



## Devon LOC Nominations and Election Statements 2022

There are currently **5** places available on the Devon Local Optical Committee for a term of 3 years.

Voting will take place online via a Microsoft form or via a form which can be completed and returned to Jonathan Drew via the details below.

Voting closes on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2022. **All votes received after this date will not be accepted.**

You must choose **5** of the nominees – **any voting form completed with more or less than 5 chosen nominees will not be accepted**

Jonathan Drew (Returning Officer)  
Devon Local Optical Committee,  
Haldon Hill,  
Kennford,  
Exeter,  
Devon,  
EX6 7XX

Or email the completed forms to [jdrew@devonloc.co.uk](mailto:jdrew@devonloc.co.uk)

### Nominations received (in alphabetical order) for this year are:

Ian Berry.....	2
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Max Halford .....	5
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## Details of each Nominee

### Ian Berry

Place of work: Noakes, Habermehl & Kerr Opticians

Optometrist/ Dispensing Optician: Optometrist

Contractor/ Performer: Performer

GOC: 01-28844

Election Statement:

Resident Optometrist at NHK Opticians, qualified as Dispensing Optician since 2008 and Optometrist since 2015.

I have worked in the optical industry for almost 20 years across both independent and multiple settings, and in a variety of roles including lab technician, Dispensing Optician, manager and currently as an Optometrist, having recently qualified as an independent prescriber.

I am involved in providing MECS, glaucoma monitoring, IOP refinement and post cataract schemes in Devon and Cornwall and am also a pre-registration supervisor.

I am keen to be involved in continuing to develop locally commissioned enhanced services and to promote and develop the role of primary care optometry to further support patients and ease secondary care pressures.

### Charles Bill

Place of work: Bill Opticians

Optometrist/ Dispensing Optician: Optometrist

Contractor/ Performer: Contractor

GOC: 01-16575

Election Statement:

I have been honoured over the last few years to be able to represent local optometrists and dispensing opticians as vice-chairman of Devon LOC for the last 3 years.

The landscape and extended roles have changed dramatically over the last 3 years with enhanced schemes in Plymouth and across Devon. I would like the opportunity to continue this important roll out for the next 3 years. I believe that we are at the edge of changing eye health care across Devon and feel that I can be instrumental in delivering this.

I am an independent optometrist and contractor working in Devon. I have worked in Torbay Eye Unit for 17 years; I am board member of LOCSU (LOC Support Unit) and I am a Director of the Medical Eye Clinic.

I joined Devon LOC in 2008 and have always been an active member. I feel that I bring a unique insight to the committee as I work in both primary and secondary care. Also being a contractor, I feel that it is important that we are represented on the committee.

I am very excited about the future of optometry and feel that there will be opportunities in the near future for us to expand our horizons. I hope that I can be part of this, and I am willing to devote the work and time necessary.

## Ross Colledge

Place of work: Vision Express

Optometrist/ Dispensing Optician: Optometrist

Contractor/ Performer: Performer

GOC: 01-33182

Election Statement:

I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to stand for election and to tell you a little about who I am and what I have to offer.

I am a newly qualified Optometrist Performer working for Vision Express in a mobile role across South Devon. Originally from Derbyshire, I was taken in by the idea of moving to Devon and was excited to accept an offer to study at the University of Plymouth.

I have always been interested in how the profession is ever changing and the many different avenues and practice settings available to us as Optometrists. Through my time at University, I gained a feel for what it was like in many different independent and multiple practices as well as hospital Optometry. I am passionate about being able to influence decisions, and while at university I undertook the role of Treasurer of the Optometry Society where I was involved in planning and organising events, as well as communicating with various organisations and companies within the optical industry. Additionally, I took on the role of Optometry Course Representative for two consecutive years where I actively listened to fellow student's opinions and worked to highlight their views, so that common issues could be raised on a higher university level. My active involvement within the university demonstrates my ability to work well within a team and take responsibility for specific tasks for very effective organisation and planning.

After graduating from university in 2019, I secured a Pre-Registration position at Vision Express Plymouth where I built my foundation as an Optometrist, improving my skills and confidence to effectively work with, and manage my own patients and integrate within the optometric team. It was certainly a challenging start to my career given the pandemic, however I successfully passed the OSCE examinations and registered in April 2021. Over the last year I have built up my experience as a competent clinician working in several different Vision Express practices around the wider Plymouth area. This has allowed me to build my adaptability and seen me working with different Optometrists

in different practice environments and diverse customer bases. For this reason, I hope to appropriately represent the newly qualified community, whilst working closely with all the Devon members.

