

# Cambridge Mayors – 2000 to present day



---

## 2000 to 2001

### Evelyn Knowles

Elected to the Council in 1987. Member of Cambridge Community Health Council, Trustee of Cambridge Folk Museum, Chair of Cambridge Refugee Group, Trustee of Cambridge Citizens' Advice Bureau. Served as a Parliamentary candidate for Northwest Norfolk in 1997. Liberal Democrat.



Liberal Democrats

---

## 2001 to 2002

### Chris Lakin

Joined the City Council in 1994 representing Newnham Ward, having previously represented Bar Hill and Oakington on South Cambridgeshire District Council. His main interests as a councillor were with environmental issues and with the work of the voluntary sector. Strong supporter of the Cambridge Mediation Service regarding the development of "victim/offender" mediation. Mr Lakin spent most of his working life with the Royal Institute of British Architects. Liberal Democrat.



Liberal Democrats

---

## 2002 to 2003

### Philippa Slatter

Educated at Withington Girls' School and King's College London. Took PGCE at Churchill College in 1971, the year when many Cambridge men's Colleges first admitted women students. Taught geography in a secondary modern school until started a family, which at that time required teachers to resign.

Elected to represent Trumpington in 1955 while re-training to become a nurse. Served as a Chairman of the Planning and Community Services committees and was Mayor in the year of the Queen's Golden Jubilee. County President of St. Johns Ambulance and Trustee of Cambridge United Charities (a combination of old municipal charities including 29 alms-houses in the city). Retired from Council in 2008. Liberal Democrat.



Liberal  
Democrats

In 2021 she was elected to Cambridgeshire County Council where she is part of the new Joint Administration on the County Council which in combination of Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independent councillors. She is a member of several committees including Health, Adults, Children and Community.

---

## 2003 to 2004

### David White

Spent most of his life in East Anglia and from 1987 lived in Cambridge. Was appointed a school governor prior to being elected to the City Council in 1998 representing Castle Ward (Liberal Democrat). In the Council he was concerned with the development of innovative methods of dealing with waste and recycling in an environmentally acceptable way. He chaired City Services from 2000 – 2002. He was also involved in the promotion of 'no smoking' in homes where there were young children whose health could be damaged by cigarette smoke.

Outside the council he was involved in the museum sector as chairman of the board of the Folk Museum and an executive member of the Cambridgeshire Museums Advisory Partnership. He supported Cambridge's international links through his membership of the committee of the Cambridge Szeged Society (Szeged is Cambridge's Hungarian twin City).



Liberal  
Democrats

---

## 2004 to 2005

### Robert Dryden

Born in Cambridge. First appointed to the Council in 1995 representing Cherry Hinton Ward. His interests on the Council were Planning and Community Development and Leisure. Before becoming Mayor, he had previously served as a Ceremonial Bailiff. School governor and City magistrate. Labour



 Labour

---

## 2005 to 2006

### John Hipkin

Spent early life in Dr Barnardo's Homes. Between 1965-'68 he researched at King's College, Cambridge, on behalf of the Public Schools Commission the possibilities of integrating the public schools into the maintained system of education. Elected as a County Councillor for Romsey in 1977 and later became a founding member of the SDP. Became a City Councillor for Castle Ward in 1992. Long-standing member of the Planning Committee and appointed the Historic Environment Champion for Cambridge. Liberal Democrat.



Liberal  
Democrats 

---

## 2006 to 2007

### Robert Dryden

Second term



 Labour

---

## 2007 to 2008

### Jenny Bailey

Jenny's career background is in radio engineering, and she worked for Pye Telecom which later became part of Philips. She subsequently worked as a telecommunications engineer. Jenny had a strong interest in environmental issues, promoting cycling, waste management and recycling and has previously served as Deputy Mayor. She represented the East Chesterton ward. Liberal Democrat.



Liberal  
Democrats

---

## 2009 to 2010

### Mike Dixon

Cllr Mike Dixon represented Market ward. A Yorkshireman, he arrived in Cambridge in 1979 and served on many of the council's committees. He was a bailiff in 2006-07 and deputy mayor in 2007-8.

Mike spent the whole of his working life in education. He graduated in mathematics from Bristol University and after obtaining a teaching qualification, taught mathematics in Bath.

He was head of mathematics at a grammar school in Warwickshire and at Gordonstoun School. He moved to Cambridge to be head of mathematics at Long Road Sixth Form College and subsequently worked for the county council as an education officer.



Liberal  
Democrats

---

## 2009 to 2010

### Russ McPherson

Russ was first elected to the City Council in May 2004, and he was elected Deputy Mayor in 2008 – 2009. He was a member of the Standards Committee, Labour spokesperson for the South Area Committee and Chair of the Neighbourhood Watch Panel in Cherry Hinton. Labour



 Labour

---

## 2010 to 2011

### Sheila Stuart

Originally from the Pacific northwest of the United States, Sheila was a member of the council since 2004, when she was first elected to represent Trumpington ward.

Sheila serves as Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health from 2006 to 2009. Her civic roles include her service as a Ceremonial Bailiff in 2006/07 and as Deputy Mayor in 2009/10.



 Liberal Democrats

---

## 2011 to 2012

### Ian Nimmo-Smith

Dr Ian Nimmo-Smith was first elected to the City Council in 1990 representing West Chesterton Ward. From 2003-10, he was leader of the council before he became deputy mayor in May 2010.

Ian arrived in Cambridge in 1972 to work at the Medical Research Council's Applied Psychology Unit (subsequently Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit) until his retirement in September 2010. There he provided mathematical and statistical support for research led by psychologists and neuroscientists. Ian also worked as a supervisor in mathematics at a few Cambridge colleges, latterly as a preceptor in mathematics at Corpus Christi College.

