is not looking to build a reputation but quite genuinely wants to help his local community. His current remit is sitting on the Audit Committee and he is also a substitute for the Planning Committee – he is attending various training courses to enable him to contribute more.

Responsibility for the ward is shared jointly between Charles and David Nimmo-Smith and, at the moment, they work in partnership. It is their future aim to divide the ward of ten parishes and focus on five parishes each.

It is amazing that he can find time to fulfil his role as a councillor because he is still in the process of building up his own business. He has a job that he enjoys as a Financial Advisor advising both business and private clients on a wide range of financial affairs. To develop and enlarge his client portfolio he attends many networking functions which he enjoys, particularly start-up networks.

Even with his seemingly boundless youth and energy, he still struggles to fit in a social life. He is involved with Henley Round Table charity events, often on a

Saturday evening, so regards Friday evenings as his 'me' time. He says that the key to it all is planning – as a self-employed person he can plan his own diary to accommodate all his activities but this sometimes means taking phone calls at 6.30am!

Currently, he enjoys a single life and is quite happy doing his own thing. He doesn't anticipate getting married for perhaps another ten years. In November, he will find time to 'do his own thing' by going off for a very well-deserved weekend in Barcelona.

**Rita Hadgkiss**