I am passionate about the future of optics and feel that it is important that as clinicians we can continue to progress and be able to offer additional services and the latest technological advancements to our patients. Therefore, I believe that it is important that we continue to promote enhanced services such as MECS, not only for our own satisfaction but also to help relieve the strain on our busy NHS clinics and continue to further our role as Optometrists. I believe that the disparity in enhanced services across the different regions of England is a real barrier to the development of more specialised eyecare, and in the outsourcing of certain patients from the hospital eye service into the community. I hope that there is scope in the future to encourage a greater number of practices, particularly larger business chains to get on board with providing enhanced schemes, this is certainly something personally I find frustrating in my current work, and is one of many reasons I am interested in working towards practice management.

I hope that I can bring a newly qualified perspective to the LOC to put across my thoughts and opinions, whilst being happy to help with any other duties that may be required of me. On a personal level, I also hope to build my own communication skills and get to know other Optometrists and Professionals within Devon to get a better perspective on what is currently taking place in the sector and to make more connections.

## **Jenny Cooper**

Place of work: For Your Eyes Only, Kingsbridge, and The Royal Eye Infirmary, Plymouth.

Optometrist/ Dispensing Optician: Optometrist

Contractor/ Performer: Performer

GOC: 01-31737

Election Statement:

Since graduating (from Plymouth University in 2018) my journey in Optometry has been ever evolving.

Since qualifying, I have gained several accreditations to enable me to provide enhanced services in the independent practice where I spend most of my working week.

More recently, I have also completed the Independent Prescribing course allowing me to offer patients therapeutic solutions when required, in order to provide the best possible patient centred care.

In addition to my work in independent practice, I also work at the Royal Eye Infirmary in Plymouth with a fantastic team of staff, allowing me to see first-hand how the expertise in primary care and the use of enhanced services can benefit the hospital eye departments when utilised efficiently.

I am keen to join the LOC as the gap between primary and secondary care gets smaller and the role of enhanced services is more relevant than ever. I feel excited about being part of these changes, and the optimistic future of optometry.

## Max Halford

Place of work: Boots Opticians, Cornwall Street, Plymouth

Optometrist/ Dispensing Optician: Dispensing Optician

Contractor/ Performer:

GOC: D-7489

Election Statement:

I have been involved in Optics in the Plymouth area for over 25 years and am a qualified Dispensing Optician, and Extended Services Contact Lens Optician (FBDO. ESCL) which allows me to care for patients within Minor Eye Conditions services. I am also the Clinical Lead for the Association of British Dispensing Opticians where I work supporting all eye care professionals in their clinical roles and I work within the LOC Support Unit (LOCSU) as an Optical Lead which allows me to work on a national basis in eyecare recovery and transformation and commissioning.

I have been an active member of the LOC for 15 years and have had privilege to be Chair for the past six years, some of which has been possibly the most challenging in the LOCs history. I am also a director of Primary Eyecare Devon – the contracting arm of Devon LOC and one of its Clinical Governance and Performance Leads.

Devon has much to be proud of in its contractors, performers and the wider eye care teams in practice who deliver GOS eye care services on behalf of the NHS, and we have, and continue to achieve, much success with our pathways of care within the region. I have worked with the LOC on minor eye conditions, glaucoma, and cataract pathways as well as our diabetic screening service which we ran in Plymouth for 3 years. I recognize that not every practice or practitioner wishes to be involved in extended services and my time is also spent dealing with PCSE, NHS England, CPD and local eyecare issues.

I led the LOC through the pandemic at a time when the future for practices seemed very bleak and I was meeting weekly with LOC colleagues to support local practices. The LOC were successful in securing and organizing deliveries of PPE across the region and on one occasion myself and a LOC colleague spent time booking colleagues into a vaccination clinic that had suddenly had 200 slots available at short notice.

Although the initial effects of the pandemic may be behind us the long-term legacy on practices, their owners, and teams, and of course patients are still uncertain. The wider LOC and I have worked tirelessly to build relationships with our colleagues both within the wider primary care network and secondary care and I meet regularly with Devon commissioners and ophthalmologists to promote and explain the role of primary care eyecare professionals.

I wish to stand for election again to the LOC as although I feel the LOC have achieved much over the past 6 years, I feel there is much work still to be done at a time of massive change.

