



## Stand up for justice

**Right** The High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire's service of thanksgiving at St Mary's

**M**Y YEAR has been an extraordinary and wonderfully life-enriching experience. I would also like to think that in diverse ways – sometimes very small – I have also enhanced the lives of others.

During my term I have engaged on several occasions with the judiciary and the police. In one particularly busy month, I observed a murder trial; offered the judiciary hospitality and received it from them; spent time with police officers and prison warders; presented numerous awards and 'hosted' a thanksgiving service for those working to uphold law and order. The moment in court involved five young men and a stabbing which resulted in a death.

The award ceremonies included attendance at the National Crimebeat final where my nomination, the Pythian Club, was commended for their work to reduce knife crime, coming second in the youth led category. During this same month there were other award ceremonies including one where I presented court awards to especially brave members of the public who had put themselves in harm's way to help others.

And at the end of the month I joined a police patrol – between the uncivilised hours of 8 pm and 5 am – of Nottingham's night-time economy. The

**Below:** Big Sleep Out supported by the High Sheriff, accompanied by Under Sheriff Deborah Hutchinson, and Nottingham Forest Football Club to raise funds for Framework, a homelessness charity



police had to deal with drunkenness, distressed civilians, and aggression and violence. While that Friday night seemed particularly dystopian my abiding memory of that intense four-week period, starting with the court case and ending on the streets of Nottingham, was the professionalism, dedication, fortitude and humanity of all those who serve to protect us. It was also uplifting to acknowledge and celebrate the bravery and generosity of ordinary citizens.

Generosity towards others has been a significant theme throughout my year. One of my key activities has been supporting organisations seeking to reduce homelessness and in particular a charity called Framework. Promotion and support of the voluntary sector is another key High Sheriff's task. I have made many requests on behalf of Framework which have always been greeted with a positive response and generosity. One of the most generous benefactors has been Nottingham Forest Football Club.

I have one final experience I would like to share. In November, Jayne, my wife, and I attended an event to mark the 23rd anniversary of the opening



of the National Holocaust Centre and Museum in north Nottinghamshire. The occasion was also used to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht and the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport operation which rescued children from Nazi oppression. We heard tragic testimonies and reflections from Kindertransport survivors. What struck me most from listening to the survivors was not so much the tragedy of their experience but their dignity and their passionate concern that mistakes of the past should not be repeated. The survivors had two key messages: first, treat people as individuals and not as 'something other'; avoid talking about 'them and us'. The second message was 'stand up and be counted'. As they put it: 'remember what happens when good people do nothing'. It felt like a call to action. A call to stand up for justice – a call which resonated strongly with my sense of purpose as High Sheriff.

### ◆ Nicholas Ebbs

*High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire 2018-19*



Above: Inside St Mary's with a constellation of High Sheriffs from Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Rutland



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