

# Who runs the Institute of Civil Funerals? Meet the council members

The Institute of Civil Funerals is run by a Council of Management comprising of qualified funeral celebrants who voluntarily give their time, energy and experience to support its members and promote quality and professionalism in the delivery of Civil Funeral ceremonies.

The council members bring a diverse range of qualifications, experience and transferable skills from previous careers to the council table and below they explain a little of their background and passion for the job they now do.

## Christine Ogden – Chair of the IoCF

I have had a varied career. Having semi-retired from teaching in 2005, I trained with Civil Ceremonies and in 2006 became a member of the Institute of Civil Funerals. I was elected on to the Council in 2011.

I have witnessed rapid changes in attitudes towards funeral ceremonies, not only amongst the professionals in the industry but also amongst the public when arranging funerals. I feel very privileged to be able to work with the Council and the Institute members to provide ceremonies that, as much as possible, fulfil every expectation of the bereaved family, and more.

## Janice Thomson – Secretary of the IoCF

Best known to our members as the script assessor, I use my skills as a former English teacher to scrutinise two sample funeral scripts per member annually as part of the Institute's Continuous Professional Development programme. I also minute our regular Council meetings and AGM, and represent the IOCF on the Council of British Funeral Services.

In 2002, while Superintendent Registrar of a London borough, I eagerly joined the first civil funerals training course. Now retired, I am still happy to support the Institute's work of raising funeral delivery standards as a volunteer.

## Karen Hopkins

It was after my dad died some four years ago that I realised I wanted to become a funeral celebrant. I thought his funeral service could have been different and decided that I could make a difference. I was used to public speaking being a Registrar for Marriages. After training with Civil Ceremonies Limited and becoming a member of the Institute of Civil Funerals I joined the Council wanting to become more involved.

I feel strongly that bereaved families should have a choice and one of the main aims of the Institute is to promote civil funerals, along with ensuring that members receive ongoing assessment to maintain a high level of service in providing unique ceremonies to families.

## Sally Band

I live in Colchester, working not only there but in neighbouring areas including Clacton, Harwich and further west as far as Braintree and Chelmsford.

Since retiring from Registration I have concentrated solely on my funeral work and have found it the most satisfying of any of my previous jobs. After having personally experienced

