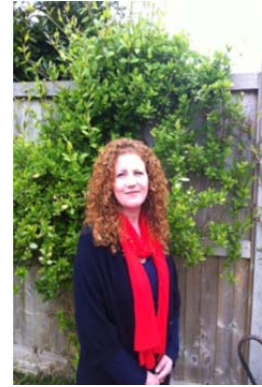


Independent County Councillor Frances Taylor



The first year as your county councillor

It is hard to believe that it has already been just over a year since I decided to stand for election as an independent county councillor for Magor. Knocking on each and every door in Mill ward (Magor and a small bit of Undy) certainly makes you realise how big this once small village has become. I have since been around most of the village helping to deliver Frost fayre booklets and also information about our campaign for the railway station.

I stood because I felt that Magor needed a strong voice at county level and I wanted to do the best I could to ensure Magor is no longer just part of Severnside. Magor and Undy still have a real community spirit and I want to play a part in ensuring its longevity. I am always struck by how many people have time to talk and pass the time of day and this is one of the things I really enjoy about living in Magor. I am out in the village, taking my son to school, enjoying the enormous amount of community events locally such as the Frost and May Fayres, Cake Saturday, Undy farmers market, it is a pleasure to talk to people, listen to their concerns and try to make a difference. It has certainly been a very steep learning curve and that will continue for the rest of my term because the business of the council is so wide and the impact, for ill or for good of the decisions made there are far reaching for our community.

In our community

Magor with Undy now has a population of around 8,000, not too much smaller than Monmouth. However, if you look at the services and facilities on offer in Magor they are certainly not comparable. The villages have seen some 1600 new homes over the past 25 years, but the accompanying community infrastructure such as a community hall, bypass etc. did not follow. If it weren't for the efforts of the many dedicated groups and individuals running some of the events I mentioned above we would be living in a dormitory town already.

Some of the things I am been working on;

- Dealing successfully with your concerns and casework for residents and businesses including issues associated with Monmouthshire Housing, the maintenance of highway verges, removal and pollarding of trees, planning matters, environmental health issues, pest control and matters connected to the extreme weather.
- Working with the Community Council and Council officers to find solutions, which will alleviate the parking/traffic issues in the Square, improve pedestrian safety and protect our unique Cenotaph. The community council plan a consultation in September.
- Encouraging local organisations to successfully secure grant funding from Severnside Area Committee, the Baptist Chapel, Undy Rugby academy, Stepping Stones have all received small grants.
- Influencing the Severnside Total Place Plan to ensure that the needs of Magor with Undy are well represented.

- Dealing with the Steelwork access changes and the impact on Llandevenny
- Working with MAGOR the action group to help promote their campaign for a railway access point in Magor/Undy. The public meeting was packed and we are waiting for a cabinet member decision to make this Council Policy. Then we begin the journey to prove our case!
- Working with Council officers, Community Council and MUSLA to progress appropriate improvements to our community facilities. You may be aware that MUSLA are revisiting their recent bid to the Big Lottery Fund and I am actively working with Officers and the cabinet member to ensure that Monmouthshire Council provides appropriate support. There will be a public consultation event shortly.
- Working with Magor Church in Wales Primary and the Community Council and Council officers to resolve the dispute over the school playing field. Pressing officer to improve the safety of the field for the school and users in the wider community.
- Lobbying Welsh Water and the Council's environmental health team to resolve issues of flooding. To date though progress has been slower than we'd like but Welsh Water is finally working with Tesco to resolve the problems caused by their private pumping station at the Europark.
- Helping other parents transform the school garden at Magor Church in Wales Primary, and filling it with edible food.
- Redwick Road is being resurfaced!
- Raising local issues with Police and ensuring regular speed monitoring on the B4245, Redwick Road, and Dancing Hill.

Representing your interests at Council

I provide a very strong voice on all issues concerning Magor with Undy, often working with Councillor Jessica Crook and other councillors on matters of local interest.

- In the Local Development Plan debate I spoke against the housing allocation at Rockfield farm and the allocation of employment land and waste site at Llandevenny due to the limited infrastructure and also the impact on the village of Llandevenny.
- In the budget consultation I lobbied against the waste changes in this financial year because there was inadequate consultation. Although I support reducing waste and increasing recycling we needed to take residents along. You may have seen some of the measures that have been agreed by the executive group in the recent budget such as the recently introduced changes to the residual waste (rubbish) collection and charging for services such as the green waste collection, pest control and increasing the cost of school meals. If you have any questions, then please get in touch.
- Working with other councillors to raise concerns about the recent Estyn Report. You may have seen in the press that Welsh Government has placed Monmouthshire's Education service in special measures. I and Cllr. Debby Blakebrough will be representing the independent group on the Internal Monitoring Board.

- Lobbying Monmouthshire Council to become a Living Wage Employer and pay those council staff on the minimum wage (most of whom are women) a living wage.
- Lobbying and pressing the council to ensure that Monmouthshire and in particular the South of the county is included in Welsh Government's Metro (rapid integrated transport network) plans.
- Raising the profile of some of the more disadvantaged pockets in the county and calling for measures which address the disparity between the most affluent and the most disadvantaged citizens.

As a County Councillor I sit on the Planning Committee, the Joint Rail Working Group, and the Internal Monitoring Board for Estyn, the Police and Crime Panel, Domestic Abuse Forum and Severnside Area Committee.

If you would like to get in touch, please contact me on francestaylor@monmouthshire.gov.uk Twitter- **@frances4magor**, Facebook www.facebook.com/FrancesTaylorIndependentCandidateforMillWard or 01633 881198. Otherwise you can stop me while I'm out and about.

Best wishes
Frances