

# **Biography**

## **Hilton Dawson**

**36 Morwick Road  
Warkworth  
Northumberland  
NE65 0TD**

### **PROFILE:**

**On leaving his posts as Chief Executive of BASW (British Association of Social Workers) and General Secretary of SWU (Social Workers Union) in January 2013 Hilton was described by the BASW Chair as an ‘Outstanding Chief Executive’ and ‘a person of integrity and courage. He is extremely energetic and hard-working and he brings vision and new ideas’. The SWU President said ‘His vision for the Union and his creative leadership was a considerable stimulus to the SWU Executive.**

**On leaving Parliament in 2005 Hilton was described by the Chief Executive of the Social Care Institute for Excellence as ‘an outstanding and powerful advocate for social care and for children’s services. At the same time then Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said he was ‘a fantastic colleague as an M.P, an outstanding advocate for young people in Parliament and a splendid combination of wise man and thorn in the side.’**

### **MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS:**

- **22% increase in BASW membership in 4 years and major investment in developing services.**
- **Successfully challenged the policies of successive governments at Education Select Committee and through Judicial Review in pursuit of an independent, accountable and sustainable College of Social Work.**
- **On standing down as Chair of NAPP in 2009 Beverley Hughes MP then Minister for Children wrote ‘ In overseeing the Academy for the past 18 months your leadership has ensured that it is now at a stage where it is delivering a challenging work programme against a clear strategy.’**
- **Modernised the working practices and constitution - strengthening young people’s involvement in one of England’s most historic children’s charities.**
- **Brokered new voluntary/private sector relationships between Shaftesbury and Serco.**
- **Successful Constituency M.P : ‘Hilton Dawson made a first class community M.P. I thank him for handing over the constituency in such a good state’ Ben Wallace Conservative MP May 2005**

- **Parliamentary Children’s Champion in 2004 – ‘a passionate advocate for children’.**
- **Established the All Party Group for Sudan which brought large numbers of the Sudanese Diaspora into Parliament and created a forum for African politicians and international campaigners. Led two missions to Sudan to discuss the peace process and eventual creation of the world’s newest country with political, military and civil leaders.**
- **An ‘indefatigable campaigner’ for reform of the law on Park Homes protecting the rights of elderly, vulnerable residents.**
- **Influenced children’s policy and legislation across 11 bills and 2 Select Committee Inquiries.**
- **A successful advocate for economic development based upon world class university research resulting in major investment and employment creation in Lancaster. ‘Undoubtedly your enthusiasm and commitment to Lancaster District will be sorely missed’ – Lancaster Chamber of Commerce May 2005.**
- **An innovative social worker pioneering new approaches to Youth Justice, Young People’s participation and support for children with learning disabilities and their families.**

#### **CURRENT EMPLOYMENT :**

**Hilton is Director of his own company established on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013.**

**Northumbria People - everybody matters here offers ‘eclectic advocacy’ enabling people’s stories to be told :**

- Working with service user, community and employee organisations to promote people-centred services.
- Working with community group Newbiggin by the Sea Genealogy Project on a database of everyone who ever lived in the village.
- Published with Powdene Press ‘Frank Renner’s Bairns’ – looking at the world through the eyes of a Northumbrian Family – March 2013
- Celebrancy – telling the stories of people’s lives at family gatherings, naming, partnership and with Northumbria Funeral Ceremonies – using the material gathered for online and print publications
- Carrying out all work in the light of the distinct landscape, history and identity of ‘Northumbria’

#### **EXPERIENCE:**

**Chief Executive British Association of Social Workers (BASW) / General Secretary Social Workers Union (SWU).**

Managed the paid service of BASW - 14,000 plus members, £3million annual turnover and 50 staff.

Principal Advisor to elected Honorary Officers and members of BASW Council.

BASW voting representative at European and Global delegate meetings of IFSW (International Federation of Social Workers).

Wrote, spoke and appeared in the media on behalf of BASW every week. Monthly column in Professional Social Work magazine

Led the establishment and strategic planning of Social Workers Union (SWU) and was first elected General Secretary..

Met members and representatives of devolved governments and key stakeholders in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on a monthly basis.

