

Election Special – April 2022

The Community News is an information service from PACDG - the Presteigne Area Community Development Group - "Working Together For Our Community"

POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION LLANGUNLLO with NORTON WARD

USE YOUR VOTE! Elections take place on 5 May for our town and county councillors.

Whatever political colour you are, use your vote to have your say. If you can't go along to vote in person on the day, you can ask to vote by post or proxy (which means someone you trust to vote on your behalf). If you want to vote by post, you must ask for it by 19th April, and for a proxy vote you must ask for it by 26th April. You can ask by calling Powys Electoral Services on 01597 826202 or there's a online form to do this at electoralcommission.org.uk/voter.

Changes to Powys County Council Ward boundaries since the last election have resulted in Norton being removed from the Presteigne Ward and included instead in a new Ward entitled 'Llangunllo with Norton'.

Three candidates have been nominated for the Llangunllo with Norton Ward

(in alphabetical order):

Nigel Bufton	Welsh Liberal Democrats
Deb Edwards	Independent
Paddy O'Kennedy	Welsh Conservative Party

We asked all candidates to provide a brief election statement.

NIGEL BUFTON

I'm humbled to be able to stand for your local councillor in what is my home ward, at 42 years old I'm the second generation of our family farm with the third generation hot in my footsteps! I've always been heavily involved with "Young Farmers" movement and spent every year possible as a member, Now I'm north of 28 years old, my time has been spent recently as Club President and one of the club leaders.

Dolau School is also something very close to my heart, as a past pupil and now a parent governor for the past 7 years. I appreciate that the closure threats to my local primary school would not be on the list of high priorities for some of my constituents but this is a much wider issue across the county, schools are the beating hearts of communities, and for many communities it's all they have left.

Cllr Hywel Lewis has been very pro-active in recent years tackling the issue of rural broadband within our more isolated communities, this is also something I would like to pursue, our every day lives are dominated by being able to access fast reliable broadband, Cllr Lewis would like to spend time with me should I be elected to ensure the smooth transition of his project is carried forward.

Being born and bred in the country it would only be natural for me to be interested in Agriculture and the Environment, we find our selves trying to find the ever challenging balance between being sustainable and green! I believe both are achievable! With increasing populations and demands for such a large range of products we need to be constantly reviewing our methods of farming and support for these essential communities.

As a lot of you will be aware, the "Wards" have changed this year, meaning that now the village of Norton has been joined to the Llangunllo ward, this change has been driven mainly by the re-organisation of the number of Councillors to Residents ratio.

My aim as a councillor should I be elected would to simply represent and defend rural communities such as my own, to have a common sense approach to matters such as Rural Education, Rural Broadband, Agriculture and the Environment, but most of all....to be

approachable and honest. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cllr Lewis for his dedication to the Llangunllo with Norton ward over the past years, thank you Hywel! Hope to see you all at the polling stations on May 5th!

DEB EDWARDS

Many of you will probably know me as Deb the post from my former occupation of 22 years. Having been born, educated, and spent most of my working life in this beautiful area, I am very aware of the issues faced by the people who live here.

For the last 5 years I have represented the residents of Norton on Presteigne and Norton Town council, being Deputy Mayor for the last year. I have learned considerably from this experience, also gained great understanding from longer serving council colleagues, and hope to continue to do so under the next administration.

My involvement as a volunteer in several area within the communities, Vicechair of trustees for East Radnor Care, raising funds for local charities through Norton Show, helping form, and continuing to support, NCT who are working to provide a community hub by adapting a recently redundant local Church, recently becoming co-ordinator for the local speed watch group, has also expanded my awareness of the needs of people in the area.

All of these experiences have, I believe, given me an insight into the concerns which are foremost in many of your minds : - protecting the infrastructure we have in health, care, education, employment, communication, the environment, transport links and crucially trying to improve on this for our area, ensuring that this part of the county benefits equally with other regions, especially our more remote communities, who often feel left out.

I would like to think I am approachable, and as an independent councillor would not be curtailed by party politics when putting forward your views and concerns.

Finally, I would like to say, please vote on May 5th, it's important to do so, whomever you choose to vote for, as it is the only way to ensure your voice can be heard. Thank you

PADDY O'KENNEDY

Firstly, I am absolutely delighted and honoured to be nominated as the Welsh Conservative candidate for Llangunllo with Norton.

As a military veteran with over 30 years' service in the Royal Air Force including operational tours of duty in Iraq, Northern Ireland and Africa as well as diplomatic tours in two UK embassies overseas in Israel and Baghdad, I am used to working as a team member, addressing people's issues, solving problems and getting things done and I intend to do exactly the same as a Powys County Councillor should I get elected.

In common with all Brecon and Radnorshire Welsh Conservative candidates in this election, my priority is to fight to prevent the closure of any Powys school that can deliver the approved curriculum and that includes Llanfihangel Rhydithon County Primary School in Dolau. Other issues on my priority list include addressing council tax increases, improving rural transport links, more support for village and agricultural shows and closer links with town and community councils.

I am also determined to vastly improve councillor availability by making myself accessible to anyone via social media, phone call or personal meeting rather than just by infrequent surgeries. The people of this ward deserve a representative that is there when they need them and I don't intend to let them down. If you need me, call me.

My military background means that I am used to hard work, long hours and being as accessible as possible when needed and I intend to continue this policy if I am elected. I look forward to working with local communities to improve the lives of the residents of the Llangunllo with Norton ward and meeting as many people as possible over the course of the electoral campaign and beyond.

If elected, I look forward to working with everyone, from whatever political background, to make our ward a better place.

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