

Bernard Clark's Bio

I had an army childhood. Accompanying my military father as the British Empire crumbled around us, I went to fourteen schools. Not good for passing exams, but helpful for understanding the world, and becoming a reporter and correspondent, working in radio and television, which one way or the other I've been doing for fifty years.

After beginning at the BBC as a cost clerk, I helped start Radio One's Newsbeat and originated Watchdog, before becoming an independent producer. These days I'm Chairman of TVT, a company that manages channels like Yesterday and Dave. It's been an enthralling journey, to now end up in Cold Ash.

I adore the village, The Castle and the shop, along with nearby Newbury - and that you can be in London in an hour. But above all, I love our home at Westrop Farm, which I first saw in the summer of 2009. Having written a book* about Alex Bell, a woman in Salford who adopted nine children with special needs – predominantly Down's syndrome – the farmyard seemed ideal for converting into units for adult respite care. However, though West Berks were encouraging, and we began to build, the scheme became nigh impossible because of the extraordinary bureaucratic requirements of the Care Quality Commission. Hopefully, we'll return to it one day.

To live on a farm in this part of Berkshire is a joy and a privilege, especially as we now have a young family, five-year old girl-and-boy twins. In truth, I'm not much of a farmer, though there have been pigs, sheep and cattle, but when people ask, I say we're farming beauty - the quiet and the greenness and the trees. Apart from seven thousand poplar trees, we recently took over much of Westrop Wood, which had been neglected for twenty years, and we're gradually maintaining it and replanting.

There's a lot to be thankful for, so over the years ahead I hope we can do our best to put something back into a friendly village that provides us with such a fulfilling life.

*A Mother Like Alex, Harper Collins.

