

# Atworth

## Deacon arrives back from her ordination on a three-wheeled motorbike

*Ruth Gillings got from her Salisbury ordination to her party by trike*

A new reverend caused a scene, when she arrived from her ordination ceremony on a three-wheeled motorbike.

The Rev Ruth Gillings was ordained as a deacon at Salisbury Cathedral and turned heads as she rode her Honda Goldwing trike back to a party at Melksham Oak Community School, in full ceremonial robes.

Mrs Gillings said: "I've had the trike for six years and always said if I ever got ordained we would leave Salisbury Cathedral on it."

The party at the school, where she is chairman of governors, marked the culmination of many years of sacrifice and effort for Mrs Gillings. She said: "I've been travelling along this journey for nine years, but the last part has been three years of study at college." She will now take up a role at the Benefice of Atworth with Shaw and Whitley, and she will be conducting services at St Michael's Church Atworth and Christ Church Shaw.

Mrs Gillings was ordained by the Bishop of Salisbury at a ceremony at the cathedral on Saturday. She said: "It went very well, better than we expected, as everybody was so nervous, but it was absolutely superb."

The school party was attended by 120 people, including representatives of the church, the school and the police force, for which Mrs Gillings is a chaplain.

She said: "It was wonderful to see so many people from across the whole of my life, as well as all my family together in one place. I couldn't have done it without my husband, Graham, and my daughter, Kirsty-Louise, and my mum and dad's support.

"I used to go to college for a weekend every six weeks, so Graham had to take time off work to pick our daughter up from school and do lots around the house. "Whenever I needed time on my own, mum and dad have come up and helped out as well."

Husband Graham said: "We're all so proud of what Ruth has done. It's not been easy for her, doing so much work, and she's been so busy with it all. "We try to help out where we can. Most of the other halves of the people being ordained have had to learn to cook, because the amount of effort and study they put in is colossal."

Mrs Gillings is taking a short break to relax, before getting back on her trike and travelling around her new parish.

She said: "I need some time to reflect on everything that I've done and read through all my cards. I've had over 80 cards, congratulating me, and haven't had the chance to see them all yet."

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