**Consultant – Serco Education and Children’s Services.  
June 2008 – March 2009**

Took part in a wide range of projects and bid formulation using the flexibility and opportunities provided by the private sector to develop and promote Serco’s work on education in YOI, behavioural approaches to improving school attendance and participation, new models of support for children with disabilities and their families and innovative proposals for engaging young people in information and advice.

**Chair – National Academy for Parenting Practitioners  
September 2007 – July 2009**

Chaired a £25 m Government funded initiative to research, develop and train the parenting workforce in international standards of evidence based practice.

**Chief Executive – Shaftesbury Young People  
August 2005 – March 2008**

Led one of England’s oldest children’s charities employing 300 staff in residential care, leaving care, supported housing projects, developing the participation of young people, influencing government and building new partnerships across public, private and voluntary sectors. Work described in ‘Brilliant Marketing’ a text book by then Chair Richard Hall – ‘they should have made him Prime Minister’

**Project Manager - ChildLine  
May 2005 – August 2005**

3 month contract to build partnerships with English local authorities to improve services to children, to develop Childline’s services and to underpin the charity’s finances.

**Member of Parliament for Lancaster and Wyre  
May 1997 – May 2005**

Represented 80,000 people in Parliament for two terms before stepping down to return to social work. The first Labour M.P. ever returned by parts of the Constituency and the first Labour M.P. in the history of Lancaster to retain their seat.

**Lancaster City Councillor**

**1987 – 1997**

Elected to a seat never before held by Labour and retained it for two subsequent elections before stepping down when elected to Parliament. Deputy Leader of Lancaster City Council 1991-1995 and Chair of Economic Development, Strategic Planning and Tourism.

**Manager (Children & Placements)**

**Lancaster and Wyre Districts, Lancashire County Council.**

**October 1989 – May 1997**

Managed 120 staff providing residential care, family centres, family placement, learning disability resources, day care, youth justice. Initiated and developed the participation of children in care across the County. Pioneered new family centres and community support for children with learning disabilities.

**Social Worker and manager in Child Care and Youth Justice**

**Preston, South Ribble, Lancaster and Wyre Districts Lancashire County Council**

**July 1982 – October 1989**

Managed staff in 3 youth justice projects

Worked with Courts, Agencies, Police and legal profession to manage and improve local youth justice systems. Achieved ‘custody-free zone.’

Groupwork focussed on offending behaviour, individual casework, multi-agency programmes, work with parents.

Child protection, children in Care, family and group work

**Unqualified Social Worker**

**Bedlington, Northumberland County Council**

**January 1979 – September 1980**

Generic social work with older people, adults with disabilities, children and families.

**Community Centre Warden**

**Choppington Miners Welfare, Northumberland.**

**May 1977 – January 1979**

Lived and worked in an excellent though much denigrated former mining community managed the Centre and developed playgroup, family support, arts and sports activities.

**Volunteer – Kibbutz Massada,**

**Jordan Valley, Israel.**

**1976 - 1977**

**Clerk**

**Coventry County Court**

**1975-1976**

**Labourer**

**Stobswold Brickworks , Northumberland**

**1975**

## **QUALIFICATIONS/EDUCATION:**

Registered Social Worker  
Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

Level 3 Diploma in Funeral Celebrancy (QCF) – 2012

Diploma in Management Studies (DMS)  
University of Central Lancashire 1988

Diploma in Social Work (CQSW)  
University of Lancaster 1982

B.A. Hons Philosophy and Politics  
University of Warwick 1975.

3 A Levels: 1972  
8 O Levels; 1970  
Ashington Grammar School, Northumberland

## **Other Roles**

Honorary Fellow of Unicef ‘for exceptional support for Unicef’s work with children worldwide.’

Professional advisor to A National Voice – the national organisation for ‘looked after’ young people.

Member of Carlile Inquiry into the treatment of young people in Young Offenders Institutions.

Advisor to the BBC ‘Taking Care’ series

Member of advisory group on Social Care which met with Prime Minister Tony Blair at Downing Street and Chequers in 2006/7

Member of Social Work Awards Board – which organises the annual England Social Work Awards.

Patron of NAPAC (National Association of People Abused as Children)

Patron of AFRUCA (Africans Unite against Child Abuse)

## **PERSONAL :**

Date of Birth – September 30<sup>th</sup> 1953  
Married with 2 daughters and 4 grandchildren  
Interests – family, keeping fit, arts, photography writing.

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