

## **Marie-Paule Schroeder Introduces Herself**

Thank you, Mr Mayor, for giving me the floor. I would like to introduce myself.

My name is Marie-Paule Schroeder, I am 60 years old and I have been retired for about five months. I am the eldest of four children and grew up in Bertrange, where my parents ran a farm in Oppert, on Rue des Champs.

I also attended preschool and primary school here in Bertrange before continuing my studies at the Lycée Michel Rodange, where I completed my secondary education with a Première D diploma.

My path then led me directly into professional life, and I began working at Banque Générale. As I have always enjoyed interacting with people, I could never imagine myself doing purely administrative work. Throughout my career, I therefore applied for positions and took on responsibilities that allowed me to maintain direct contact with clients. I worked for more than twenty years at the Mamer branch, including the last ten years as Assistant Branch Manager.

My professional career then brought me to Junglinster, where I managed a branch and a team of six employees for six years.

Over time, I increasingly worked with professional clients: business owners, craftspeople, and small and medium-sized enterprises from a wide range of sectors. In 2015, I took responsibility for the Centre d’Affaires Entreprises – West, based in Strassen, before moving to Kirchberg in 2021 to take over the management of the Centre d’Affaires Entreprises Luxembourg. Since April of this year, I have officially been retired.

Alongside my professional activities, I have always found a good balance through my various hobbies.

I am passionate about gardening, growing fruit and vegetables, and enjoying the beauty of nature, whether in my garden, during walks and hikes through the countryside, or while on holiday.

Another of my hobbies is choral singing. I have been a member of the Sainte-Cécile Choir of Bertrange for more than forty years and have also served as its President since 2004. Beyond the pleasure of singing and rehearsing together, I particularly enjoy and value the contact with people from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, who enrich my life in many ways.

I am also active within the Parish Works Association of Bertrange, which I have chaired since 2013. Between 2021 and 2024, we carried out a social housing project, and today we manage 34 housing units intended for individuals and associations that are unable to find accommodation on the regular property market.

Since my youth, I have always been interested in politics, especially local politics. From childhood onwards, I have witnessed the evolution of our community: the development of projects and new residential neighbourhoods, the completion of both large and small initiatives, the growth of our village, and the transformation of Bertrange into a modern municipality.

This interest in our municipality and its residents, together with my desire to play an active role in public life, led me in 2005 to stand for the first time on the CSV list in the municipal elections.

I have also been involved in various advisory commissions. For many years, I have been a member of the Finance Commission, and since 2023 I have served on the Cultural Commission. Before that, I was also a member of the Foreign Residents Commission, now known as the Municipal Commission for Intercultural Living Together.

As a new member of the Municipal Council, I wish to work together with my colleagues from the CSV group, as well as with all of you, for the development of our municipality and the well-being of all its residents.

It is important to me that, in all our projects and decisions, we place people at the centre of our concerns and ensure that everyone can feel at home here.

The harmonious coexistence of all citizens is something I care deeply about. To achieve this, we need not only good infrastructure but also dynamic and well-functioning associations. Sports and cultural associations are essential places where community life is lived and where a significant part of integration takes place.

From personal experience, I know how much commitment and effort are required to keep an association running successfully. That is why our associations are particularly close to my heart and deserve our full support.

Another issue that I consider essential is affordable housing. We know that Bertrange is one of the municipalities where housing costs are among the highest. It is therefore important that, as municipal representatives, we ensure that sufficient affordable housing is available. Our young people should be able to continue living in Bertrange, and socially more vulnerable households must also be able to find a home here.

Another priority for me is respect for our natural environment. The principle of sustainability should guide all our decisions. We have only one world and one natural environment, and it is our responsibility to preserve and protect them and to pass them on to future generations in good condition.

From an early age, I saw and experienced on my parents' farm what it means to work in harmony with animals and nature, and how we all benefit when the natural environment is healthy. This experience, together with the enjoyment I personally find in working close to nature, motivates me to advocate within the Municipal Council for the protection of nature and the climate.

Before concluding, I would like to express my sincere thanks to my predecessor, Guy Weirich. For many years, Guy did outstanding work for the CSV within the Municipal Council. He was always exceptionally well prepared, brought forward many ideas, and contributed concrete proposals.

His interventions were structured, concise, and supported by practical examples. I must say that he has set the bar very high, and I will do my utmost as I now take over from him.

I assure you of my commitment to working for the benefit of our municipality and all its residents, and to helping make Bertrange an attractive and pleasant place in which to live.

I wish us all a fruitful collaboration, constructive and enriching debates, and a spirit of collegiality in our discussions, even when we hold different opinions.