

NEW YEAR NEWSLETTER

In case anybody did not see my last newsletter can I repeat my wish that you all have a safe and happy 2021. Certainly, for most of us 2020 will be neither be forgotten nor remembered with any great joy.

Let us hope that 2021 brings happier times. For me it should bring great changes. In January last year (2020) I informed the Constituency Chairman and election agent for the Conservative Party that I would not be putting my name forward for selection to contest the Kent County Council elections due in May 2021. There is never a right time to go nor is it ever easy to decide to do so. I decided that 45 years of Public Service was enough. Time to prioritise my wife and family who have sacrificed so much of my time and energies.

I gave my Party the greatest possible notice in order to attract the widest possible field of Candidates. As I had hoped a large number of excellent Candidates applied from which the Party Members selected Charlotte Whitney-Brown. A lifelong resident of Boughton Charlotte will be well known to many of you, not least for her work for Helen Whatley MP. She has sought to add to her already considerable knowledge of local issues by attending as many Parish Council meetings as possible. I wish her well.

Local Government is a far different world than when I started. I believe the two major parties were further apart then, however we respected the sincerity of each other's views. Robust debate could be followed by a friendly drink together. Lifelong friendships were forged across Party lines. Today's Politicians seem to prefer insults, lies and threats instead of reasoned debate.

I hope I do not need to reassure you all that until the Election takes place I shall continue to work on your behalf whatever your politics. I have no intention of ceasing my membership of any of the Committees I currently serve on. Likewise, I shall continue to attend as many Parish Councils as possible. One advantage of the current inability to hold meetings face to face is that it is more possible to attend two, sometimes even three Parish Councils in one evening. Indeed, if the current pandemic causes any delay to those elections I shall continue as always.

Currently I am dealing with many flooding issues, requests for possible 20 MPH speed limits and other Highways issues. Also I am spending one day a week Chairing Home to School Transport Appeal Hearings.

Andrew Bowles
KCC Member – Swale East