



# Traditions and technologies

**BY MY calculations, there have been 777 High Sheriffs overseeing Buckinghamshire since 1125. Clearly centuries of traditions to uphold and cherish in our county.**

Yet because of the lockdown restrictions imposed earlier this year, my Declaration ceremony on 26 March was only the second to have been held virtually. All the necessary protocols were followed, and thankfully we were all much more experienced with the use of video conferencing than we were twelve months ago, so it all went off without a hitch.

But it brings into sharp relief how technology has redefined the role of the High Sheriff. It became clear to me in the run-up to my shrieval year that to project my plans and ambitions to a broader audience then it would be necessary to embrace and enjoy using social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Image is now as important as impact, and if I cannot be seen in person, then there must be a visual alternative to get the message across. By using regular video calls on MS Teams or Zoom to introduce myself as the new High Sheriff early in 2021 it enabled me to set up



Declaring the results of the Chesham and Amersham by-election on 17 June

meetings and visits for later in the year when the lockdown restrictions were lifted.

And so it has proved. By using the modern technology tools available, I have been able effectively to plan and then execute the traditional events that each High Sheriff hopes to achieve during the 12 short months that we are in office. I now not only have a diary that records my endeavours in writing, but also many photographs that will enhance the experience for future High Sheriffs.

The accompanying images reflect a cross-section of the many and varied activities that I have undertaken during the year. Being the returning officer for the Chesham and Amersham by-election on 17 June where the Liberal Democrat candidate, Sarah Green, overturned a massive Conservative majority was certainly a unique experience.

In closing, I should also mention that I have developed very good working relationships with all the High Sheriffs in my neighbouring counties by having regular scheduled Zoom calls before our shrieval years had started to discuss matters of mutual interest. Rather than operating autonomously we have shared our best practices, and that has enhanced our year immeasurably. We now meet each other regularly at events across the counties, and at High Sheriffs' Association gatherings. Firm friendships have been formed.

It also reflects that we are in a new paradigm. This is the way in which the traditional High Sheriff will operate in this modern world. I look forward to the balance of my year using technology and social media to enable me to achieve the best possible results for the Office of the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire.

## ◆ George R Anson

*High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire 2021-22*



Thames Valley Police and High Sheriffs meet (left to right) Willie Hartley Russell MVO DL (Berkshire), George Anson (Buckinghamshire), John Campbell QPM (Chief Constable), Imam Monawar Hussain MBE DL (Oxfordshire) and Matthew Barber (newly elected Police & Crime Commissioner)



George Anson with the Urban Search and Rescue team at Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue in Aylesbury



George Anson at the traditional Weighing-In Ceremony of the Mayor of High Wycombe (Cllr Andrea Baughan)