

## Get to Know... Collette Stone



Collette joined us in 2017 and at the Easter Court 2021 was co-opted to the Court of Assistants and joined the Education Committee.

Born in West Middlesex, she attended a secondary school on the River Thames, which was originally the home of Alexander Pope, and along the river from the Rolling Stones' rehearsal rooms on Eel Pie Island.

Her favourite subjects were Art and English, and when it came time to pick a job, teaching was always the first choice, but her hobby was Girlguiding and youth work, thanks to a primary school conversation shouted through the hedge with her 7-year-old neighbour one day - "Want to come to Brownies?" was the fateful question that led to a

lifetime of volunteering in the UK and overseas, shaped her future profession and became a voluntary career in its own right alongside the day job.

Collette's teenage years were more about the fun and less about the study, so not surprisingly she didn't gain a place at university, but did locate a College of Education in the Chilterns that offered qualifications in Secondary school Art with Youth Work, and proximity to a Scout Campsite full of scout volunteers who became life-long friends and included the significant future husband.

The teaching day job never materialised – recession saw to that, so she took up a sensible career as a civil servant and was posted to HM Immigration Service at Heathrow on the frontline at immigration control, amongst the first female Immigration Officers to be appointed. The teaching bug returned, and Collette became the Service's first female vocational trainer and then the first race awareness trainer in the Service, with a couple of years in training video directing and production on the way.

On promotion to Chief Immigration Officer she spent a year in the Appeals Courts as a Presenting Officer, and after a spell at Terminal 4 was promoted to manage the national Immigration Service Training & Development Unit, and then on promotion to the Home Office to become Head of Leadership & Management Development for a while. This was where Collette settled into a first role in consultancy, as an Executive coach for Senior Civil Servants and their teams, she was often sent in to support senior leaders with growing and building new teams, troubleshooting with teams not working so well, and advising on organisation development.

Alongside this the voluntary work was developing – qualifying as a Leader Trainer for Girlguiding, becoming a County Commissioner twice, Region Lead for Adult Training, a National Deputy Lead for Training, an International Programme Adviser and representing the UK at events such as a Trainers' Conference in India, and the Europe Region at conferences in Oman and Austria. Last month, with a team she had never met in person and based in three other time zones, she facilitated a four-day workshop in New Delhi on Leadership for the Bharat Scouts & Guides of India – from her dining room table.

In recent years she has joined the Department of International Trade as a Senior Change Adviser, set up her own consultancy business and is a member of adjunct faculty for Henley Business School's MBA and MA Leadership programmes. And having completed a screenwriting course with the National School of Film and Television in December she is thinking about becoming a screenwriter and/or author... so the love of creative arts and English is still there.