



SUMMER
2024

The High Sheriff

Magazine of the High Sheriffs' Association of England and Wales



National Crimebeat Awards 2024

Young Adults in the Criminal Justice System // Closing the Gap // News – from and about members



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Front Cover:
Sally Scott with member of
the TVP firearms unit at the
Oxford Combined Courts Open
Day Photo: Dr Nicholas Posner

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2023 to November 2024

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represents the Council's views.

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concerning their year in office.

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From the Chairman



A warm welcome to new Council members, His Honour Christopher Critchley DL (Surrey 2022), Jeanie France-Hayhurst (Cheshire 2022) and Phillip Sykes (Hampshire 2021). On behalf of all Council members, many thanks to the High Sheriffs 2023 for their hard work and dedication to their bailiwicks, counties and communities during their year in office, and many congratulations to the new High Sheriffs 2024; enjoy a very successful, happy and fun year.

Last summer, our magazine focussed on shrieval support and contributions to the first ever Coronation the magazine had covered. This summer, High Sheriffs, exercising their role as returning officers, will be preparing to announce the results of Thursday 4 July's general election in the wee small hours of Friday 5 July, just as High Sheriffs in nomination 2025, and some 2026, will be preparing to attend the High Sheriffs' Association's annual flagship briefing at Burghley.

Announcing the results of the general election is an exciting and immensely important responsibility laid on High Sheriffs by Section 24 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. Being present at the count and seeing how this vital element of our parliamentary democracy works is an immense privilege and hugely interesting. It also gives High Sheriffs opportunities to meet, and to say thank you to the large number of volunteers who help administer the count and who count the votes.

Your Association has been busy. On Monday 29 April, we held the first ever online briefing for the chairs of Shrieval Nomination Panels and Under Sheriffs, the clerks to the nomination panels. I am delighted that so many chairs and Under Sheriffs gave their time to the Zoom briefing. Everyone learnt much about the importance of nomination panels and how essential they are to the process of nominating High Sheriffs in the 21st century. The briefing for panel chairs and Under Sheriffs will now become an annual event.

Two weeks later, on Monday 13

May, we held the first of two online briefings for High Sheriffs in nomination 2025. The second one will be on Monday 2 December and we shall be catching up online with this year's High Sheriffs on Monday 9 September. The online briefings provide extra support to High Sheriffs and High Sheriffs in nomination, but our flagship event remains the annual summer briefing.

This year sees the last annual briefing to be held at Burghley. Leaving Burghley will be a big wrench for the Association. We are enormously grateful to Miranda and Orlando Rock for allowing the High Sheriffs' Association to use magnificent Burghley, and we also give huge thanks to the wonderful Kara and her dedicated team for the tremendous support they have given us over the years. Next year, the annual shrieval briefing will be in London.

On Thursday 2 May, our Hon Secretary, James Williams, and I had the privilege of attending the inaugural annual general meeting of the High Sheriffs' Association of Northern Ireland held at the Law Society in Belfast, after which we attended a reception at the Royal Courts hosted by the Lady Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Dame Siobhan Keegan, by whom we were welcomed with great warmth. Your Association will continue to support our new sister Association in Northern Ireland and will maintain those close links.

The Association is also most grateful to the Sheriffs of the City of London for hosting High Sheriffs in office at a reception at the Old Bailey. The Shrievalty's connection with the City Sheriffs and the Corporation of the City of London is very important.

Andrew Tuggey,
Chairman, Gwent 2015

From the Hon Editor



I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the outgoing High Sheriffs who have contributed articles to this issue of *The High Sheriff*. They are not simply a record of all that you have done to support the communities in your own bailiwicks, but they provide a fascinating and very readable series of ideas, commentary, initiatives and themes for both those currently in office and those in nomination. If anyone doubts the value of the Shrievalty to society you only have to read these pages. Thank you.

In this edition there is an article on young adults in the criminal justice system. Current High Sheriffs may find this helps explain some of the behaviours they will encounter during their year in office and I would like to thank Flora Fitzalan-Howard not just for this article but the support she has given to the Shrievalty.

The article on 'closing the gap' demonstrates very clearly how a small initiative can have a tremendous impact in communities. Thank you to fellow Council Member Simon Miesegaes for bringing it to our attention.

Conflict and violence dominates the 24-hour news agenda but we are fortunate to see how wonderful communities can be and the self-sacrifice of individuals to help others. Look at any of the articles and in particular the value of National Crimebeat. Volunteers remain the lifeblood for community services and you are volunteers.

Michael Gurney, Hon Editor, Norfolk 2021

From the Editor



I would like to echo Michael's thanks to those High Sheriffs who sent in a county article – combined with the last winter edition, it has been a record-breaking performance from the 2023-24 cohort as far as I can tell from my Excel spreadsheet. Yes, I do keep track...

By the time you read this, many if not most of the current High Sheriffs will be preparing to act as returning officer at the general election. The winter edition of the magazine will feature an election round-up, so please try to capture the event on the night (or indeed early hours of the morning). Ideally, I'm looking for a high resolution image together with the time of the declaration and the specific constituency – if you declare more than one, I'll be very happy to feature both.

Separate to the general election, current High Sheriffs will be invited in September to write on their first six months in office so until that time, have a productive and enjoyable time in your counties.

Jayne Lewis, Editor



Diary of Forthcoming Events

JULY 2024

SEMINAR FOR HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR THE YEARS 2025 AND 2026

FRIDAY 5 JULY

The 2024 Seminar for High Sheriffs in nomination will be held at Burghley House, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 3JY. Details of the programme and speakers together with an application form will have been sent in mid-May 2024 to all High Sheriffs in nomination for 2025 and 2026.

SEPTEMBER 2024

ZOOM FOR CURRENT HIGH SHERIFFS

MONDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

To discuss matters of interest for High Sheriffs at 5.00 pm for about an hour.

OCTOBER 2024

THE RED MASS

TUESDAY 1 OCTOBER

The annual Roman Catholic Mass will be held at 9.30 am at Westminster Cathedral to celebrate the start of the legal year. Those current and past High Sheriffs and High Sheriffs in nomination who wish to join the judicial procession are invited to coffee beforehand from 8.30 am, prior to the procession lining up. There will be a ticket-only reception after the Mass; to obtain information about the tickets, please contact the Secretary of the Thomas More Society, at secretary@thomasmoresociety.org.uk. The TMS traditionally asks for an offering towards the increasing costs of running the ceremony, which will be included in the formal invitation from the Hon Secretary of the Society.

THE LADIES' LUNCH

EARLY OCTOBER

The annual Ladies' Lunch will be held in London. Details will sent in the summer to those ladies who are in nomination.

NOVEMBER 2024

NATIONAL CRIMEBEAT

WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER

This is the opening date for submissions for the 2025 awards. See page 9 for more details.

53RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER

The Association's 53rd AGM and luncheon will be held at Fishmongers' Hall, London. The agenda and papers for the AGM and an application form for the luncheon will be sent to all members of the Association in mid-September 2024.

THE NOMINATION OF FUTURE HIGH SHERIFFS

TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2024

The ceremony will take place in Court 4 (the Lady Chief Justice's Court) at 2.00 pm at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL. At the ceremony the names of those nominated for the Office of High Sheriff for the years 2025, 2026 and 2027 will be read out in court. The Secretary will write in September to all High Sheriffs in nomination for 2025 and 2026 inviting them to attend. It may be possible for a few 2027 nominees to attend as well but space in court is limited. The Association will not know the names of the 2027 nominees so it will be up to such nominees or their proposers

to contact the Secretary should they wish to attend. After the ceremony, there will be a Tea Party at St Clements Danes Church in the Strand. This event provides a good opportunity for those in nominations to meet each other.

DECEMBER 2024

ZOOM FOR HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR 2025

MONDAY 2 DECEMBER

To discuss matters of interest for High Sheriffs in nomination at 5.00 pm for about an hour.

MARCH 2025

NATIONAL CRIMEBEAT

TUESDAY 18 MARCH

The awards ceremony will take place in London. All projects to be entered must be endorsed by a High Sheriff and submitted by 24 January 2025. Finalists will be announced shortly after that.

IN THE NEWS...

For news updates
on members
see page 50

County Round-up

A year in office offers the chance to travel not only around one's own county but to venture further afield into neighbouring counties. Many High Sheriffs have written in their county reports of the value of regional groups. There is value too in contact with past High Sheriffs, whether on a social level or continuing a tradition.

