



## The Wight way

**WHEN INVITED to be High Sheriff five years ago I could not have envisaged what a significant year 2022 would be: emerging from a pandemic, with everyone making up for lost time and celebrating missed anniversaries, as well as the wonderful opportunity to celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. Then, of course, came the sad news of the death of The Late Queen Elizabeth II and the subsequent Proclamation of King Charles III.**

At my Declaration I chose to announce my theme for the year, 'Inspire to Aspire', the influence for which was my role as a magistrate and my background in nursing and working with young people.

We recognise that some folk choose paths which may ultimately lead them into criminal activity and the importance of positive role models and those who inspire others cannot be overstated.

My year was to shine a light on those groups, charities and individuals who make a difference and inspire others to aspire to make better lifestyle

choices. It has also been an opportunity to connect people in many ways.

I have met people from such a diverse range of backgrounds; highlights for me have been: digging an allotment with some young people; joining them on their practice Duke of Edinburgh Award walks; watching them grow in confidence and having great admiration for their leaders who inspire them to succeed and, literally, go that extra mile.

I have been able to join families with a disabled person getting out on the water in specially adapted boats, each family being excited – giving them confidence and making memories. The smiles on their faces were truly heart-warming, and a privilege for the High Sheriff's Trust to sponsor.

For me, like everyone, Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee celebrations were extra special. I was honoured to be invited to the rehearsals of Shademakers, 270 volunteers representing the Island, who took part in the pageant processing down The Mall with their fantastic heraldic beast-themed costumes.

The Island does not have a very diverse ethnic population, so it was all the more rewarding to spend time with Equals, a group celebrating equality and diversity on the Isle of Wight, who came together to participate in Ryde Carnival (the oldest carnival in the UK). I was able to join them making their costumes and rehearsing for the procession. They are such a benefit to the Island and enrich the lives of all they meet.

One tip: do not underestimate the power of the High Sheriff's Awards. Thanking your community is such an honour, especially those volunteers who give up their time to make your county a special place to live. The presenting of awards is so very powerful. A number of people have said they received an award and it was something they will treasure. One young lady told me it still gives her goosebumps today when she remembers receiving her award, explaining she had been a troubled child



The Shademakers' unicorns were part of the Platinum Jubilee pageant



Three volunteers from Northwood House & Park each received a High Sheriff's Award

and the award gave her a boost which shaped her decisions and her future.

Although not expecting to get thanks back, this is a recent quote from the IOW High Sheriff's Facebook page; how humbling...

'I follow your posts and just wanted to say what you do, and how much you do, must be appreciated by so many people all over our Island. I see you used to be in the NHS – clearly the service ethic became deeply embedded. Thank you for what you do. Thank you for sharing what you do on social media platforms – bringing images of ordinary people to public recognition. Keep doing what you do and thank you for your service to the Island.'

**Kay Marriott**  
High Sheriff of Isle of Wight 2022-23



With Police Cadets for my Declaration