



# A ceremony close to home

I STARTED my year on 31 March 2022 with my Declaration in the Public Hall in Appleby-in-Westmorland, my local town. I wanted to hold the ceremony close to home as this part of the county hasn't had a High Sheriff for a number of years so I wished to share it with the local community. I was very fortunate to be able to do so in person unlike my two predecessors who held theirs via Zoom.

The reception and support I have received from the people of Appleby and the town council have been amazing. As a result, the Mayor of Appleby, Dr Gareth Hayes, has become a close friend and we have worked on a number of local projects including refurbishment plans for the local play area – to be renamed the Platinum Play Park, in recognition of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Cumbria is geographically challenging but despite this my wife and I have met many wonderful people and heard some great stories about local community engagement throughout the county. We have worked alongside Cumbria Community Foundation who arranged visits to organisations and charities they have given grants to and I am very



Opening ceremony for a stone seat erected by the community in Raisgill in celebration of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

grateful to members of staff for the work and time spent in arranging these.

My theme for the year is 'Youth Opportunities' so I have tried to focus on visiting youth organisations, including Scouts, Guides and Young Farmers' events. I met with Cumbria Youth Alliance and as a result I have agreed to take part in their Youth Mentoring Programme to be launched in schools throughout the county. This is an exciting scheme and over 360 pupils will be taking part in the initial stages with plans to extend it further.

I feel very privileged and humbled to be High Sheriff in this eventful year and particularly so to have been responsible for reading the county Proclamation at Carlisle Citadel with approximately 5,000 in attendance. The support from Scouts, Guides and Armed Forces Cadets was very much appreciated on this momentous occasion.

Another privilege has been the number of commendation and long service award ceremonies I have attended and I will shortly witness the attestation ceremony for the Police

Cadets. I never imagined how rewarding and interesting my year would be and how quickly time would pass.

I have received lots of support from previous High Sheriffs and the Under Sheriff, Tim Cartmell, has been outstanding and a great reference point when I am in need of guidance.

Getting to grips with social media has been a challenge but worthwhile because posting pictures and comments on the groups visited has been greatly appreciated by the recipients. It has also made me realise how much the volunteers and beneficiaries appreciate a visit from the High Sheriff and this makes the role so rewarding.

The next major event in my diary is the Judges' Service to be held in Carlisle Cathedral marking the start of the new legal year and also the midpoint of my term – I eagerly look forward to my remaining time in office.



At my Declaration ceremony with David Beeby (2021) and his consort Sue Redshaw

 **Alan McViety**  
*High Sheriff of Cumbria 2022-23*