1. Dr Ruth Hussey (Merseyside) and Mary-Liz Walker (Greater Manchester) at the Savoy Chapel with the hassock used during 'pricking the lites'

2. Jean White (Mid Glamorgan) with Anne Morgan (2008, second right) presenting the Anne Morgan Prize at the annual High Sheriff of Mid Glamorgan Community Youth Awards to Tomas Butler, Daniel Waters and Corey Owens (Merthyr Tydfil Police Youth Volunteers)

3. Robert Drewett on board HMS Somerset with Lt Cdr James Williams RNZN, Celia Drewett, Jenny Duke (Somerset 2022) and Cdr Dave Mason (Commanding Officer)



4. Jaydip Ray (S Yorks) with neighbouring High Sheriffs and others at the South Yorkshire Legal Service L-R Rev Canon Keith Farrow (High Sheriff's chaplain), Sarah Turner (Mistress Cutler), Zulfi Ali Karim (W Yorks), Henrietta Chubb (Leics), Theresa Peltier (Derby), Veronica Pickering (Notts), Andrew Marsden (immediate past Sheriff of London), Clare Granger (N Yorks) and Charles Turner (Master Cutler) Photo: Andrew Cox

5 Andy Bliss en route to the West Sussex Judges' Service at the historic Chichester Cathedral with L-R, Alex Nikolov (Police Cadet), Revd David Murdoch (Chaplain) and Richard Bickersteth (East Sussex) Photo: Andrew Mardell

6 Simon Muir (Berks), Sally Scott (Oxon), Ann Limb (Bucks) and Liz Green (Herts)

7 All eight Welsh High Sheriffs at the Welsh Legal Service, Llandaff Cathedral L-R Meurig Raymond (Dyfed), Jean White (Mid Glam), Alan Brayley (W Glam), Reginald Cawthorne (Powys), Rhys James (S Glam), Simon Gibson (Gwent), Kate Hill-Trevor (Clwyd) and Janet Phillips (Gwynedd)

8 Theresa Peltier (Derbyshire, fifth from right) at the Legal Service with, among others, Andrew Cochrane (Under Sheriff), Ami Lindo (High Sheriff's chaplain), Police Cadet Ruby, Gillian Feehally (Rutland), Veronica Pickering (Notts), Henrietta Chubb (Leics), Victoria Hawley (Staffs) and Milan Shah (Northants)

9 Henrietta Chubb (Leics), Liz Green (Herts), Sally Scott (Oxon), Milan Shah (Northants), Geraldine Feehally (Rutland), Bharat Khetani (Cambs) and Veronica Pickering (Notts)

10 Mary-Liz Walker (Greater Manchester, centre) at the Judges' Service in Manchester with, among others, Ruth Hussey (Merseyside), Dennis Dunn (Cheshire) and Diane Hawkins (Lord-Lieutenant)

11 Charles Bishop entertained nearly every former High Sheriff of Essex and their consort since 2002 to celebrate the retirement of His Honour Judge Gratwicke (centre)





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12 Colin Weston (Dorset) with Amelia Riviere (Hants) with HM Coastguard Lee on Solent

13 Veronica Pickering (Notts), Milan Shah (Northants), Bharat Khetani (Cambs), Henrietta Chubb (Leics), Liz Green (Herts) and Theresa Peltier (Derby)

14 Amelia Riviere celebrated Hampshire Law Sunday at Winchester Cathedral with, among others, the Rt Revd Nicholas McKinnel (Devon), Henry Robinson (Glos), Nigel Atkinson (Lord-Lieutenant), Sharon Foster (Bristol), Dawn Haig-Thomas (IoW), Simon Muir (Berks), Colin Weston (Dorset), Alastair Barron (chaplain), Robert Drewett (Somerset), Toby Ashworth (Cornwall) and Pradeep Bhardwaj (Wilts)



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National Crimebeat Awards 2024

Young people excel at the National Crimebeat Awards which recognise innovative and exceptional crime prevention projects



Amanda Parker JP
Lord-Lieutenant

Chair, National Crimebeat; Council
Member, Lancashire 2015-16

On Tuesday 19 March we celebrated the seven young teams of finalists at the 26th National Crimebeat Awards. These awards recognise the most innovative and successful crime prevention projects carried out by young people (under 25) in England and Wales and winners go home with sizeable sums of money to invest in their cause.

The National Crimebeat Awards are the brainchild of the High Sheriffs' Association. Every year our High Sheriffs from around England and Wales help identify another cohort of incredibly dedicated young people who go above and beyond in their communities. It's a very hard competition to judge and many of those who don't make it to the finals are encouraged to enter again as we have often found that it's just a tweak to their entry that would have pushed them on to the shortlist. This year we had nearly 30 entries so choosing the final seven was hard enough and from that the final winner even more so.

The projects are always extremely varied and this year ranged from groups driving crime reduction, to urban garden development preventing fly tipping, to fraud awareness, from leading ex-offenders away from a life of crime, to supporting ending violence against women and girls, to cyber detectives and to addressing social issues in young people through poetry and music. Each team presented their project to an audience of around 150 people including High Sheriffs, sponsors, other participants, the trustees and judges. We also welcomed Matthew Ward KPM, Deputy Assistant Commissioner at the Met, and Her Honour Judge Rosa Dean, Senior Circuit Judge at Snaresbrook, who presented the prizes. Although some nerves prevail, we are hugely respectful of the way each group was able to articulate their project to such a large audience with such apparent confidence.

Our two guests spoke eloquently about the difficulties that their organisations and roles faced and were enormously respectful of the work that young people do in our communities to help prevent crime. These young people go on to be



Top: The trustees of National Crimebeat with guests and sponsors

Above: Deputy Assistant Commissioner Matthew Ward with Cleveland Police Cadets who were highly commended

the 'old ones' after all, and their educative and instructive example on the younger generation often has a greater impact on their peers than older people talking down to them.

Yet again the standard of applications has been incredibly impressive. I have great admiration for all of these young teams – all winners go above and beyond to make huge differences in their communities, but this year the determination of an individual really moved the judges. Although the prize money, the certificates, the medals and the trophies mean a lot to the winners it is also the honour of winning a national awards that sends them back their communities with enormous pride.



As ever we are hugely indebted to all our supporters, sponsors and donors for their generosity. We are particularly grateful to Imperial Hotels who grant us use of their premises and hospitality at the Royal National Hotel; Big Bus Tours Ltd always add to the afternoon fun after the delicious lunch and Merlin Entertainments allow all entrants a whirl around the London Eye. Without our other sponsors – including the Fishmongers' Company, Oldfield Partners, Fortus and many other individuals and charities – we would not be able to put on such a great event, nor offer financial prizes to our finalists and shortlisted teams. I would also like to thank my fellow National Crimebeat trustees who help throughout the year and ensure that our ceremony runs like clockwork.

Entries for the 2025 Awards will open on 1 November 2024 and the awards ceremony will take place on Tuesday 18 March at The Royal National Hotel, London. All projects to be entered must be endorsed by a High Sheriff and submitted by 24 January 2025. Full details can be found at www.national-crimebeat.com.

Start your search for your crime prevention youth groups as early as you can!

Above: This year's winner Khan Odita (UrbanScape) with (L-R) his mum, Natasha, and Rachael Moorcroft (Merseyside Community Police Officer) on the London Eye
Photo: Grania Phillips

Below: Khan Odita receives the Burnett Presentation Award from Tranai Todd (trustee and last year's recipient)



Right: Runners-up DIVERT with Ina De (Greater London) and Jo Allinson (the Fishmongers' Company)

Below: HHJ Rosa Dean

Winner overall and of the Burnett Presentation Prize

Merseyside: UrbanScape Community Garden

At the age of 14, Khan Odita saw that an area very close to his house had become a primary dumping ground for all kinds of unsavoury rubbish. Khan's Toxteth community in Liverpool is an area that has a long history of criminality and anti-social behaviour with low levels of community esteem. Fly-tipping was an increasing problem blighting the locality and making it an unpleasant area to live. Khan determined to eradicate fly-tipping, hoping to simultaneously foster community cohesion and develop pride in the area where they live.

Although super enthusiastic and totally committed, it was much harder to bring his neighbours along with him on the journey. Nonetheless, he, together with his mum, set about cleaning up

the area, leading by example. They carried out litter picks, organised skip days and generally were seen out and about in their community tidying up. Little by little, support and momentum grew and the community joined Khan on his journey.

Eventually he set up a CIC (Community Interest Company) and formed the Mulgrave Street Action Group with the aim of developing a community garden. What started as the acorn of an idea for a young boy became the oak of the community and transformed what had been a derelict dumping ground into a garden filled with flowers, plants, seating areas and, later, vegetables for the benefit of all. His aims have been met and Mulgrave Street is now a tidy and beautiful area of which the whole community is proud.