Upon his retirement from the City Council in May 2012, Ian was elected as an Honorary Councillor.



Liberal  
Democrats

---

## 2012 to 2013

### Sheila Stuart

Second term



Liberal  
Democrats

---

## 2013 to 2014

### Paul Saunders

Paul was elected to the City Council in 2010 representing Romsey Ward for the Liberal Democrat Party. For many years he worked in the IT industry.



---

## 2014 to 2015

### Gerri Bird

Gerri was born in a Magdalene Home in Cork, Republic of Ireland. At the age of 10 months, she contracted polio and was admitted to hospital where she remained until she was 7 years old.

Herself a wheelchair user, Gerri has, through her adult life, campaigned for the rights of disabled people to bring about change and independence. Elected to the Council, representing East Chesterton Ward for the Labour Party, in 2011.



---

## 2015 to 2016

### Robert Dryden

Third term



---

## 2016 to 2017

### Jeremy Benstead

Elected to the Council, representing Coleridge Ward for the Labour Party, in 1992. He was born in the Mill Road Maternity Hospital, now Ditchburn Place, and has lived in and around Cambridge all his life.

Along with his time as Councillor, he has spent thirty years working in the roofing industry. He is very keen to encourage young people into the construction industry and has been involved in expanding training and apprenticeships. During his time on the council, he has taken particular interest in Licensing and in the running of the Council. He also takes a close interest in the preservation of Cambridge's green spaces, having been a founder of "Save our Commons and Meadows" (SOCAM) in the late 1980's.



 Labour

---

## 2017 to 2018

### George Pippas

Councillor Pippas became a City Councillor in 2011 and was re-elected in 2015. During his six years as a Councillor, he has been involved in Housing, Licencing as a member and as a spokes in Planning, in JDCC and employment committees. He has also been a Vice-Chair and Chair at the South Area Committee. As well as this, he has also served five years as a bailiff and one year as Deputy Mayor.



Liberal  
Democrats 



---

## 2018 to 2019

### Nigel Gawthrope

Councillor Gawthrope became a City Councillor in Kings Hedges Ward in 2012 and was subsequently re-elected in 2016. In his time on the council, he has served on various committees: Licensing, Planning, Civic Affairs, Housing Scrutiny (Chair), Joint Staff Employment Forum (Chair), Employment Appeals panel, Civic Affairs and the Development Plan Scrutiny Sub Committee (Vice Chair).



 Labour

---

## 2019 to 2020

### Gerri Bird

Second Term



 Labour

---

## 2020 to 2022

### Russ McPherson

Second and third Term



 Labour

---

## 2022 to 2023

### Mark Ashton

Born in Lancashire, moved to Cherry Hinton in Cambridge in 1971 after graduating with Food Technology Degree to commence work as WJ Adkins Ltd meat processor. And went onto work for Cambridge City Council as Authorised Meat Inspector for 7 years before returning to the private food sector with leading food firms and supermarkets.

He was elected to city councillor for Cherry Hinton in 2011, Mark sat on all committees except Licensing and chaired South Area Committee; was Deputy Mayor in 2022/23 and continued as Chair of Cherry Hinton Residents Association after he left the Council. He was well known as the “Mayor in Shorts” and supported charities Cambridge Aid and Romsey Mill who both do amazing work for those in need in our city.

As Mayor, with his wife Barbara the Mayoress, they led the city for the Queens Jubilee Celebrations, the Queens death and the Proclamation of King Charles III. They also visited our twinned city Szeged, in Hungary.

Most importantly during the mayoral year, Mark and Barbara celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.



 Labour

---

## 2023 to 2024

### Jenny Gawthrop Wood

Cllr Gawthrop Wood moved to North Cambridge in 1976. She has worked in a range of jobs over the years, as a university assistant, as a social and demographic researcher and in roles for the Kings Fund Institute, Wellcome Institute, and at leading research institutes in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

She sat on the Strategy and Resources, Planning, Joint Planning and Development Control (with S. Cambs), Housing and County Health Scrutiny Committees, representing the City and the issues which King’s Hedges face. She was a member of the Planning and Transport Strategy Committee, during the development of a new joint local plan and was the Homelessness and Refugee lead in her first year.

A key theme of her Mayoral year was to support our Cambridge community, break down barriers and build links across the City, our communities and organisations so that everyone can benefit from what our City can offer



 Labour

---

## 2024 to 2025

### Baiju Thittala

Cllr Baiju Thittala was born in Kerala, India. He moved to England in 2004 where he studied politics, sociology and history at Cambridge Regional College. He went to study Law and graduated from Anglica Ruskin University in 2013 in LLB (Hons).

In 2018, Baiju was elected to represent East Chesterton in the by-election, becoming one of only a handful of first-generation councillors from a minority ethnic background in the history of Cambridge City Council. Since then, he has continued to fight a range of issues to create a fairer society for everyone, particularly the underprivileged.

Baiju was previously the lead councillor for Equalities at Cambridge City Council, sitting on the Equalities Panel, and was also the Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee and the chair for the Housing Scrutiny Committee. In 2019, he was shortlisted in three constituencies as a potential Parliamentary candidate and came second in the West Suffolk Parliamentary constituency.

As a councillor, Baiju moved a motion at full council, calling on members to show their support for the Black Lives Matter movement, a motion that was passed unanimously. He has also called on the council to lobby the Nursing and Midwifery Council for an end to disproportionate and unfair treatment of non-EU nurses. That fight continued until the rule was changed.

In May 2023 Baiju was elected as the first Asian Deputy Mayor of Cambridge.

