

David Griffiths

I have been pleased to call Dunsfold my home for the past 22 years, having moved from Grafham, in Bramley, where I had lived and worked at Grafham Grange Residential Special School - first as head teacher and then CEO - since the latter part of 1979. The majority of my working life was devoted to Special Education, which involved the education and care of young people who were experiencing a wide range of difficulties, as well as providing extensive support to their families.

In 1990, when Grafham Grange School was threatened with closure, I worked with the Department for Education and Members of Parliament to set up the first ever Special Educational Trust, which would take over the management of the school from the local authority. This process was long and involved and necessitated changes to two Acts of Parliament. At its successful completion, I became CEO of Grafham Grange Special Educational Trust, which continued to prosper and was expanded to take on two other residential special schools.

I served as Justice of the Peace on the Guildford and West Surrey Bench for 27 years and was elected as Deputy Chairman of the Bench for a number of years. Due to my interest in the law and expertise in Special Education, I was invited to become a lay expert member of the tribunal service and I sat as a member of the Care Standards Tribunals hearing appeals.

Following my retirement from full time employment as CEO in 2006, and until very recently, I ran my own training and consultancy practice, providing behaviour management training, support and advice to Education, Care, and Health professionals across the UK.

Despite having continued to work until 2022, I have done my best to be involved in village activities, which have included being an active member of the Bonfire Committee and assisting on stalls at village fetes – most notably the Coconut Shy!

Lockdown situations over the last two years have brought the importance of community into strong focus and my family and I were impressed at how well the people of Dunsfold supported each other during that difficult time. I now have more time to give something back and would welcome the opportunity to do so.

I believe that the Parish Council should be a listening organisation, which is aware of the range of opinions of the members of its community, and which takes their views into account, within the constraints of relevant legislation. That has been at the centre of my working and judicial life. Open and honest two-way communication is key to effective local governance, and should I be fortunate enough to be elected I will make that my priority.