Runners-up

Greater London: DIVERT

DIVERT is a holistic programme that prevents young offenders from perpetuating bad and criminal habits. It started in Brixton in 2015 and this is now one of the busiest custody suites across London largely because of this hugely successful programme. DIVERT's seven young volunteer ambassadors are key to the success of this intervention programme. All have previously been in police custody and received support from a custody intervention coach





themselves. Having turned their own lives around, they share their lived experiences and are highly effective in engaging with other young people who find themselves in custody.

The DIVERT ambassadors are impartial, unbiased and compassionate, working closely with the young people with whom they engage, helping to redirect them from the behaviours that have led to their arrest. They encourage and support them in employment, education and training. They also play a vital role in developing the future of DIVERT and are totally committed to reducing the level of violence on the streets of London.

DIVERT is an exemplar to the rest of London – and indeed the UK – showing what, with the benefit of early intervention, you can become if you choose a better path.

Third Place

Derbyshire: White Ribbon Campaign

The Voices in Action Derby Youth Council were pivotal in developing and implementing a city-wide campaign which ran during the '16 days of Action' of the 2023 White Ribbon Campaign. White Ribbon is the UK's leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls by addressing its root cause and to change long-established and harmful attitudes and behaviours around masculinity that perpetuate inequality and violence. The judges felt that this group really had made an impact through their work.

As part of their campaign the determined group developed and implemented a series of activities

including producing white ribbons for all young males in Derby secondary schools to wear to show their endorsement of the campaign, as well as launching a giant white ribbon competition. However, the judges felt that the most powerful and bold initiative was the development and launch of a scenario-based video, which makes a strong stand against the inappropriate conduct of peers. It educates young men about the appropriate language and behaviours that should be used towards women and girls. It challenges and encourages men and boys to speak out against misogyny and the more serious offences which this can lead to. Search for this video on YouTube under Derby City White Ribbon Campaign – it's brilliant. Powerful in its own right, it has the added impact of the messages being endorsed by Derbyshire cricketer Wayne Madsen and Joe Wildsmith from Derby County FC.

Above: Third place was awarded to Derbyshire's White Ribbon Campaign, here with Chris Land (Fortus)

Below: Denzel Kira aka Poet49 and his team from the MAC Project with Wade Lyn CBE (West Midlands) – TRACY was highly commended

Highly Commended

West Midlands: Tracy

Denzel Kira aka Poet49 is an aspiring young poet who addresses social issues through his art, with a growing social media following. Denzil was supported by the MAC Project (Music and Change) which seeks to engage with young people in Coventry, particularly those who feel disconnected from their current education path or who need a positive environment to keep them off the streets. It also helps them to progress a career in music.

You can find his TRACY videos [spoken word short film] on YouTube, which Denzil not only wrote but also cast, scheduled and directed thanks to his newly acquired skills and the support of the MAC Project. These videos tell the stories of so many young people in the Coventry area, stories which are not currently understood or explored in depth. This brilliant three-part video, which has attracted a large following on social media and on YouTube, focuses on some of the real issues that draw young people into criminal behaviours. The lived experiences of those involved convey how, for example, domestic abuse, drug misuse and gang culture have no positive outcomes or consequences.





Left: The fraud awareness team from Brighton and Hove Police Cadets were highly commended

The power of the films comes from these young people showing other young people that they are not alone in the challenges they face and, importantly, that there are alternatives to a life overshadowed by criminal activity. Do take time to watch, not least to hear Denzil's mellifluous voice tell stories of disaffected young people – they are really powerful.

Highly Commended

East Sussex: Fraud Awareness

We have all become much more aware of fraud and cybercrime but perhaps not enough. The Brighton and Hove Police Cadets decided to further raise awareness, especially among those who are most likely to be affected. They conducted a piece of work around fraud, which included visiting victims of telephone scams. They reviewed the research which identified that many young people do not feel that they are at risk of being a victim of fraud and cybercrime, as they are 'too savvy' for it to happen to them.

Their research led them to reach out to communities of all ages and to raise awareness of the signs to look out for. They had identified that far too many of us did not check before clicking links or giving out our personal information. They went out into the community to spread the word about cybercrime and internet scams by attending events, giving out leaflets, conducting door knocks, library drop-ins and group talks to reach as many members of the public as possible with a clear warning message.

But this wasn't enough for them, the cadets also wanted to know that

their messages had been understood and taken on board. They next created a survey and, while the results were really positive, they still felt that their job was not yet done! And so they are still out there continuing with the initiative, continuing to spread the word and building on its early success. We can all learn something from this great piece of work.

Highly Commended

North Yorkshire: Cleveland Police Cadets

Cleveland are a relatively new cadet team and have a programme to gain insight into local policing and crime, working with police officers to help make their community a safer and happier place to live and work. They were provided with an opportunity to contribute to this by using innovative and creative means to find ways to help reduce levels of crime, in particular violence, burglary and offences affecting those under 25.

Having considered information shared with them by the crime prevention team, as well as supporting the police with their knife reduction campaign, they also engaged in a project to make their community more aware of the need to protect their homes and families. The cadets delivered Christmas cards to over 500 homes containing a happy festive message but which also included crime prevention information and a message of support for the vulnerable, with details of agencies which could help and support them especially at that time of the year.



Above: Theo Lane from Bishop Luffa School receives the High Sheriffs' Association Award from Amanda Parker (Chair of National Crimebeat) for Ransomware

The cadets regularly support many community and charity events and use these as an opportunity to engage with local communities, as they provide an ideal platform to run and manage their crime prevention campaigns. Their work continues with a 2024 plan to help drive crime reduction further and to increase crime awareness including: stands in shopping malls, property marking events, community online alert forums, house-to-house questionnaires and, together with police officers, visiting victims of crime.

Winners of the High Sheriffs' Association Award

West Sussex: Ransomware

In 2023 Bishop Luffa School suffered a major ransomware attack which shut down all the computers on their network. Although a specialist team was brought in through their insurance company, two special young people got ahead of the game and made a significant impact on the investigation. What began with their own investigation into the ransomware group led to their active involvement with the school's leadership team. They were taken seriously when it was realised that they had discovered some new developments and were well ahead of the professionals.

The young people worked diligently and at pace to help resolve this time-sensitive issue. They developed a blog post to ensure that timely information was available to both the leadership team and the police, which greatly assisted their investigations. This award recognises the significant impact of Max and Theo, who, by their determination, dedication, professionalism and commitment to do the right thing, played a significant and valued role in ensuring damage limitation and, importantly, preventing further crime, disruption and minimising harm – a worthy winner of this year's special award.

Using Evidence to Inform Practice and Policy: Young Adults in the Criminal Justice System

Dr Helen Wakeling, Georgia Barnett, and Flora Fitzalan Howard are psychologists, researchers, and evidence-based practice specialists with over 65 years' experience of working in the criminal justice system (CJS). They are the founders of KTA Research and Consulting.

What is evidence-based practice?

Evidence-based practice (EBP) involves the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of the best available evidence when making decisions.^{1,2} This involves integrating multiple sources of evidence in a structured approach, combining research evidence, clinical expertise, and operational insights in the context of user characteristics, culture, and preferences.³ EBP has three main benefits:

1. EBP gives us the best chance of improving outcomes; all interventions, treatments, activities, policy decisions and services can a) achieve the intended (improved) outcome, b) make no difference/have no impact, c) backfire and make things worse or d) have mixed effects (e.g., work for some, not for others). Using the best available evidence gives us the best chance that what we put in motion will 'work' as hoped, bring better outcomes and avoid causing unintended harm.

2. EBP helps us to use money and resources wisely; for example, helping an organisation to choose from a range of potential activities the one that has the greatest impact, or the one that works equally well as others but for less cost.

3. EBP ensures that practitioners, decision-makers, and organisations continue to learn and grow; integrating new, more credible and trustworthy evidence into decisions routinely means that new learning

can be mobilised, and existing practices can be improved.

What do we know about young adults in the CJS?

In 2016 the Justice Select Committee published a report following a year-long enquiry into how young adults are treated in the CJS.⁴ The report concluded that young adults, particularly young adult men,⁵ are a distinct group with different needs to people under 18 or over 25. The Committee found that the CJS was not meeting these needs and called for a distinct approach to, and additional investment in, young adults. Research shows that the brain continues to develop after the age of 18, reaching maturation at around the age of 25. Young adults are still maturing in important ways – psychologically and socially – during this period of brain development. Changes in the brain in adolescence and young adulthood mean that during this period, younger people are more likely to take risks and seek reward, to prioritise impressing their peers when making decisions in the presence of friends, and are more susceptible to peer influence, than at any other time in life. While there are important differences between individuals at this time in their lives, as a group, young adults also feel stress more keenly, have greater problems understanding others, and find it more difficult to manage their emotions and impulses when under pressure, than older adults.

