



A platform for renewal and hope

I WELCOME the opportunity to share some reflections and also to express my thanks. I do so with a strong sense of the purpose of the Shrievalty and the role it plays as a catalyst for renewal and hope. It is also a reminder of the many positive and good things that are happening across South Yorkshire.

I have much respect and admiration for those who have served as High Sheriffs, with a strong sense of duty and service to our county, and thank my predecessors who have generously helped and guided me.

I have witnessed the truly outstanding work done by our judges, magistrates and all who administer justice in our county and want to pay them tribute. It is important that a wider section of society understand what our system of justice and the rule of law is all about in all its many and varied aspects.

I must thank South Yorkshire Police, Fire and Rescue, the ambulance service, the NHS, and the prison, probation and rehabilitation services for the work they do and for the way in which they welcomed and embraced the Office of the High Sheriff. These organisations and the people who work in them are sustained in wisdom, discernment and compassion.

The global pandemic highlighted the importance, dedication, hard work and commitment of those who work in voluntary, charity and community organisations. It has been humbling to witness the incredible sense of community

that we have across South Yorkshire. We are blessed to have so many wonderful organisations shaped and defined by people who work tirelessly to support the vulnerable, the homeless, those living in poverty and in deprivation, those suffering with poor mental health, those on the margins of our society. They work together for the dignity of all, answering human difficulty, tragedy and weakness with compassion and understanding.

Children and young people are a very important part of our communities – they are the future. They grow up having to develop a resilience to cope with whatever life throws at them and become well-rounded healthy adults. For many this can be difficult and as a consequence they struggle with their mental health and well-being. Throughout my year I have worked with such young people and organisations that help them. We know that the pandemic has put a huge strain on many and I thank those who opened their doors to me. We must continue to help and support, inspire and motivate our young people, helping them with their challenges and celebrating their successes.

High Sheriffs can be a catalyst for working collaboratively and in partnership and can achieve great outcomes. This human ability to help and support is the foundation for renewal and hope and a reminder of the great kindness and generosity that we have across the county. It has been a pleasure to get to know and work with the Lord-Lieutenant, the Mayors of Barnsley, Doncaster,

Handover to my successor, Lt Col Robert McPherson MBE, on 11 April 2022 at Sheffield Combined Courts Centre. L-R: Jo Tear (Mistress Cutler), Professor Jaydip Ray (High Sheriff in nomination 2023-24), Mr James Tear (Master Cutler), Padre Albert Jackson (High Sheriff's Chaplain), Christine McPherson, Lt Col Robert McPherson (High Sheriff 2022-23), Prof Dame Hilary Chapman DBE (Lord-Lieutenant), His Honour Judge Jeremy Richardson QC (Recorder of Sheffield), Cllr Gail Smith (Lord Mayor of Sheffield), Martin McKervey (High Sheriff 2021-22), Juliet McKervey, Rachael Brown (Lord Mayor's consort), Col George Kilburn MBE DL (Under Sheriff)

Rotherham and Sheffield, and with the Master and Mistress Cutler, representing the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire. I thank them for their kindness, friendship, generosity and support. We should all be very grateful for the work they all do.

I am most grateful to my wife Juliet, our daughters Bronte and Freya, and my wider family both in Sheffield and in Ederney in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland for all for their love and support and for affording me the opportunity to be the High Sheriff of South Yorkshire.

I congratulate Lieutenant Colonel Robert McPherson on his appointment and wish him every success and happiness as High Sheriff.

The Shrievalty does have a purpose. It is a platform for renewal and hope. I am very grateful for having had the opportunity to help define and shape some of that purpose.

◆ Martin McKervey
High Sheriff of South Yorkshire 2021-2022