



Worth copying in future?

DURING THE last twelve months all High Sheriffs have learnt new ways of doing things, occasionally with success. The question is: will they be worth copying in future?

The Young Citizen Award has been an annual event in Lancashire since it was established by Rodney Swarbrick when he was High Sheriff over 20 years ago. The award ceremony is usually held at police headquarters at Hutton, as it is run by the Lancashire Partnership Against Crime (LANPAC) with support from Lancashire Constabulary. Sadly, an awards ceremony at police HQ was never on the cards this year but it would not have been right to cancel it in this of all years, when all young people have faced such enormous challenges.

Fortunately, the award is sponsored by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) and it occurred to me that some UCLAN students might like to get involved and put on a virtual event. I am grateful that the university was pleased to be involved. It became a project for one particular student assisted by a tutor and the university's EntrEvent management team. They did a splendid job, even

Below: Winner of the Young Citizen Award James Curl with community police in Chorley
Below right: Virtual award ceremony for the High Sheriff's Young Citizen Awards (clockwise from top left): MC Andy Mitchell; Catherine Penny; DCC Terry Woods; Russell Millhouse (UCLAN)



Catherine Penny on Ribble Way walk in aid of NWAA with Andrew Penny, Chaplain Revd Canon Brian McConkey and PA Judith Turner Photo credit: Fiona Finch

managing to provide well-timed clapping sound effects throughout the evening.

More than 50 young people were nominated for the award, with their ages ranging from 21 to just four years old. As well as a winner, runner-up and third place, nominees could be placed in the Highly Commended or Commended categories. Usually, those who are Commended are not able to attend the award ceremony because of a lack of space. The advantage of the virtual ceremony was that all nominees were able to be recognised, with family and those who had nominated them also able to tune in. In future years, the challenge will

be to continue to welcome all nominees to the ceremony, perhaps by holding a combined live and virtual event.

The master of ceremonies, Andy Mitchell, was brilliant at engaging with all the young people and at making the evening flow. DCC Terry Woods, Russell Millhouse of UCLAN and I were the other members of the award platform. The feedback after the event was terrific. Several people mentioned how important it was to recognise the achievements of our youngest generation at a time when they have sacrificed so many aspects of an ordinary upbringing for the benefit of the rest of society.

Another high point of my year was undertaking a sponsored walk in support of the North West Air Ambulance (NWAA). The NWAA had initiated a fundraising campaign to celebrate its 21st year and all five of the northwest High Sheriffs joined together in support. For my part, I walked the 42 miles of the Ribble Way in Lancashire. Along the way, I met people who had been helped by the air ambulance, raising awareness of both the charitable status of the organisation, as well as the role of the High Sheriff. Between the five High Sheriffs, we raised nearly £15,000 in support of a superb charity which is also a key emergency service.



Photo credit: Anna Baybutt, (Lancashire Partnership against Crime)

Catherine Penny DL
High Sheriff of Lancashire 2020-21