Young adults (18–25-year-olds) make up just under 10% of the population

of the UK,⁶ while 13% of the prison population comprises those aged 18–24,⁷ and, in 2020, 22% of the Probation caseload.⁸ Being younger is associated with a greater risk of being violent (and being a victim of violence) in prison, as well as with higher rates of recall or breach of licence conditions in the community, and more frequent (proven) reoffending.^{9,10}

Research conducted in the last eight years has strengthened the case for taking a distinct approach to young adults in the CJS

There are certain characteristics, experiences, and issues that are more common or heightened in young adulthood, which we should take account of when working with people at this time of life. These include:

- Recent care experience,
- Mental health issues and psychological resilience,
- Recent experience of trauma,
- Substance misuse,
- Self-harm,
- Traumatic brain injury,
- Neurodivergence, including learning difficulties and challenges,
- Worse experiences of prison, and poorer relationships with staff,
- Use, and risk of being a victim, of violence,

- Involvement in robbery, weapons-related offending, gang-affiliated violence, county lines and extremist-related offending,
- Debt and gambling, and
- Risk of violent or drug-related death on release from prison.

What 'works' with this group?

In 2015, while working for HMPPS (then the National Offender Management Service) we summarised the data and evidence on young adults in prisons and on probation, and concluded that interventions for this group should focus on six priority needs, which are to:

1. Develop a stable pro-social identity,
2. Build resistance to peer influence,
3. Develop self-sufficiency and independence,
4. Build skills to manage emotions and impulses,
5. Increase future orientation: who they would like to be, how they might get there and what their lives could be in years to come, and
6. Strengthen bonds with family and other close relationships.

This was published as a set of commissioning principles for young adult men.¹¹ Based on a review of evaluation research and a rapid evidence review of 'what works' to reduce reoffending among young adults,¹² seven interventions, services, and approaches to reduce reoffending and promote desistance from crime in young adults are recommended:

1. structured programmes that build skills in thinking and emotional management,

2. re-entry schemes that help prisoners resettle into the community,
3. interventions to build resilience/ stress management,
4. education, employment training and help finding a job,
5. activities and interventions that build psychosocial maturity,
6. services that help young adults build or maintain healthy relationships with family and significant others, and
7. building positive relationships and engaging with young adults.

Conclusion

Research conducted in the last eight years has strengthened the case for taking a distinct approach to young adults in the CJS. While there remains much that we don't yet know about what, when, how, and with whom interventions and approaches work best to improve outcomes for this group, focusing on the above seven interventions gives us, at least at this time, the best chance of helping effectively, ensuring that we avoid unintentional harm, and of using resources wisely.

If you are interested in taking an evidence-based approach, see our website at www.kta-consulting.co.uk, or contact us via info@kta-consulting.co.uk.

¹ Being conscientious means making a concerted effort to gather and use evidence, committing effort and resources to do this, rather than relying on what is to hand or what we can easily access. Being explicit means spelling out and describing the evidence on which we base claims or decisions, so that it is open to scrutiny. Being judicious means focusing on the

most reliable and trustworthy evidence, identified through critical appraisal.

² Sackett, DL (2000). Evidence-based medicine. John Wiley.

³ American Psychological Association (2006). Evidence-based practice in psychology. *American Psychologist*, 61(4), 271-285.

⁴ Justice Committee (2016). The Treatment of Young Adults in the Criminal Justice System; Seventh Report of Session 2016-17, HC 169.

⁵ On whom there was the most relevant research; there was less evidence on which to determine the needs of young adult women.

⁶ Office for National Statistics (2023). Population and Household Estimates, England and Wales: Census 2021, Unrounded Data. ONS.

⁷ Prison Reform Trust (2024). Bromley Briefings Prison Fact file: Winter 2024. PRT.

⁸ Young adults (justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

⁹ McGuire, J (2018). Understanding prison violence: a rapid evidence assessment. Ministry of Justice.

¹⁰ HMPPS (2022). Probation Service Management of Young Adults Policy Framework. Ministry of Justice.

¹¹ NOMS (2015). Better Outcomes for Young Adult Men. Evidence Based Commissioning Principles. Ministry of Justice.

¹² McGuire, J (2015). What works in reducing reoffending in young adults? A rapid evidence assessment. Ministry of Justice.

The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

High Sheriffs intending to lay wreaths during the Armistice period can order these with the High Sheriffs' badge in the centre from The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.



Orders should be placed (quoting stock code H0018) by calling the Poppy Appeal on **01622 717172** and speaking to a Regional Organiser.

Please order in good time.



Closing the Gap

Simon Miesegeas DL

Chair, Warwickshire

Crimebeat; Council Member

Warwickshire 2019

At first sight, it is difficult to envisage a wider gap than that between the velvet-clad figure of a High Sheriff and a primary school based in a difficult and complex area of North Warwickshire.

In 2007, the late Sarah Holman and Johnnie Arkwright set up Warwickshire's own Crimebeat charity, with the aim of supporting community-focused projects within the county – this idea brought with

it a link to National Crimebeat, in that where projects were run by young people or involved young people, entries could be made to the National Crimebeat annual awards competition.

In 2023, an application was made to Warwickshire Crimebeat for support in funding a project run by Kissing it Better (kissingitbetter.co.uk), a charity which focuses on 'ending the isolation of old age by bringing the generations together'. And while this might initially seem to be outside the Crimebeat arena, the committee decided to support the application on the basis that it regularly brought primary school children face to face with

groups of the eldest generation within care homes, sheltered housing or day centres. This enabled younger members of the community to not only listen and learn from their elders' wisdom and experience, but also, crucially, to ask questions – a significant by-product being to understand the importance of caring for that generation.

And the conversations have proved to be many and various, including advice on not getting involved in drinking too much or using drugs – those were things to be left alone. It is too easy to think these sorts of conversations are above the level of primary school children but

Children from Camp Hill Primary School receive their Commended certificates at a special assembly





when we know that 20 per cent of children between the ages of 5 and 7 have mobile phones – rising to 53 per cent for children between the ages of 8 and 11 – such subjects are right in the face of primary school children. Hence, Kissing it Better's project sows small seeds of a sense of not wanting to get involved in those things because of a feeling of letting that older generation down.

The Committee were of the opinion that this project should go forward to the National Crimebeat panel and the entry was made. The huge excitement of a day in London, having been selected to be in the finals, was dashed – but there was great momentum to use this project, with its 'Commended' status, to promote a wider sense of 'good' in the community.

The High Sheriff of Warwickshire for 2023-24, Mrs Sophie Hilleary, worked closely with one of the trustees of Warwickshire Crimebeat, Joe Greenwell (himself a former High Sheriff in 2020), as well as the force behind Kissing it Better, Jill Samuda, to organise a full morning assembly of around 400 Camp Hill pupils, where all 33 primary school participants would receive a copy of the 'Commended' certificate signed by the High Sheriff. Not just stopping at that, the families of those receiving the certificates were asked to come to morning assembly – not

The children 'in action'

Kerry Parker (Higher Level Teaching Assistant, Camp Hill Primary School) receives her High Sheriff's Award certificate from Sophie Hilleary (Warwickshire)

something that is part of their usual day and, indeed, shifts were changed by many in order to see the children receive their certificate. In short, the assembly was a simple example of the complete closure of the 'perceived' gap between 'the Velvet' and tough Nuneaton life – and all for a simple idea, a piece of paper and time to present. In essence, the very best of the simplicity of the Shrievalty.

As if not enough, the snowball kept rolling down the hill and

before long BBC TV's local news programme *Midlands Today* had made a three-minute piece on this extraordinary project ([youtube.com/watch?v=eA9gDpcBcNo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eA9gDpcBcNo)).

The communities of North Warwickshire, borne out of the coalfields that are no more and heavy industry which is now so sparse, have a remarkable sense of belonging as, if not more powerful as any seen in more affluent areas of the county.

To conclude, simplicity within the Shrievalty is everything – a small initiative of taking primary school children into care homes through to a morning assembly created an extraordinary sense of community in an area where community is paramount but achieving that community can be extremely difficult. In short, 'the Velvet' and a community steeped in challenges but with extraordinary resilience could not have been closer.

And to close, this comment to highlight the critical shrieval link to the guardians of peace:

'Loneliness and isolation are a real threat to our older generation. Kissing it Better (KiB) gives a real chance for the young to mitigate this threat.'



