

WOOTTON ACADEMY TRUST
BIOGRAPHIES, DIRECTORS

Jonathan Billington, DMS, MCFI

Strategy Consultant NHS

Director, Wootton Academy Trust

Jonathan Billington has a background in strategic financial management and was previously CEO of a sub-regional Economic Partnership. He has extensive knowledge of educational establishments having worked in FE and HE over a twelve- year period. He has also been a school governor within Bedfordshire Schools for the past 15 years, including being a former chair of governors at a local middle school.

Jonathan is currently engaged in a partnership programme between the NHS and DWP to support those with Work Limiting Illnesses back into a work environment.

Jonathan plays a prominent role within the local community. Amongst other roles he is a trustee of a local charity in Cranfield and a keen member of the bell ringing society.

David Clare, HND in Electrical & Electronic Engineering, Certificate in Business Management, Diploma in Business Management, I.Eng MIET - Dip Mgmt. (Open).

Energy Consultant

Director, Wootton Academy Trust, Chair of Wootton Local Governing Body

David Clare qualified as an electrical engineer in 1980 and applied that qualification as a design and operational power engineer on electricity distribution. Between 1994 and 2000, David worked as a senior manager at Southern Electricity and Eastern Electricity (now UK Power Networks) - both large utility companies and at the time listed in the FTSE 100. David's role included operational and budget responsibility over technical, administration and operational field staff David had departmental responsibility for near 200 staff through a defined management structure in which he reported to the Director of Connections who in turn reported to the MD.

In 2000 David left Eastern Electricity to set up an electricity connections business within a company that became a division of a Morgan Sindall Group plc. Morgan Sindall Group plc is a leading UK construction and regeneration group with a turnover of £2.2 billion, employing over 7000 people. Subsequently David was headhunted moving to John Mowlem Construction, initially as General Manager of the Utilities Division before being appointed Technical Director of Mowlem Energy. He oversaw the sale of Mowlem Pipelines to raise investment capital to expand the construction business over asset ownership. When John Mowlem plc was bought out by Carillion plc in 2005/06, Mowlem Energy was rebranded as Carillion Utility Services with a construction focus. David declined an executive role within the business and facilitated a management buyout of those products and services not seen as "core" by Carillion but the business focus was regional and he opted not to be part of the MBO team.

At this time David set up in partnership and formed an energy consultancy business which has advised blue chip clients on a number of major energy projects, including flagship projects such as the Olympic Park and Kings Cross regeneration. He has worked with both the University of Cambridge and Imperial College London developing their property facilities as both institutions expand. His company has identified a niche market: focussing on renewable and sustainable (wind, solar, biomass & non-fossil fuel energy) large power projects in addition to providing consultancy water and gas utilities. The business continues to work on a number of iconic projects. David has also formed Utility Assets Ltd., the seventh independent electricity distribution business in the UK, with the aim owning and operating energy assets to deliver low carbon electrical energy and Q Heat Ltd. focussing on low carbon heat networks.

David Clare is chair of Wootton Upper School Local Governing Body having been a governor on the Advisory Body since 2011 and Facilities Director since the creation of Wootton Academy Trust. His knowledge of new technologies, coupled with the skills-base he has developed to meet the new energy future, equip him to support WAT in the implementation and running of the proposed STEM College. In particular, David's knowledge of, and wide contacts in, the energy market sector allied with his business experience will enable him to support the 16-19 College and Governor on Kimberley College Advisory Body in providing an inspirational curriculum which meets the changing needs of UK industry and provides 16 - 19 students with an applied learning experience that equips them for their future. David has been involved as a governor at lower and middle schools since 2000.

Michael Gleeson

Executive Principal, Wootton Academy Trust

After graduating from Birmingham University with both a B. Mus. and a 11 - 18 years Post Graduate Certificate in Education, Michael started his teaching career at Denbigh High School in Luton in 1984.

Michael moved to Wootton Upper School as Head of Music in 1986 and subsequently held various posts in the school (and at Kimberley 16-19 STEM College, the Trust's other institution) including Head of Expressive Arts and later Deputy Head.

Michael has been a director of Wootton Academy Trust since 2012 and from May 2014 Michael Executive Principal of Wootton Academy Trust.

Michael has a keen interest in curriculum design and content and for many years chaired Bedford Boroughs Curriculum Development Group.

Between 1990 and 2008 Michael played an active part in Bedfordshire's excellent Youth Music set up as manager of one of the Youth Orchestras accompanying the orchestra to France and to biannually to Edinburgh. He has been a member of the Friends of Bedfordshire Youth Music since 1998 including six years as chair and more recently secretary. This charity is dedicated to raising funds to provide opportunities for young people to take part in music making activities.

For the last eighteen years Michael has played the keyboard for his local church every Sunday.

Peter Haddon BA (Law), MEd, PGCE

Wootton Academy Trust Director

Wootton Upper School Local Governing Board

Personal focus for both WAT and WUSLGP will be on Curriculum – organisation, quality of provision, strategic direction of improvement planning, data review and analysis.

Independent education consultant.

Retired from Headship of Holywell School, Cranfield in August 2017, having taken up that Headship in 2008. During that period of time Holywell re-established itself as a very popular school of choice in the area, raised educational standards for pupils and expanded its numbers significantly with further expansion currently continuing.

President of the Bedfordshire Middle School Headteachers' Association from 2009 to 2014. Represented Middle School sector on the Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust Board from 2010 to 2016.

