LYMPSTONE LIVES - JENNY CLARK

I was born in Surrey but came to University in Exeter in 1980 and lived in Exeter for 4 years. I then moved away with work, and married Tony in 1991 - I worked for 13 years selling into the manufacturing industry, and then worked in facilities management before taking a career break when my daughter was born. We returned to Devon in 1996 and bought our house in Lympstone.

We have 2 children - Jono (26) and Eliza (22) - I also have 4 stepchildren and 4 grandchildren. In 2002 Tony and I bought a lettings business from Hazel and John Eaton-Terry (who are still Lympstone residents) and I still work full time there, managing holiday cottages, blocks of leasehold flats and residential lets. I first stood for the Parish Council in 1999 and served for 8 years. I am nearing completion of my second term.

My love of Devon started at an early age - my family always had holidays on the island of Lundy, and I have visited there over 80 times now. My husband and I moved to Lympstone in 1996 - my son was then 3 and my daughter was born that October. I had lived in Exeter in the 1980s and my husband had served in the west county when he was in the Royal Navy, so we were keen to find a permanent home in Devon. My husband was a keen sailor, and taught sailing and power boating so when we visited friends in Lympstone, our minds were made up immediately! We bought a derelict house and five months later we moved in; it was still a semi-building site and after 22 years there are still jobs to do.

Lympstone is a very magical place; over the years the whole family has been involved in many of the clubs and societies and both my children went to the village school. We have met some wonderful people and had a huge amount of fun. For me it is the people who make our village so special. We have found enduring friendships, unfailing kindness, laughter and interesting activity here, and this was most in evidence when my husband died suddenly in 2007.

My perfect day would be to start with a (large!) cooked breakfast, then take my granddaughter Lilly to the beach with her bike or a bucket and spade to build

sandcastles. I would then take a long walk around the village with my camera and end up in The Globe or The Swan to watch a rugby match. A perfect evening would be supper with friends or family in any of our 4 excellent pubs and then a walk down to the estuary to see the moonlight on the river.

What and who have influenced me most? Certainly, my father who had a wicked sense of humour and taught me to be a ‘glass half full’ person; my grandmother who was the kindest and most generous person I knew, and everyone in Lympstone - I have learned that the more you contribute to your community, the more you gain.

I feel very privileged to have been elected to the parish council twice and it has been an honour to serve my terms. I hope also that my efforts within fabulous volunteer teams have provided practical solutions to real issues and a few enjoyable community events by good friends, and our children are having a great time growing up. The number of clubs and activities for the children is wonderful, and as all parents know there is never a moment to rest.