Neither a day less... nor a day more

Russell Beard

High Sheriff of Bedfordshire 2023-24

Serving one's county as High Sheriff brings a multitude of diverse experiences that one can never fully prepare for. From sitting with judges to witnessing first-hand the remarkable work of our police force, from acting as returning officer at an election to meeting members of the royal family, from engaging with schools and colleges to embracing the rich tapestry of cultures across Bedfordshire and so much more – the journey is truly remarkable.

Reflecting on the past year, amid countless memorable moments, it was meeting the numerous charitable volunteers that stands out. Their tireless efforts in aiding those in need, amid prevalent issues like poverty, homelessness, child deprivation and loneliness, are both inspiring and humbling.

The stark realities – such as children arriving late to school due to ill-fitting shoes, the necessity of food and hygiene banks or a young person's meager possessions next to their 'put-me-up' bed in a community hall – paint a distressing picture. Yet the unsung heroes who step up daily to assist these individuals are truly magnificent. I always felt a sense of guilt when leaving after a charity visit as I just wanted to do more to help.

It is now almost forty years on from the Band Aid single which raised millions for those overseas and we could do with Bob Geldof and co. singing in Kenilworth Road right now.

The Office of High Sheriff can only do so much. While efforts such as guiding charities towards potential funding sources,



With Dean Bourke (trustee) and volunteers on a visit to local homelessness charity Emmaus Village Carlton

liaising with support groups and raising awareness through the High Sheriff's office are made, somehow you just never feel you have done enough. Sometimes a simple 'thank you' can provide solace. The impact of the Office should never be underestimated, as recipients of the High Sheriff's certificate for excellence in serving the county are always so pleased to be recognised.

The High Sheriff is always made to feel

very special at every appointment and you hope that the shining of light can prove to be positive.

I have kept in close contact with my successor by sharing diary notes and attempting to hand over email addresses and website details as efficiently as possible.

When I first took office, a former High Sheriff told me that when the term ends you will not want to do a day less and a day more is probably going too far... I now know exactly what he meant!



Bedford's Christmas Tree Festival 2023 raised over £23,000



Presenting a High Sheriff's Award to the pharmacy department at Luton and Dunstable Hospital



With the volunteers of Luton Sikh Soup Kitchen



Presenting long service awards to volunteers at Hospital Radio Bedford

Championing inclusion and young talent



With Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE at Buckingham Palace for a reception in celebration of the Windrush Generation. Their Majesties unveiled the ten portraits of Windrush elders, newly commissioned by HM King Charles: *Windrush: Portraits of a Generation*

Sharon Foster

High Sheriff of the City of Bristol 2023-2024

What a momentous year! From when I took the oath of Office and reflecting on when I was nominated, I can truly say that my journey has been incredible...

This year, among many other takeaways, I found that good partnerships and bringing communities together can foster unity and better understanding. During the last twelve months, I have gained significant insight into the valuable contributions made by various sections of our community.

My main priority for the year has been the project 'Inclusion Not Exclusion' under the agenda of 'child exclusion' – this important project was initiated and driven by the concerns of school children and the young people of Bristol. The figures allow just a small insight into some of the challenges that we are facing within education today and to have had the opportunity to communicate with young people and children who have been excluded from school has been truly humbling.

Inclusion not Exclusion focuses on the detrimental impact of school exclusions and suspensions and seeks to reverse the trend which has worsened since the pandemic. School exclusions and suspensions disproportionately affect vulnerable children, jeopardising their education, well-being, and prospects. I do acknowledge, however, that there are some local schools that have successfully reduced suspensions through innovative and inclusive practices. Ultimately, I would like to see all schools working together in a concerted effort to tackle the problem.

On the 2 April 2024, to mark the culmination of my year in office, I held a



Outside City Hall, Bristol, on Remembrance Sunday with the Peaches Golding OBE (Lord-Lieutenant), Cllr Steve Pearce (Acting Lord Mayor), Avon and Somerset Police ceremonial mace escort, and Richard the sword bearer

momentous event at the newly opened Bristol Beacon. The evening – produced by Creative Connex CIC and serving as a platform to shine a light on the project – brought together families, community members, civic leaders and supporters for a celebration of young artistic talent curated by Creative Power Town, a dynamic youth agency fostering creative exploration.

High Sheriff's Awards were given to the most deserving community members and young people. Award categories included Outstanding Young Leader, Outstanding Beacon of Light and Outstanding Young Visionary Motivator among others. Local TV news celebrity Alex Lovell and Deputy Mayor Asher Craig helped with the presentations. I am especially proud that the showcase featured Bristol's burgeoning creative talent with captivating performances by some of the most talented and creative young people of the city of Bristol.

The evening was not just limited to artistic expression. Keynote speakers included Dayton Powell (a specialist in gang culture and violence reduction), Hannah Woodhouse (Executive Director of the Children and Education Directorate, Bristol City Council) and Deniece Dixon, a local business owner and parent. They delivered thought-provoking speeches on tackling the scourge of knife-crime, education and advocating the needs of children with special educational needs.

I am pleased that the showcase was a resounding success. It celebrated the power of arts and storytelling, highlighting the importance of educational inclusion, and it recognised the vibrant talent of



Awaiting the arrival of Her Majesty Queen Camilla with Cllr Paul Goggin (Lord Mayor of Bristol) Peaches Golding (Lord-Lieutenant), Sir Terry Waite (President of Emmaus UK) and staff and volunteers at Emmaus Bristol, a homelessness charity



Welcoming Her Majesty Queen Camilla to Emmaus Bristol with Peaches Golding OBE (Lord-Lieutenant), Dom Wood DL, Cllr Paul Goggin (Lord Mayor of Bristol) and Deborah Griffiths (Lady Mayoress)

Bristol's youth. The event also served as a springboard for continued dialogue and collaborative efforts to foster a brighter future for children and young people in Bristol at the end of my term as High Sheriff.

It is truly an honour to have been offered the opportunity to serve as the High Sheriff for the County and City of Bristol – the first Black Caribbean woman to have been offered and to have held this office.

My experience demonstrated the importance of having strong engagement with a diverse community and various organisations across the city – taking the Shrievalty across the city both to where it had been, and where it may not have otherwise been.

Radical, simple, spiritual

Dame Ann Limb DBE DL

High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire 2023-24

I served as 789th High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire and was the first Quaker to hold the office in 800 years. I have undertaken all my engagements by putting my Quaker values into action and have been upheld by my Quaker community of thousands who acted collectively as my chaplains, as Quakers have no hierarchies, no creeds, and no priesthood.

I approached my year through the lenses of both outputs (what and how much done) and outcomes (impact). I spent 83 full days, a third of the recognised working week of 250 days, undertaking a total of 110 separate and different engagements. Fifty per cent of these were spent on upholding the Crown, the judiciary and criminal justice system; twenty per cent devoted to supporting the work of the police, probation, prison, emergency, and crime prevention services; and thirty per cent focussed on promoting charities working for the elimination of domestic and sexual violence, violence against women and girls (VAWG) and building sustainable and inclusive communities.

In terms of outcomes, I prioritised attendance at key civic, community, faith and belief events across Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire that have enabled me to speak about, and demonstrate, the importance of values-led leadership in public life and throughout the judiciary and HM Courts and Tribunals Service. I supported the work of the police, probation, prison, emergency and crime prevention services by using my networking and advocacy skills to celebrate and showcase the diverse range of people who work at all levels in these key public services. I promoted charities working for the elimination of domestic and sexual violence, violence against women and girls and building sustainable and inclusive communities by using my convening powers to stimulate lasting collaboration between charities, leaving as a financial legacy The Harmony Fund to provide funds to carry out projects with The King's Foundation in Buckinghamshire which demonstrate 'people, places, planet – in harmony'



With my chaplains, Milton Keynes Quakers, and His Majesty King Charles III who made a private visit to the Woburn Sands Quaker Burial Ground in 2023

(www.instagram.com/kingsfdn/).

I have sought both to honour the history of the Office and to encourage evolution in the way the role of High Sheriff adapts to the realities of contemporary society. I have held to my principle of 'zero carbon zero cost' completing my year on foot, on bicycle or in my electric car. I have kept to a minimum the costs which the High Sheriff must cover personally because I have received subsidy, hospitality, and in-kind support from organisations and



businesses, and because I chose not to fund either a justice dinner or garden party, choosing instead to make a personal regular donation to MK Foodbank in lieu of providing general hospitality. Notwithstanding this, undertaking the routine activities associated with the role of High Sheriff requires those who take on the role to cover the costs entirely from their personal finances – a situation which is jarringly incongruous in the 21st-century world of equality, diversity, and inclusivity.

