

NORTH YORKSHIRE

News from and about members



Above: Gathered for the North East Circuit Legal Service in the York Assembly Rooms

Balancing act

AS I approach the end of my shrieval year I am filled with conflicting emotions. A very small part of me is relieved as I know I couldn't practically carry on balancing the demands of being High Sheriff with my work and other commitments. However, a large part of me is filled with sadness that my time is drawing to a close, and also with a small dose of envy of those about to set off on this wonderful journey. What a privilege and honour it has been to serve as High Sheriff of North Yorkshire, and to get to know this wonderful county better and to have seen some amazing things being done by some extraordinary people across all walks of life. I would like to share just a few of the many highlights of my year.

The North East Circuit Legal Service at York Minster

The North East Circuit Legal Service is a major highlight of the shrieval year. Although it takes place

in North Yorkshire at the magnificent York Minster, it represents the whole of the North East and brings together the High Sheriffs of North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, East Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, County Durham, Northumberland, and Tyne and Wear. It is quite a spectacle and all beautifully organised by the Under Sheriff of North Yorkshire, David Garfitt, who even arranged for the sun to shine. The procession this year was around 130 strong, and included nine High Sheriffs, two Supreme Court Justices, two Court of Appeal Judges, the Vice-Chancellor of the County Palatine and six High Court Judges. The many tourists in York that day appeared quite taken aback by this extraordinary show of pomp and ceremony that we British are so good at, and they will have some fun photos to take home with them.

Police

While I have had many wonderful experiences across all aspects of the criminal justice system, including



the judiciary at all levels, prisons and probation service, I have spent more time with the North Yorkshire Police than any other organisation in our county. Some of my time with the police has involved the exciting stuff such as racing around in fast cars with 'blues and twos' blaring (on the last occasion I did this we chased, caught and locked up a major cannabis dealer/grower), and going out on foot patrol in busy towns across the county on Friday or Saturday nights to get a flavour of the challenges faced by police officers on a daily basis. However, just as rewarding have been all the other things I've done with the police, which included taking part in a mental health conference and also several award ceremonies covering serving officers, PCSOs, police volunteers and police cadets. Common threads that run through everyone I've met across the North Yorkshire Police force include commitment, professionalism and a determination to protect. We should all be very grateful for the fine work they do.

Dragons' Den Charity Night

Like High Sheriffs across the country, some of the most rewarding things I've seen and done during my shrieval year have involved the charitable and voluntary sectors, but I've only time to highlight

Top: Representatives of the five charities awarded Dragons' Den funding

Above: The High Sheriff with Chief Constable Lisa Winward and cadets and staff

briefly one particular event. With significant help from our local Community Foundation, we created a High Sheriff's Dragons' Den event, mimicking the TV show but with charities rather than businesses pitching for funds. We raised a fantastic £30,000 thanks to the generosity of the Dragons and some match funding from our Community Foundation, which we gave out on the night to five different charities: Whitby InterActive, Community Furniture Store, Art Therapy Yorkshire, Whitby Sheds and Leyburn Arts Centre. The charities we chose were all small, local and staffed largely by volunteers. Happily, we are about to set off on a tour of the charities involved to see at first hand what the money raised has gone towards and what a difference it has made. And, even better, we are already planning the 2019 event so hopefully this is something that will run and run for years in North Yorkshire.

◆ Christopher Legard
High Sheriff of North Yorkshire 2018-19