

MEMBERS OF THE RUTLAND FIRST CIC BOARD

Sharon Milner

Chair



Sharon has more than 35 years of experience in education, starting her teaching career in Tower Hamlets in 1985. She moved to Rutland with her young family in 1996 and worked in local primary schools before becoming Headteacher of Brooke Hill School in 2006.

In 2011 Brooke Hill became the first Academy in Rutland, with Sharon taking on the role of Executive Headteacher of Brooke Hill Academy Trust. Two further schools joined the Trust – Edith Weston Academy and, later, South Witham Academy. Both schools moved from Special Measures to Good Ofsted ratings and the opportunities for the children and whole community improved.

As a National Leader of Education, she also supported several other schools in the East Midlands. Her ethos has always centred around providing opportunities for all children and empowering them to make the best choices for their own future.

Sharon is an advocate for making social, emotional and mental health a priority in all schools. She worked closely with Rutland County Council to open the first Nurture Hub at Edith Weston. The success of this project has led to more local schools adopting a Nurture

approach and to more hubs being developed. She was also Vice Chair of Rutland Schools Forum for four years and a representative on the steering group for the Resilient Rutland project, which provided invaluable resources for the young people of Rutland.

Sharon enjoys regular pilates, yoga, swimming, salsa and Pickleball sessions as well as time with family.

Liz Clarke



Liz Clarke has lived in Rutland since 2012, and with her husband Nick runs Clarke PR and Media Ltd from their home in Uppingham.

Liz has worked in many areas of communication including Radio and TV, as a Conference Director, and as a Communications Director within the Church of England. She is Mayor of Uppingham Town Council and is the Chair of Governors for Uppingham C of E Primary School.

There are four fabulous adult offspring, eight grandchildren, a dog, a cat and some fish in the immediate family!

Helen Cullen



Helen spent her entire career in the banking and securities industry where she held senior roles with UK and American investment banks. She has worked in a variety of areas including banking operations, operations consultancy, systems installation and training, process re-engineering and systems specification, control and risk management, regulatory reporting, client services and institutional client relationship management. Where work permitted, Helen has been a volunteer for most of her adult life. She has been a Special Constable and was a senior officer of a London graduate social club for a number of years. More recently she has helped several small charities gain their registered charitable status and served on their trustee boards. After retiring in 2014 she and her husband moved from Kent to Rutland where they have close family connections in the area. She has served as a Parish Councillor and as a trustee of Citizens Advice Rutland and is a founding trustee of the CIO, Rutland Youth Choirs. Helen is a keen dog-walker and gardener and leads a busy life in her community. Amongst other things she is an NHS volunteer and a committee member of the local Arts Society. She is a strong supporter of engaging rural communities to achieve local conservation goals and with this in mind she and her husband regularly visit conservancy and community-based projects in Africa where a broadening and evolving range of interventions are linking conservation with economic development.

Dr Carole East



In my 46-year teaching career, I have taught in a wide variety of local contexts: primary education, prisons, FE, the WEA , home teaching and, for the last 20 years, in Higher Education. I have a Masters in Continuing Professional Education and a PhD from the University of Nottingham, exploring the impact of poor mental health on students and staff who support them. Also, a founder member of the University Mental Health Adviser Network, a registered charity that advises government bodies on student mental health. As Senior Disability Adviser at the University of Nottingham, I supported the teaching and learning of disabled students with the aim of creating a holistic supportive environment for all students and staff. This resonates with the recent Resilient Rutland project which has just come to an end. I am also a governor at Cottesmore Academy.

Michèle Evans



I have worked in 7 NHS and private hospitals, 2 Military Hospitals and clinics, and 3 private practices, including a short spell in Australia. I ran Nordic walking classes for private clients and for Swindon Council's scheme: Be Active, Be Healthy. I started and ran a number of Pilates businesses – restarting on each relocation due to husband's military career. This included rapidly learning the technology to go on-line one week after lockdown during the pandemic. Recently, I retired from Excellence Physiotherapy private clinic in Oakham where, as part of the team, I worked with Oakham school students.

I am an active member of St. Andrew's Church being involved with the regular school visits of Whissendine CE Primary School to the church and various other organisational roles. Along 5 other village volunteers, I help set up the Whissendine Youth Group in 2023, becoming chair of the committee at its commencement.

Gina Head



Gina Head is the Brand Director for GALAXY Chocolate. Responsible for the P&L and growth agenda for the UK's best tasting chocolate. Gina has been employed by MARS Inc for the last 9 years.

Gina has a further seven years broad marketing experience across consumer technology, financial services, retail and the fitness industries and holds a BA Hons in Business Management and a Postgraduate CIM Diploma in Marketing.

Outside of work, Gina is a mentor for a D&I charity Psalt and a Mental Health First Aider. She lives in Oakham with her sons Finlay and Reuben and her husband Alex.

Paul Kitson



Paul is a qualified Accountant and Corporate Treasurer and spent most of his career with BP p.l.c. working a variety of roles in Accounting, Corporate Finance, Project Management, Governance and Risk Management including several secondments in Russia. Paul has also worked as head of Ethics and Compliance in a Russian Oil Company. Since retiring, Paul has been a volunteer adviser at Citizens Advice in Rutland and East Hertfordshire. To keep fit, Paul is a regular walker with the Long Distance Walkers Association and participates in yoga.

Jeannette Warner



On graduating from Exeter University having studied Economic and Social History, Jeannette worked for Royal Insurance in the Personnel and Training Department, before taking a career break to raise her two sons.

On returning to work she joined her husband in the family print business, becoming a director in 2009. The main focus of her current role is to monitor and develop the corporate responsibilities of the business, which have been as varied as they have been interesting.

Since moving to Rutland in 2015 Jeannette has become involved with a number of charities including Women in Philanthropy and in particular For Rutland where she has recently been invited to become chair. She is also a school Governor at Uppingham community college where she is vice chair of the Resources Committee. She joined the board of Rutland First CIC in 2019 with a particular interest in Resilient Rutland and the wellbeing and mental health of the young people of the county. Jeannette is also part of the Rutland Lieutenancy where she is very pleased to hold the position of Vice Lord Lieutenant.

Outside of work Jeannette enjoys travelling, long walks in the countryside, working and developing her garden and Pilates.