This is not sustainable in the long term and is a matter which I hope successive High Sheriffs will address and to which I have drawn attention in a blog on the topic (annlimb.co.uk/blog/honouring-history-encouraging-evolution-reflections-on-almost-half-a-year-of-being-high-sheriff-of-buckinghamshire).

I have received steadfast and invaluable help from others – my eight Goodwill Ambassadors, a group of innovative, inclusive, inspirational intergenerational volunteers who took the place of the conventional police cadet and my energetic and efficient Event Director, who stood in for my wife Maggie who could not serve as a traditional consort because of her age and ill health. Without all these people, it would not have been possible for me to undertake the role and to have such a full and fulfilling year.



With five of my High Sheriff's Goodwill Ambassadors pictured at Chequers, Buckinghamshire, where I hosted a thank you reception for the judiciary who were addressed by Cherie Blair CBE KC (centre)

Spreading the word...

Kate Hill-Trevor

Hon Mrs Hill-Trevor,
High Sheriff of Clwyd 2023-2024

My theme was a very simple one: Making a difference. I hope that I have added to some people's lives, often just by showing an interest. Certificates and saying thank you are such simple things, but we should never underestimate their power to make people feel special and I am delighted that Clwyd is now offering bilingual long service certificates for magistrates who combine the law and order and voluntary elements that are so fundamental to a High Sheriff's remit.

Sadly, most people have no idea what a High Sheriff does. At the beginning of my year, I lost count of the times I was asked how many fetes I had opened and how many babies I had kissed and so, as well as meeting as many people as I could, I have tried to build awareness by developing social media accounts, hopefully bringing the Shrievalty to a new audience. I hope that these help to show how the role continues to be relevant in our modern society. Following other High Sheriffs' accounts is a great source of inspiration but also a slippery slope and I have caught myself falling into the trap that we warn our children about – the dreaded FOMO and thinking that everyone else has a more focused theme or more diverse visits. However, I haven't been asked the baby question recently so hopefully together we are making steps to improve our 'brand awareness'.

Despite the history of the role, we all know that the world and voluntary sector are changing. Young people today are



At Brynkinalt Hall with winners of the High Sheriff of Clwyd Community Awards

leading very different lives and are unlikely to stay in jobs long term. Many do not have direct role models of volunteers in their families, with both parents working full-time and grandparents using their time to help with childcare. I believe that we need to look closely at lifestyle trends, be more vocal about the benefits of volunteering and offer volunteering options for those looking for short-term possibilities as well as those able to commit on a more regular basis. This clearly presents challenges but we must adapt if we are not to end up with a huge void in the voluntary sector.

As I reflect on my year, I'm reminded of the saying: 'The best experiences in life are often detours' – events that take place off the standard path and moments that we never planned or expected but that change us for ever and help us to see the world in a different way. I have certainly seen and heard things that I would never have done in a 'normal' year – phrases such as 'would you like the regimental goat to come along?' or 'fanfare etiquette'

don't crop up in most people's lives! So what have been the best moments? I find it impossible to narrow it down to single occasions, although sitting with an elderly lady who had lost her sight and watching her face as she felt her way around my court dress – stroking the velvet, feeling the steel cut buttons, feathers and lace – that will be etched in my memory for ever. It was a harsh reminder to keep one's own life in perspective as there are so many people struggling out there.

I am very proud to follow in the footsteps of other family members – Sir Edward Trevor and my husband's Uncle Nevill who were both High Sheriff of Denbighshire in 1622 and 1965 respectively – but the role of High Sheriff isn't about me or any of the High Sheriffs who have come before and who will follow... it's about the people we meet, and for me it has also been about my journey through the year and the feelings of joy and hope that, despite what the media would have us believe, the world still has huge numbers of kind and selfless people.

Throughout my year, I've been continually reminded of the profound impact individuals can have when they come together for a common cause and the power of collective action. I make no apology for repeating what other High Sheriffs say: it really is eye-opening and humbling and a complete privilege to have held the Office of High Sheriff.

I hope that together we can continue to thank those who are doing so much and inspire others to do more. To borrow a quote: 'If not now, then when? If not you, then who?' Together we can all make a difference.



At St Mary's Church, Chirk, with the Revd Canon Dr Hayley Matthews (Archdeacon of Wrexham), Amanda Blakeman (North Wales Police Chief Constable) and volunteer police cadets and leaders following my thanksgiving service



With Rhyl Boxing Club, winner of Clwyd Crimebeat Project of the Year 2024

Do your little bit of good



With Consort George Grignon at the launch of the Windrush Exhibition at Chatsworth House

Theresa Peltier

High Sheriff of Derbyshire 2023-2024

Choosing your best bits is rather like choosing your best music for *Desert Island Discs*. Like music, your choices can leave an emotional imprint for a variety of reasons and depending on your mood your 'best' can change as regularly as the weather.

During my year of office, I attended just over 370 engagements. I have been exposed to the most wonderful people across the county where I've shared stimulating conversations, laughed heartily, been moved to tears, heard heartbreaking stories of loss, survival and resilience, and in practical terms got stuck in to better understand the lived experience of others. Without doubt, Derbyshire is a county bursting with the best in humanity.

My theme for the year was 'Unity is Community'. With this in mind, the High Sheriff's Legal Service at Derby Cathedral was a highlight. I strongly believe we achieve more if we recognise and value our differences and use them as our strengths to work collaboratively for the greater good.

Celebrating difference was the order of the day: from the deeply moving music courtesy of Derby Cathedral Choir, superbly led by Alexander Binns, the organist and voice of soloist Jamie

Joseph, to the delivery of prayer from Royal School for the Deaf Derby and Reigate Primary School students, who displayed such composure and dignity.

It was an opportunity to bring people together, representing all that is great about Derbyshire, where our physical and social differences were accepted and embraced. Where conversations

began, friendships flourished and alliances were strengthened.

Celebrating and honouring the Windrush generation as part of the 75th year anniversary gave me a deeper appreciation of the sacrifices they made and being able to showcase the Windrush Exhibition, the creation of my consort George Grignon, at Chatsworth House



Having presented daughter Natalie with her police long service award – with son-in-law Chief Inspector Chris Thornhill, grandchildren Orson and Emeline, and Ruchita Shah DL



With Derby College Windrush group for the launch

was a moving and unforgettable moment. The untold stories of those who worked so hard to contribute to the UK, often in a hostile environment, were inspiring and highlighted the resilience of that generation and all they achieved.

It was sobering remembering those who paid the ultimate sacrifice through centuries of war and conflict when I attended various Remembrance services and Holocaust Memorial Day – without doubt many moments to pause and for reflection. To truly honour those who gave their lives, we all have a personal responsibility to treat everyone with compassion, dignity and respect.

By contrast, I spent a day with Derbyshire YMCA Padley serving breakfasts to those without a roof over their heads; a week volunteering with Derby Kids Camp; visited Jericho House, a home for males working hard to overcome drug and alcohol dependency; hospitals; youth groups; charities and more. Yet despite 370 engagements, I only really scratched the surface, realising very quickly there are hundreds of buried hidden gems rarely discovered across the county.

Climbing Snowdon raised some money

and my passion for dance enabled me to host the first Derbyshire UNstrictly Dancing fundraiser and the Embark Schools Dance Festival supported by the Embark Academy Trust, Amanda and Peter Ellse of Cosy Foundation, and Jonathan Leach of Indigo Communications. I'm pleased to

say that, due to the success of the dance fundraiser, this will now be an annual feature in the Derbyshire calendar. Six dancers already confirmed for June 2025!

We rely heavily on the goodwill of our volunteers, and the professionalism and hard work of our emergency services, judiciary, military, army personnel, charities, third sector organisations and community groups. I am immensely grateful for the support from His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant and the Lieutenantcy, past High Sheriffs, those High Sheriffs in nomination, and the previous Under Sheriff Andrew Cochrane. It has been a joy to nurture these friendships and I particularly send very best wishes and congratulations to the current High Sheriff, Ian Morgan OBE.

The support from my partner George and additional consorts Anne and David Grattidge without doubt enabled me to get to grips with the task ahead and I am immensely grateful for the support they gave.

I have been privileged to be among a countywide demographic where leadership, commitment, resilience and a passion for improving the lives of others was in abundance. Everyone I came across played a part in contributing to building stronger, safer and happier communities.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, 'Do your little bit of good where you are; it is those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.'

Thank you to each and every one of you for all you are doing to make a difference and to all who have supported and walked beside me as part of the journey.



