



## Greater London 2013-14

Before entering my year of office, I started to take a greater interest in Criminal Justice and read what articles in newspapers and magazines came my way. From these it was quite apparent that for a very long time there had been many views about how to improve the work of police, courts and prisons as well as the lot of victims and offenders. Much however of what was written, broadcast or enacted recently seemed in reaction to the latest shocking crime or a BBC search for two-minute sensations and controversy to stir our mornings. Still wondering who really did the thinking and research work that our country so badly required, I was fortunate in my first week of office to be told by the Deputy Governor of HMP Wandsworth about the Institute of Criminology at Cambridge University. The next day I got hold of James Buxton, the High Sheriff of that shire, and asked if we could visit the Institute together. He graciously agreed and we had a most illuminating afternoon, which resulted in Professor Lawrence Sherman, the Director of the Institute, speaking at my



The High Sheriffs of Greater London and Cambridgeshire visiting the Institute of Criminology.

final reception for those involved in Criminal Justice in London. I think the event was a great success, both for the Institute in spreading the word about the very deep and practical work it does and for those charged with

responsibility in Criminal Justice in being given access to that work.

Another thing I only learnt about as I took office was that the High Sheriffs of many shires had websites, in addition to sections on the Association's website. With a beneficial nudge from my chaplain to make good use of mine, we made sure that throughout the year every visit we made was noted on the website under county news and photographs of the people and places we visited were added. We have a county history page and two other pages with links to charities, which do good work in Criminal Justice in our shire. I find that people we have seen either have looked up the Greater London website before or do so afterwards and are pleased to see the jolly photographs and I am grateful for the recognition that these bring. The website has been a huge plus for the work of the High Sheriff of Greater London and has raised the profile of what we do.



Professor Sherman and the Rt Hon the Lord Judge, PC, Treasurer of Middle Temple, formerly Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales with the High Sheriff of Greater London at his talk and reception in Fishmongers' Hall.

For the full text of Professor Sherman's talk, please see the High Sheriff of Greater London website home page – [www.highsheriffs.com/greater-london](http://www.highsheriffs.com/greater-london)

Another opportunity, which I had not properly appreciated, was the awards



# News from and about Members

scheme of National Crimebeat. Having entered four teams of young people, I now understand the great benefits it entails. The awards are given to young people who have taken an initiative, either of their own or at the suggestion of an adult, to do something to beat crime. I have taken a great interest in Volunteer Police Cadets and wrote to all 32 boroughs asking them for examples of how their work had beaten crime. To make life easier for both of us I devised a simple form for them to fill in and send back. The effect was electric. First, they had to think about the practical impact of their weekly activities. Next, we had some excellent entries, of which cadet groups and their families were immensely proud. The two winners were Hounslow, thanks to one thirteen-year-old, who in response to surviving his attempted murder by a group who stole his mobile telephone, started a neighbourhood watch to clean the whole area of crime; and Greenwich with a brilliant scheme of sending in plain-clothes cadets to attempt to buy fireworks or alcohol, with adults ready to caution the



Volunteer Police Cadets with their awards from National Crimebeat.

shopkeepers if they supplied the goods. How exciting that work must have been after school each week. Oh to be fifteen again! We had a tremendous ceremony, lots of photographs and lunch together. The cadet units were thrilled with the size of the cash prizes and hugely enthused to do more

against crime. Afterwards they had a bus tour of London and a most memorable day. I think I was just as thrilled as they were. □

**David Jones**

*High Sheriff of Greater London 2013-14*