

Ivor McArdle – Parish Councillor

My wife, Sandra, and I moved to Cold Ash from Reading in 2009. We chose Cold Ash as it has all of the elements of a quintessential English village (a local store/post office, a church, cricket on a green and a pub... or two) and is ideally placed, being only 15 minutes from the mainline into Paddington and 10 minutes from the M4 and A34.

When we arrived, we were amazed at how welcoming the people of Cold Ash were; we spoke to more people in our first weekend here than we did in the previous year in Reading. We also loved the countryside around the village and particularly the WAG.

When we moved here Sandra immediately joined the Ashmore Green WI (she couldn't join the Cold Ash WI as it met during the daytime) and the Horticultural Society. She has had mixed levels of involvement in the two societies becoming the President of the Ashmore Green WI but yet to attend a meeting of the Horticultural Society. Still, she maintains an interest in it through the news bulletins and updates from our neighbour, Graham Collins.

I have been a bit slower in embracing village life. In December 2018 I gave up full-time employment and now have the time to engage more fully; something I've always wanted to do as Cold Ash is a lovely place to live and I had no doubt it needed commitment from its residents to keep it that way. I therefore, amongst other things, volunteered to join the Parish Council and was accepted. My initial driver for joining the Council was a passion for looking after the environment but as soon as I had attended a couple of meetings as a resident, I could see there was much more that I could get involved in.

The skills I hope to bring to the Council were honed firstly with Prudential, where I worked for 30 years, and then with Proteus Consulting, with whom I worked for 10 years. During my career I have become a Chartered Insurer, specialising in Pensions, followed by spells as a Business Analyst, Project Manager and Programme Manager. In my role with Proteus I worked mainly in Financial Services but also had stints working with County Councils and Charities, plus other private sector organisations in areas such as airlines and media.

Prior to moving to Cold Ash I lived my whole life in Reading; starting in Coley Park and ending in Tilehust. I attend Manor and Coley primary schools, and Ashmead Secondary School (now the Madejski Academy).

Our immediate family consists of two children, Cesare who is a Corporate Lawyer and Natasha who is a Doctor, and also includes the unmissable Bronte, who is a dog (she's a Wheaten Terrier who we got as a puppy last December and, as anyone who has met her can vouch, is a live-wire).

My interests include reading, Tai Chi (which I took up earlier this year), Football (I'm a fan of Reading FC), the environment (I'm a member of the West Berks Countryside Society which I go out with most Tuesdays doing conservation projects). I've also recently taken up snooker, after a gap of many years, which Pat from the Post Office can confirm is reflected in my performance.... and of course, all the joy that comes from owning a dog.

I'm looking forward to serving the community.

