

# “Large opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day”

Sally Koch

## Kay Marriott

High Sheriff of the Isle of Wight 2022-23

I have had an incredible year celebrating my theme ‘Inspire to Aspire’, my aim being to highlight the work of people and organisations who dedicate their time to supporting others. After the pandemic years, I also wanted to continue raising the profile of the role of High Sheriff in the community.

I have spent time with the emergency services on land and water; they all made me feel so welcome and I found it very informative observing their front-line work, dedication, quick decision-making and compassion.

I have appreciated sitting in the courts, and a great end to my Crown Court experience was giving an award by order of the Crown Court made under section 28 of the Criminal Law Act 1826 by His Honour Judge Mousley KC, to two gentlemen who showed great courage leading to the apprehension and conviction of a criminal.

I have had the pleasure to visit and learn from a vast range of charities, spending time with a number of young people and their incredible leaders, who ensure young people have a voice.

It was particularly inspiring to visit Vectis Radio 4Ps Project working with young people with additional needs; their project was commended in the National Crimebeat Awards – a credit to them and the Island.



Celebrating Indonesian Independence Day



Presenting the National Crimebeat Commended Award to Vectis Radio



With representatives from the Island's emergency services

I was particularly privileged to be invited to attend citizenship ceremonies for those taking the oath to become UK nationals; to meet the Indonesian community and sample their wonderful food at the Indonesian Independence Day celebrations, a colourful event with dancing and talks about their beautiful country; and also to be asked to open the Diwali Festival of Light – a real treat. I also had great fun with Equals IW when they were preparing to take part in various carnivals – a group whose aim is to support equality and diversity on the Island.

It was also a pleasure to meet our Polish community and to speak with Ukrainians about how their lives had literally been saved by kind Island residents who had thrown open the doors of their homes to them. It was lovely to meet them all and thank them for enriching our culture by sharing theirs.

The list goes on... I have managed to thank many and through social media raise their profile and that of the High Sheriff with really positive feedback, for which I am most grateful.

It was overwhelming to see the residents of the Island's response to other people's needs – the incredible work being done across the Island with warm spaces, food larders and friendship groups popping up in many areas through local organisations, charities and even in people's homes.

One of the things which has really humbled me is the number of volunteers we have on have on the Island. People give up their time freely in all sorts of ways to support others and make the Island a special place to live.

I am not a tin shaker, fundraising isn't my strength; however, through various sources – donations, Legal Service, monies for giving talks – I was able to top up the High Sheriff's Trust and make donations to a number of grassroot charities.

As it is difficult to quantify, I think the role of High Sheriff is sometimes underestimated but it is most definitely respected and needed in the community; it's a role that unites people, facilitating connections from which they will benefit.

I am particularly thankful for the friendship of the South West High Sheriffs whose comradery has inspired me throughout the year.