Celebrating International Women's Day Derby

The balance of justice and mercy

The Rt Revd Nicholas McKinnel

High Sheriff of Devon 2023-24

Devon is a large county with the great mass of Dartmoor at its centre and I have spent much of this year circumnavigating it en route to one destination or another. At each venue during my year of office I have been privileged to enjoy a whole range of encounters and experiences.

Reflecting on that year, my first observation is one of surprise at how under-resourced our criminal justice system appears to be. It is dispiriting to hear judges having to apologise to juries for the failures of IT and video links, or to find prison governors powerless to upgrade the inadequate facilities offered to their residents. There seem to be serious staffing shortages across the system and delays across the board worryingly impede justice. We hear plenty about the struggles of other public bodies like the NHS and education sector but there are few advocates for the criminal justice system – which may be where High Sheriffs have a contribution to make.

Within that slightly depressing context my second observation is of the hard work, the expertise and the compassion of all whom I met. That includes police officers often picking up some of the most unpleasant tasks in society, magistrates doing their best to be fair to victim and accused, judges in their lonely task, and the statutory and voluntary agencies working to help ex-offenders.

I took a particular interest in the rehabilitation of prisoners because the transition to the outside world is



Shire Reeve meets Portreeve; with Katherine Pugh, 1,203rd Portreeve of Ashburton, a town where the office is uniquely retained through an Act of Parliament

a vulnerable part of the system and often hard for prisoners to negotiate. With release on a Friday (at least until recently) and often with little money and no home to return to, it is small wonder that many ex-offenders are tempted to go back to the sort of activities that got them into trouble in the first place.

'Bring back Sure Start,' was the response of a family judge when I asked what one thing would make the biggest difference to their caseload. So many of the problems they encountered on a daily basis, they explained, came back to inadequate parenting and the lack of a secure home, with statistics regularly evidencing the



At HMP Exeter with Chris Taylor and Director of Services Tina Parker, both of Pact (Prison Advice and Care Trust)

high percentage of those in prison who were brought up in care. I found some brilliant examples of early intervention by the Youth Justice Service, but we are all now aware of the lifelong effect of those crucial early years of home life.

My final observation is simply that the law, properly upheld and administered, alone stands between us and the arbitrary rule of the dictator or the violence of the mob. The balance of justice and mercy is deeply rooted in the Christian heritage of our Western society with our respect for the value of all people but that will always be fragile. We need a healthy and robust legal system, and it has been an honour to be able to observe it over the last year.



Presenting a High Sheriff's Award to the volunteers of the Museum of Policing in Devon and Cornwall at its opening in Tavistock Photo: Museum of Policing in Devon & Cornwall (MOPIDAC)



The Severn Class Plymouth lifeboat with Cadet Daisy, Chairman Richard Benjafield and Coxswain Simon Jeffery

Helping one another

Colin Weston MBE JP

High Sheriff of Dorset 2023-24

It's hard to say quite what I expected from my year as High Sheriff of my beautiful home county of Dorset. Of course, I knew I wanted to respect and celebrate the historical ceremonial role, but much more than that, I wanted to find a pathway through the year that acknowledged the everyday challenges which face our various communities, and which allowed me to say thank you to the individual people and organisations that protect and care for the rest of us, day in and day out.

During my career in Customs and Excise and as a magistrate I have learnt that 'helping one another' is key to working successfully. The main reasons we see people before us in court are addiction, coercion, desperation or greed, and it is vitally important that we try and break that cycle and help them to stop reoffending. But, equally, we must never forget to support the victims and the witnesses whose lives are so often destroyed by crime. To do that all agencies and charities associated with law and order need to 'help one another'.

I not only wanted to support, encourage and thank those working in law enforcement and the emergency services, but to encourage others to help break that cycle of offending. I visited and went out with various police teams including road traffic. I was even thanked by a speeding motorist who said, 'I suppose if you are going to be caught speeding it is nice to be able to say it was by the High Sheriff of Dorset.'

I spent two shifts with Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue. At Weymouth I got stuck some 30 feet in the air at the top of the turntable ladder. I visited several HM Coastguard training sessions and the RNLI at Poole, Swanage and Weymouth and attended an event in Poole called 'DocBike' – a charity putting a highly trained trauma doctor or critical care paramedic on two wheels. Working alongside local emergency services, they provide lifesaving critical care and help to prevent crashes from happening in the first place. DocBike started in Dorset ten years ago and is now being rolled out to other counties. I also learnt about the work of the Yeovil Freewheelers Blood Bikes, a service which provides a time-



With certificate recipients and the Bovington Military Wives Choir



Meeting His Majesty King Charles in Poundbury
Photo: Neil Crick ARPS

critical emergency medical motorcycle courier service free of charge to the NHS and which is run entirely by volunteers.

During National Volunteer Week I held an event at the RNLI College in Poole to showcase the wonderful work of our emergency services and the various voluntary organisations which support them. We heard from the smaller organisations which skills and resources they had to offer and the main blue light emergency services were very interested in working more closely with these other organisations in the future. It was a great success and it is hoped the event will be held on a biannual basis.

Numerous civic days across the county demonstrated the wealth of work that takes place in smaller villages and towns – the initiatives that make a daily difference, and the many unsung heroes who perform countless tasks to help others. There is so much going on that most people are totally unaware of and it was a constantly steep and fascinating learning curve. I also had the enormous privilege of meeting Their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla.

I finished my year with an awards ceremony at the Dorset County Museum, giving out 22 certificates to those who had very much endorsed my ethos of 'helping one another'.

I tried to make every handshake count and I said thank you many times every day to wonderful people who work tirelessly for the people of Dorset. Some provide professional skills within formal organisations, but so many are just ordinary folk who volunteer their time for no reward, and to them I extended particular thanks and recognition.

It has been the most extraordinary year of my life, and also for my wife Ruth who put in almost as many miles! I was utterly privileged to hold this distinguished Office and to have the rare opportunity to give thanks, face to face, to all those who are constantly 'helping one another'.



HM Coastguard training day

Young people are the present



Visiting Wealden Volunteer Police Cadet Unit led by High Sheriff's Police Cadet Cleal



At the East Sussex County Council Annual Youth Voice Engagement Event including youth cabinet, youth mayors and two High Sheriff's cadets

Richard Bickersteth

High Sheriff of East Sussex 2023-24

I have never been entirely happy with the phrase 'children are our future' as I don't think it tells the whole story. From my experience with three sons, they are definitely our present as well as our future. This is probably reinforced by having worked in the toy and games industry for twenty years.

Young people today are growing up in a world of challenges we never had to face. So when I took on the role of High Sheriff, although not a formal theme, I did have 'supporting young people and all those who work with them, especially those who are overlooked or vulnerable' as one of my areas of focus.

I started by appointing two police and two fire cadets – my very own High Sheriff's posse! This has been one of the most fulfilling aspects of my year and they have made me very proud. As well as having key roles at my Declaration Ceremony, summer reception, judges' service and awards ceremony, I also tried to include them in as many other events as possible, subject to their academic commitments. So we did not overburden our hosts I usually only had one or two cadets at any event.

For safe-guarding reasons, we agreed that their parents would ferry them to or from any events. This worked well and meant the parents could occasionally enjoy the event too. Seeing how they all grew in

confidence during the year has been very moving; the shy cadet at the start was by the end happily engaging with the Duke of Norfolk, bishops or High Court judges. In fact my two police cadets' units both secured a National Crimebeat Award. When I visited their cadet units I understood why, as I saw how their leadership skills were also being developed. As a result I was pleased to give High Sheriff's Awards to both the police and fire cadet leaders in East Sussex.

I also engaged with young people during my shrieval year by visiting youth groups across the county which highlighted the need for more leaders and finance. Some were growing – such as Brighton Table Tennis Club, Kidz Klub and Ticehurst Youth Group – thanks to inspirational leadership. Maybe this is why the uniformed organisations that I also visited – such as Brownies, Sussex Police, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service and St John Ambulance cadets – are so vibrant.

I also supported young people by joining in many school assemblies. The secret



With Fire Cadets Jasmine and Simon, together with Chief Fire Officer Dawn Whittaker of East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service at my High Sheriff's thanksgiving service and summer reception



With former mayor and now trainee teacher Mr James Bacon and head girl and head boy at ARK Little Ridge Primary Academy in Hastings

was having lots of photos to show them. The response of primary school children to my wearing court dress was priceless. Their questions always raised a smile, the most common being: 'Is the sword real?'

