

Breaking down barriers



Left: At the Legal Service with Andrew Cochrane (Under Sheriff), Ami Lindo (High Sheriff's chaplain), Police Cadet Ruby, Sue Jennings (Head of Law, University of Derby), Oliver Maxwell (President of the Derby and District Law Society), Gillian Feehally (Rutland), Veronica Pickering (Notts), Henrietta Chubb (Leics), Victoria Hawley (Staffs) and Milan Shah (Northants)



saw the launch of the Derby Windrush exhibition at Chatsworth House, very kindly hosted by Lord and Lady Burlington and attended by members of the Windrush Generation, Shrievalty and the Lieutenancy. Created by my consort Mr George Grignon, I have been able to present High Sheriff's Awards to Caribbean elders. It is important their untold stories are collated as part of their historical contribution to the UK. The exhibition is booked for various venues across Derbyshire.

- **Women in prison** – as patron of Friends of Foston Hall (FoFH), I have seen first-hand that many women in prison can be vulnerable. Their preparation for the outside world requires commitment, understanding and a willingness to keep offering support to aid their rehabilitation. FoFH have delivered six workshops to date, all providing stimulation, improved wellbeing and education. Through sponsorship we were able to increase the range of books for the prison library.

It is a real privilege to be High Sheriff. The highlights are numerous, from opening a garden fete, cutting the ribbon at an exhibition, volunteering with the homeless and Derby Kids Camp to presenting awards; every interaction, including the laughter, has been worth its weight in gold.

Theresa Peltier

High Sheriff of Derbyshire 2023-2024

The role of a High Sheriff is unique to each individual who has the honour of being appointed. All those in nomination are told 'You have to do it your way' and that is absolutely true.

As the first black High Sheriff within my county, I considered it important and necessary to engage with as many groups as possible across Derbyshire, not only to raise the profile of the role of High Sheriff, but to break down barriers and promote difference and the value that brings. My appointment also coincided with the 75th anniversary of HMT *Empire Windrush* arriving at Tilbury Docks in 1948. Passengers included eight hundred and two from the Caribbean invited by the UK government to help rebuild the country after the Second World War.

The theme for my shrieval year is 'Unity is Community', and while embracing difference in its widest sense, there are four key strands which I wanted to give particular focus to.

- **Adoption and fostering** – a topic very close to my heart. Using my personal experience of inter-racial adoption I was given the opportunity to make two videos, based on personal testimony and recommendations. Both videos are now mandatory training for all social workers and potential adopters

Above left: With a Scout digging for treasure
Above: Having a rest during Snowdon fundraiser with Heather Lounds, Debi Hedderwick and Lorelei Jarvis

through Adoption East Midlands. They are also part of a national toolkit *'Just Home: Leading in Colour'* (thestaffcollege.uk)

- **Deaf community** – Derby has the highest population of deaf people proportionate to the UK population. It has been humbling and life-enhancing to work with different individuals and organisations where British Sign Language (BSL) is their first language. Working in partnership, more organisations now provide deaf awareness workshops for their employees and, in the case of Chatsworth House, staff are learning BSL at a basic level. It is a beautiful language, full of expression, and one that we should all consider having a basic knowledge of. This was illustrated beautifully at the recent Legal Service, when children from the Royal School for the Deaf Derby and Reigate Park Primary Academy delivered parts of the service in BSL. There were quite rightly some proud parents that day.

- **Windrush** – what an absolute joy it has been to be part of the Windrush celebrations and honour some of the Derby Windrush elders. We know up and down the UK there are unsung heroes, making a tangible difference to other people's lives. This important anniversary



With Lady Burlington at a Windrush celebration dinner, Chatsworth House