From 2005-2008 worked for Bedfordshire County Council School Improvement Team, introducing the government's new School Improvement Partner (SIP) programme to Bedfordshire and leading on that programme for three years. At that time also providing SIP activity for schools in Essex and Enfield.

From 2000 – 2005 Headteacher of St Bernard's Secondary School, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. Took up this post when the school was in a precarious position for a variety of reasons. Completed the turnaround, attracted funding for fundamental building renewal and returned to work in Bedfordshire.

From 1991 – 2000 Deputy Headteacher at Cardinal Newman Catholic Secondary School, Luton.

Bedfordshire resident since 1991. Married with two daughters both of whom were educated from nursery school through to A levels in the Bedfordshire school system. Played keyboard for local church for past 26 years.

Simon O'Toole, BA, Dip Law

Barrister

Member/Director, Chair of Wootton Academy Trust

Simon O'Toole is a barrister in private practice in London, and a Governing Bencher of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple.

Simon has always had a keen interest in every aspect of education at all levels. Prior to joining WAT as a Foundation Governor, he had been a member of a university senate, governor and acting vice-chairman of governors of a primary school. In the past he has been a part-time law lecturer at universities, and is currently an accredited qualified advocacy trainer of pupil barristers and new practitioners on mandatory professional courses.

Simon is a member of the Bar Council Education and Training Committee, and the Inner Temple Education and Training Committee. Simon is Chair of the Inner Temple Outreach Committee which is responsible for Inner Temple's extensive outreach contribution which is recognised as being one of the best of its kind among the professions. The objective of Outreach is to encourage and support non-traditional candidates with the necessary academic qualifications and skills required of a barrister to apply for pupillage and tenancy.

Simon is an elected member of the Consultative Board of HELP Programme based in Strasbourg. (HELP is The European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals which supports the Council of Europe member states in implementing the European Convention on Human Rights at the national level by enhancing the capacity of judges, lawyers and prosecutors in all 47 member states to apply the ECHR in their daily work.)

Simon is also the Chair of an Advisory Committee of a charity common investment fund managed by the world's largest asset manager. He is a former trustee of the Cardinal Hume Centre, London. In his spare time, he likes walking, opera and films.

Michael Ridley, MA (Cantab), MBA (Open University)

Director, Wootton Academy Trust, Chair Kimberley College Local Governing Body

Michael is a civil servant, currently working at the Department for Education on policy related to the post-16 further education and college sector in England, including quality, accountability and governance. He has previously worked in a variety of policy and delivery roles in DfE and other departments, on issues including FE restructuring, better regulation, insolvency, pensions, consumer advice, utilities, aerospace and enterprise education. Prior to joining the civil service, Michael worked in a general management role in the container shipping industry for eight years, including two years based in southern Africa.

Michael is a graduate of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where he studied geography and social and political sciences. He also has an MBA and various project management qualifications. He has previously served as a governor at Castle Lower School in Bedford, including five years as Chair of the governing body. He has two children, one of whom attended Kimberley before starting at university, and the other is currently at Wootton Upper. Outside of work he enjoys sailing, walking, cooking, and trying to improve his Spanish.

Tom Stephenson, FEng BSc PhD FIChemE CEng FHEA

Head of the School of Applied Sciences, Cranfield University

Director, Wootton Academy Trust

Professor Tom Stephenson is Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation at Cranfield University, an exclusively postgraduate university specialising in technology and management. He leads Cranfield's research and innovation activities that include delivery of major grant bids, exploitation of research and development of strategy. His responsibilities include delivery of the Research Excellence Framework (REF2021) submission, research degrees and entrepreneurship; the latter covering intellectual property (IP), licensing and start-ups. Prior to his current role, Professor Stephenson was for the previous 10 years Pro Vice-Chancellor for the School of Applied Sciences which had an annual income of £35 Million, 800 postgraduate students studying for Masters and Doctorate degrees, and over 300 academic, research, technical and support staff.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering (FEng), a Chartered Chemical Engineer (CEng), Fellow of the Institution of Chemical Engineers (FIChemE) and the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM). Professor Stephenson is a graduate in biochemistry from the University of York and has a PhD in civil engineering, specialising in public health engineering, from Imperial College. Prior to joining Cranfield in 1990, he was a Senior Lecturer in Biochemical Engineering at Teesside Polytechnic.

He is Chairman of CIM Ltd, a company wholly owned by Cranfield that specialises in vehicle crash testing and is FIA approved for Formula One. Professor Stephenson is also Chairman of Water Innovate, a Cranfield spin-out company which he set up and was sold to Bluewater Bio in 2010. Between 2010 and 2012 he was Chairman of British Water, the trade association representing 180 water sector supply chain companies.

Tim Williams

Director, Wootton Academy Trust / Wootton Local Governing Body

Tim Williams is the Director of Tim Williams Consulting, a management consultancy specialising in Human Resources. Tim is a senior HR practitioner and leader with experience of working in the private and not-for-profit sectors. For the past 30 years, Tim has worked within blue-chip multi-national companies, most recently as Vice President for Human Resources for Pearson PLC's global Technology function and, before that as HR Director for companies and divisions within Pearson and Whitbread PLC.

Tim is a graduate of the University of Wales where he obtained a BSc in Industrial Economics. Tim holds post-graduate qualifications including a Master of Science degree in Management & Technology and, as a qualified HR professional, he is a corporate Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development.

Tim is married with two grown up children and lives in Leighton Buzzard. He was previously a governor at Gilbert Inglefield Middle School for 10 years.