

# Sharing values through multicultural, multifaith events

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High Sheriff of Greater Manchester 2023-24

Six months since my Declaration. What a joy it's been – but where has the time gone?

My first engagement was Yom Hashoah the annual event of remembrance and reflection in memory of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust. It was so humbling to witness the six Holocaust survivors present and listen to the spoken testimony they recorded with the My Voices project. 'Reunion' was this year's theme which considered the challenges that affected post-war family reunions. It was extraordinary to learn that only recently, two survivors – cousins aged 98 and space after 101 – were reunited eight decades on.

The momentum of invitations to support many of the fantastic organisations, charities and volunteer groups across Greater Manchester soon began to build. Seeking to identify groups that operate below the radar, I am grateful to my DL colleagues for directing me towards so many volunteers quietly doing wonderful things to support their local communities.

Four days after the spectacle of the Coronation, the University of Salford Business School hosted the 2023 finals of the UK Young Enterprise Awards. HRH The Princess Royal was warmly welcomed to the event, taking a very keen interest in each concept, some of which had outstanding commercial potential. Loughborough University won with their protective clothing designed for women participating in contact sport. With cutting-edge technology and materials, their designs will mould to body contours providing a comfortable and protective shield. Bravo!

A significant highlight of my year so far was the opportunity to visit

Greater Manchester Police's Forensic Unit, accompanied by my husband and by Under Sheriff David Cam.

What a revelation! The visit included forensic reception (for all forensic exhibits); case management; the laboratory (DNA recovery, chemical enhancement of fingerprints); fingerprint unit; firearms – GMP is one of three NABIS hubs for England and Wales (National Ballistics Intelligence Service); forensic imaging and the digital investigation units. All three of us were brimming with questions and the staff enthusiastically shared their passion for their work. Having overrun the scheduled visit considerably, we left the unit full of admiration for the incredible and detailed work they all do in support of victims of crime.

It has been a real pleasure to meet the Royal Air Force, Army and Police cadets who, under the guidance of their dedicated adult volunteers, are benefitting from fantastic opportunities to learn so many new skills.

I've been privileged to attend several graduation ceremonies for the Prince's Trust 12-week Team Programme, a personal development programme, for participants to have the chance to gain new skills, earn a qualification and meet new people. To witness their new-found confidence, resilience and achievements is always very moving.

For many years, Irish Community Care Manchester has worked tirelessly to identify and respond to the needs of both the Irish and Irish Traveller communities across Manchester with outreach services including advice, advocacy and support

**Below left to right: With Royal Air Force Air Cadets 317 Failsworth Squadron; At Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Prince's Trust graduation; The Judges' Service in Manchester**



**Signing of the High Sheriff's Roll at Manchester Crown Court, Crown Square**



**HRH The Princess Royal at the University of Salford with the High Sheriff and consort, Cllr Ann-Marie Humphreys (ceremonial mayor of the City of Salford) and Emma Humphreys (her mayoress), and Diane Hawkins (Lord-Lieutenant)**

around homelessness. During my recent visit to one of their well-attended lunch clubs, I was privileged to meet Peggy, one of the very many Irish nurses recruited to staff a fledgling NHS.

The several traditional and important ceremonies central to the ancient role of High Sheriff – Declaration, signing of the High Sheriff's Roll and the service for His Majesty's judges to mark the start of the legal year – are all incredibly powerful occasions and reminders of the legacy of the role. For me, as the first Irish born person to hold this office – certainly in Greater Manchester – I consider that history to be incredibly important.

Reflecting on my first six months as High Sheriff, I continue to be so impressed by the level of dedication of volunteers from every community. It is such a privilege to participate in so many meaningful multicultural and multifaith events which contribute to our shared values.

