



Ensuring continuity



B EING THE High Sheriff presents a brief and unique opportunity to bring people together and make connections that might be useful to a range of different charitable, voluntary and statutory organisations across the county. To make the most of this opportunity and to best be of service, I have found it essential to try and meet as many people as possible across a range of sectors, and the gift of the role is that everyone will give you their time and a warm welcome.

One of the challenges of the Office is to marry the different initiatives and ideas of each Sheriff with continuity of some sort. There are many projects and organisations that need more than a year of support and such support and encouragement can be especially important when funding streams are so short-term and precarious. I invited my two successors to meet me during my first week and again in September. I hope that this co-operative approach will ensure that work and connections are longer-lasting and have more impact.



Top: With Police Cadet Paige Mangleshot

Left: With Roman soldiers at the Alban Pilgrimage in St Albans



News from and about members



Above: Presenting an award to PC Alexandra Nicolaou with Chief Constable Charlie Hall QPM

Right: With Police Chaplain Caroline Malcolm and Sgt Duncan Wallace at the opening of the community garden at Buntingford Police Station



My theme or broad focus for the year has been to support work in building stronger communities. I am also interested in interfaith and integration initiatives. I have found that having a theme also gives a focus to my traditional responsibilities to support the administration of justice and law and order. With the police, this has taken the form of supporting new initiatives in community engagement. I attended a conference at the College of Policing on 'Faith and the Police', and I sense a real appetite in Hertfordshire for a 'whole community' approach to tackling the big social challenges. I have spent time with our judges and magistrates trying to understand more about the

issues that they face every day, bringing relevant groups of people into court to meet and inform each other.

The role has enabled me to make introductions to strengthen communities in a number of ways and I hope that positive and sustaining partnerships will be developed between our prison, HMP The Mount, and the University of Hertfordshire. Links into local business through the Chambers of Commerce are helping focus Hertfordshire businesses on supporting local causes and our Community Foundation is the linchpin that can hold many of these projects together, contributing its research and expertise to help match local giving with local need.

It is an enormous honour – and responsibility – to hold an ancient Office that is still valued and a great privilege to use the role to thank the many people who give their time selflessly to help others and to congratulate those who have done something that is really valued. There is still much to do and look forward to, especially my Justice Service at which I hope to welcome those of many faiths and beliefs, and my awards ceremony. I really enjoy being asked to present awards and at a recent event at the prison, presenting awards for the first art competition there, an inmate asked my favourite question to date about my High Sheriff's badge, 'Hey, Miss, what's your bling?'

◆ Sarah Beazley

High Sheriff of Hertfordshire 2019-20