

Councillor David Cook - Biography

Born in 1945, third son of a railwayman and a schoolteacher and brought up in the suburb of Handsworth in Sheffield where I sang in the choir at St. Mary's Church. I attended Athelstan Primary and King Edward VII Schools till 1963 achieving A levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics then moving to Newcastle University armed with the knowledge the North East's economy was built on coalmining, shipbuilding and engineering. One way or another I have been on Tyneside ever since witnessing the radical change of the economy in that time.

After graduating with M.Sc. and PhD in Clinical Biochemistry my career as a Lecturer in Clinical Biochemistry at Newcastle University also involved work in the laboratories of the Royal Victoria Infirmary. I retired finally in 2008

I married a 'Geordie' nurse, Liz in 1971 and we have a daughter, son, and one grand-daughter, all of whom still live in Newcastle, where Steven works for Clydesdale Bank and Katherine for Natural England. Liz retired from nursing in 2005

In 2018, I stepped down from the role of school governor which I held for just over 25 years, latterly as Chair at Walbottle Campus School.

I joined Benwell Cricket Club in 1969 (now called Benwell and Walbottle Cricket Club) and am still involved, as a league official and with the club. I played football for Gosforth Bohemians and later hockey for St. Georges in local leagues. I qualified as a hockey umpire and officiated in both men's and women's matches. I have been lucky and privileged enough to have played football in Australia (with Melbourne University) cricket in Denmark, and hockey in Germany and the Netherlands. I was able to arrange clearance for the Danish fast bowler Ole Mortensen, to play in English Cricket (the Test and County Cricket Board had overlooked the fact he was an EU citizen!) He was second in the national bowling averages only to Malcolm Marshall of the West Indies. I do look back on that episode in my life with some satisfaction!

I am lucky to have been able to travel widely in Europe and elsewhere but we are gaining pleasure these days in visiting many of the places in the British Isles we had never actually been to.

I am also fond of listening to classical music and New Orleans jazz.

We have lived in Lemington ward since 1971, and although I have been a Labour Party member for many years, I became a Councillor almost by accident being pressed into service as a candidate in 2010 when the intended candidate in the ward had to withdraw owing to him being moved away by his work. I have enjoyed the satisfaction of being able to solve problems on a ward basis for residents but, as will be appreciated, it is a never-ending task! My busiest job outside the ward has been as vice-Chair of the Planning Committee, since 2011, but I have also served on the Regulatory & Appeals Committee, the Health Scrutiny Committee, the Historic Environment Advisory Panel, the Heart of the City Partnership and in previous years the Economy Scrutiny Committee.

I look forward, with a certain amount of trepidation, to my role as Lord Mayor and meeting the many people and organisations that oil the workings of the City's society but ask for no reward for their endeavours, save the satisfaction of their achievements. I look forward to visits throughout the City and to meeting distinguished guests.