



# The right track... together



Photo: picturepress.co.uk

**LONDON IS BIG: 9.5 million people, 32 boroughs, 50 plus courts and tribunals, 180 police stations, 8 prisons, 3,000 schools... the High Sheriff is just another Londoner. The Dean of Westminster recently asked me where I'd parked the shrieval car; I pulled my trainers from my handbag and pointed across the square to the tube.**

It was clear the High Sheriff needed to be more visible. Greater London was only founded in 1965, so we are not required to wear the sumptuous velvets of our peers. So I raised £30,000 from the Livery Companies connected with textiles for prison charities Fine Cell Work and Making For Change to make a 'visibility cloak'. London College of Fashion students designed it. Eight of Fine Cell Work's best stitchers in five prisons did the embroidery. Making For Change cut and assembled it in HMP Downview. Our hope is it will last 100 years, being passed on to successive female High Sheriffs – and any male High Sheriff who can style it out... We held a party for it and the 32 people who funded, designed, embroidered, stitched and printed it. The embroiderers who were still serving sentences were represented by gold balloons attached to

David Moorcroft (West Midlands), Jonathan Floyd and Heather Phillips outside HMP Birmingham at the beginning of The Right Track 100-mile walk home

the cape. The project brought together livery companies, students, charities and people serving sentences – 'Sheriff power'. Since then I've visited four men stitchers in HMP Frankland and women at Low Newton and Downview; Shona Harper-Wilkes, High Sheriff of County Durham, kindly hosted me.



The Cape – new to the role of High Sheriff of Greater London

Building on Lynn Cooper's (2021-22) work, I've done the 'Business as Usual' (police, courts, prisons) but focussed on four boroughs to make it 'doable'.

I've also started some 'High Sheriff's Youth Awards'. Realising our Justice Awards were very successful I have introduced awards for young people who 'do the right thing' and show up for themselves even though things are stacked against them. This has created relationships with our Virtual Schools (educational oversight teams for children in care) and the Met's Safer Schools Teams as well as local schools and pupil referral units.

The Proclamation was different in London. We had Clarenceux King of Arms to proclaim The King. My only role was to process from Mansion House with the Lord Mayor, City Sheriffs, Aldermen and Livery Companies, to hear it read in the City. It was a fabulous day of bandmen, pikemen and heralds: London at its best. I thanked God for the Cape (off-the-peg would not have cut it).

The last week in September I got to combine my day job as CEO/Founder of Beating Time (a prison charity) with my role as High Sheriff. In 2020, Jonathan, who was serving a sentence at HMP Birmingham, and I set up an employment project: Inside Job. Since then we have placed 212 people leaving prison into work. On 21 September he was released after seven and a half years. He decided to walk the 100 miles home to Manchester to prove that people who have served a sentence do change and want to give back but need support. Sixty-five of us walked with him. The High Sheriff of the West Midlands, David Moorcroft OBE, came to walk him out of Birmingham and the High Sheriff of Greater Manchester, Lorraine Worsley-Carter MBE DL, welcomed him home to Manchester. It was great being in The Right Track Together! He started work with us the next day.

Photo: @benstockley

**Heather Phillips**  
High Sheriff of Greater London 2022-23