As we face into the “recovery phase” of the National Eyecare Transformation Programme we must ensure that the voice of primary eye care is heard and the ambitions of Optometry First are delivered across the whole of the county and not just in packets of care in certain areas. I believe that the capacity crisis with our hospitals can only be truly alleviated when optometrists and opticians are supported both clinically and financially to deliver the levels of care that we all trained for. This will require hard negotiation and I hope my previous experience will help deliver this.

We are also about to see the transfer of GOS from NHS England to Devon ICS. This is a huge change, and we again must ensure that this progresses smoothly and any opportunity to achieve the correct funding level for the sight test is not lost. For years the sight test has been underfunded and national negotiation has done little to improve the situation, we may now have a chance to look at this funding level and I hope the contacts and experience I have can be utilized to ensure this is a positive step and not a race to the bottom on GOS fees.

In my six years I have lobbied MP’s, attended parliament, meet health care professionals across the county and region, spoken at many events and attended hundreds of meetings and done whatever I can to keep the primary eyecare agenda in the spotlight and ensure recognition for the contractors and performers I represent. I hope I can be successful in my bid for re-election so I can continue to use the relationships and contacts I have made over the last 6 years to support the LOC in its vital work.

We are now working at a more regional and national level in delivery of eyecare and I believe my national work with both ABDO and LOCSU will bring benefits to practices across Devon.

I hope you will consider supporting my nomination for election.

## **Winne Maina**

Place of work: Specsavers Paignton/ Totnes

Optometrist/ Dispensing Optician: Optometrist

Contractor/ Performer: Contractor

GOC: 01-19094

Election Statement:

I am currently Clinical Director at Specsavers in Paignton and Totnes and have held this post for 5 years now.

I have over 20 years’ experience as an optometrist, working in all sectors, on the high street, in independent practice and in hospital settings in that time.

I am a keen supporter of Optometry Shared Care and feel I can bring enthusiasm and participate in creating a positive working relationship between primary and secondary care provision in our region, as we enter a new framework of eyecare provision in England.

I believe that in joining the LOC I can increase the diversity of experience and opinion, contribute to the agenda and work of the LOC, positively promoting our profession.

## **Sophie Withers**

Place of work: Acuitis Opticians, Exeter

Optometrist/ Dispensing Optician: Optometrist

Contractor/ Performer: Contractor

GOC: 01-26897

Election Statement:

I am a highly motivated optometrist with a passion for our profession.

I moved to Devon in late 2020 to open my own practice, Acuitis Opticians and Hearing Centre, Exeter.

Despite challenging economic times, we have experienced a successful first year and were recently awarded the Best New Business at the Exeter Living Awards 2022. Having previously practiced in London and Wales, I feel I have a good insight into additional services and shared care across the country and would love the opportunity to join the LOC and help make a difference in our local area. As a local business owner and practising optometrist, I feel I have a good insight into the needs of our local clinicians and believe I am well placed to offer them support as they navigate these ever-changing times.

Since qualifying as an optometrist in 2011, I have gained a wealth of experience across the industry, working in both clinical practice and education settings. I spent many years as the Head of Education for Birmingham Optical (Nidek UK and Europe) leading the clinical education and training for the OCT rollout into major multiple groups and supporting independent practices in the introduction of new clinical services to their business. I confidently deliver CET and CPD on a large range of topics including OCT, dry eye and low vision including at National conferences such as 100% Optical, Eye Care and Optrafair. I have also developed independent CET programmes for the Macular Society, Birmingham Optical and Vision Express. I have worked at Cardiff University as clinical tutor since 2015, teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Despite now moving out of area, I still travel to support the optometry school for assessment days. I have a passion for education and training and hope I could use these skills within the LOC to develop local training and CPD. I strongly believe in the skills of the optometry profession and in the power of shared care. I have worked closely with the developers of the Welsh Low Vision Scheme and the WOPEC team and would love the opportunity to champion the optometry profession and assist with the development of shared care proposals for Devon.

I have worked in clinical practice as an optometrist and optometrist manager before moving into a professional services role for Luxottica. Here I introduced a new clinical audit system and training programme.

I feel fortunate to have been able to gain such a varied working experience and believe this knowledge would be beneficial for the LOC moving forward.

I am a strong communicator and a people person, who joined the profession in the hope of making a difference. I believe joining the LOC would give me the opportunity to make a real difference in my new home county.

I hope you consider my application.