The shrieval year goes so fast and yet I know that the time I gave to encouraging young people, from youth mayors to my police and fire cadets to primary school pupils, may well have had more impact on their lives than on those of all the judges, magistrates, police and fire officers that I also thanked. As one of my fire cadets wrote: *It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. This year has been by far one of the best years of my life. I have been to places I never thought I would have visited and met people I never thought I would have the chance to meet.* I could not have put it better myself and I know he is talking about the present, not the future.



With Fire Cadet Jasmine's Uckfield unit for a specialist animal rescue demonstration

Children 'Getting Court'

Henry Robinson DL

High Sheriff of Gloucestershire 2023-24

Some High Sheriffs keep detailed records of every visit. Others record every mile covered and every tweet posted. They are at an enormous advantage over me – I who have done none of these things – because they have a wealth of information to draw on when it comes to describing their year.

Everybody warned me that the year would fly by with astonishing rapidity and it has. A remarkable number of people ask me whether I am enjoying 'my year' and, of course, I am. Kind of them to ask but... surely completely irrelevant? I have met remarkable people and been to places I would never have had access to without the entry badge of being High Sheriff. I have also been staggered by the scale and the generosity of the charitable and voluntary sectors in the county. But I strongly suspect that all High Sheriffs say the same, so I want to concentrate on two aspects of what goes on in Gloucestershire which I think are unusual.

A previous High Sheriff introduced a way of getting schoolchildren into our Crown Court in Gloucester, imaginatively called 'Getting Court'. The children come



With Cllr Jaro Kubaszczyk on Polish Heritage Day in Kings Square, Gloucester

with a teacher and sit in on a Friday morning court session. About halfway through the morning the judge clears the courtroom and calls the children forward so they are sitting where they have just seen the barristers performing and has

a conversation with them. They do this with amazing humanity, understanding and humour. There is then a brief address from an ex-prisoner – who now has turned their life around – giving an insider's view of life in prison. It is an eye-opening and personal account, which cannot fail to move anyone who hears it. I suggest that this type of crime prevention is enormously valuable and is naturally increasingly vulnerable to spending cuts. But the cost of 'Getting Court' for an entire year is paid for if it stops one young person being in a young offender institution for six weeks. It is, I would suggest, a scheme which could benefit from being more widely adopted.

One of my introductions in the course of this year has been what we have called a 'High Sheriff's Round Table' – a discussion with local leaders of industry about getting better value for their CSR budgets. In conjunction with our Community

Foundation there seems to be some scope for mutual benefit, whereby the costs of achieving an industry's corporate objectives are reduced by an existing process, about which all too often they know little. As I approach the end of my year, I very much hope that my successors will continue with this project.



An inspiring visit to The Butterfly Garden (a project for people of all ages dealing with disablement of any kind) to discover all the wonderful work that Chris Evans (centre) and others are doing



On a visit to see IT Schools Africa (now ITSA Digital Trust) and all the wonderful work they are doing in recycling tired computers and making use of them in Africa and in Gloucestershire

Why are they falling in...?

Ina De

High Sheriff of Greater London 2023-24

It has been a very great privilege to serve as High Sheriff of Greater London. The response to 'Hello, I'm the High Sheriff' still remains for the most part 'What's that?', but much ground has been covered and many incredible Londoners thanked and recognised.

Superhuman efforts are being made to keep justice alive and the warm reception received at every court visit was humbling. In addition to Greater London's nine Crown Courts, I met and thanked people who are working hard to deal with whatever is thrown at them across the judicial arena, including Magistrates' and Family Courts, Tribunals, Coroners' Courts, prisons and probation. South London Coroners win the prize for the most unusual visit by virtue of including a post mortem on the agenda.

I thanked brave witnesses at our second Justice Awards ceremony held at the Supreme Court, where a large turnout of impressively robed judges enhanced the occasion. It is notable how many young people perform acts of bravery in often terrifying circumstances. The recognition we are able to give as High Sheriffs is vital and the support from our hosts dignified both ceremonies.

Southwark Cathedral deserves a special thank you for hosting my legal thanksgiving service in November. There are a great number of people who perform the vital role of delivering justice day in and day



On a visit to Brixton Prison with members of the Pact team, Alastair Gordon (Pact trustee, centre right), Andy Keen-Downs (Pact CEO, second from right), and the Revd Raymond Baudon (High Sheriff's Chaplain) Photo: Andy Aitchison



With the Right Hon Lord Hodge (Deputy President of the Supreme Court) at the Justice Awards ceremony at the Supreme Court

out with tenacity, flair and integrity and it was wonderful to be able to bring them all together. Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester and Bishop for Prisons, asked the pertinent questions in her address. What is it we want prisons to achieve and how successful have we been at delivering that? Aside from dire conditions and an estate which isn't fit for purpose, finding a job after serving a sentence is a real challenge and reconviction rates within a year of release are high. I have had the pleasure of meeting many dedicated volunteers and charities who are working hard to break the cycle of reoffending, including PACT, Unlocked Grads, Shannon Trust, Give-a-Book, Beating Time, Bounce Back, and Onwards and Upwards to name a few. They are all unsung heroes and celebrating them, together with the justices in the wonderful surroundings

of Southwark Cathedral, felt joyful, uplifting and completely appropriate.

All this has reinforced for me how crucial it is to provide young people with a good start in life. Desmond Tutu nailed it when he said: 'There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.' In that spirit, it was a proud moment when London-based DIVERT reached the finals of the National Crimebeat Awards, coming second overall. DIVERT's objective is to prevent reoffending by leading young people away from crime and into employment, education and training. The programme started in Brixton in 2015 and their young ambassadors now work in 13 of London's busiest police custody suites, turning around young people's lives. Compassion truly is alive and well in Greater London.



With Jordanne Cliffe on a visit to Fine Cell Work, a rehabilitation charity that helped stitched the High Sheriff of Greater London cape



Outside Westminster Abbey for the RNLI's 200th anniversary thanksgiving service

How can 12 months have passed so quickly?

Mary-Liz Walker JP DL

High Sheriff of Greater Manchester 2023-24

Life-affirming, humbling, joyful, sometimes challenging but utterly engrossing is how I describe my shrieval year.

The eight boroughs and two cities that make up Greater Manchester each contribute their distinct local characteristics to the county. Yet the thread that weaves its way through all our communities is the positive and powerful impact our volunteers have on every aspect of life across Greater Manchester.

From the outset, I focused on giving as much time as I could to the range of organisations I anticipated visiting. I'm grateful to my DL colleagues for identifying so many groups operating below the radar and I quickly learned that embracing social media gave me the opportunity to highlight the wonderful work they do to a wider audience.

As High Sheriff, once I realised I could legitimately unleash my natural inquisitiveness, there was no holding back. Without exception, I was repaid by the sheer volume of information groups shared, their enthusiasm, engagement and passion for what they do.

Two new inspiring groups I visited are doing extraordinary work to address the silence and stigma affecting men who suffer from poor mental health by facilitating better access to appropriate clinical and peer support. This need was

brought sharply into focus driving to an engagement. My husband and I witnessed a young man positioning himself to jump on to the motorway from an overhead bridge as we passed below. Our 999 alert was one of many received by GMP and, thankfully, we later learned he was safely rescued from that moment of crisis.

Happier events that will live long in my memory were my involvement with GMP Cadets (so many groups!), attending attestations for special constables, observing public order training and as a passenger with the tactical driving unit during training assessments.

The civic events were many and varied, uplifting and very moving and included: the 90th anniversary of Holodomor, Stalin's deliberate starvation of Ukraine (1932-33); and the 650th anniversary celebration of the bilateral Anglo-Portuguese Alliance with superb period organ music performed by Lisbon's Sérgio Silva.

On 4 February, the 50th anniversary service to mark the M62 coach bombing was a sombre, dignified memorial event on a wet, cold morning. A 25-pound IRA bomb hidden within the luggage locker of a coach carrying off-duty armed forces personnel and their families exploded, killing 11 and injuring 31, most of whom were from Greater Manchester. I was so taken aback to meet people I knew at the service whose lives had been blighted by such terrible and tragic personal loss.

During my final week, I was honoured



Speaking at the Iftar hosted by the Bangladeshi community with Cllr Ahmed Ali (Manchester City Council)

to attend a deeply moving thanksgiving service dedicated to 26 individuals who donated their bodies to the University of Manchester in the past year. Such altruism enables the university to continue to provide high-quality teaching and research opportunities to the 850 students annually who commence their studies in medicine, dentistry and anatomical sciences.

I've been privileged to meet the groups who cook and deliver nourishing meals to the housebound and disadvantaged. I've experienced a warm welcome to Succot, Iftar and Eid celebrations; participated in 13 citizenship ceremonies; attended four swearing-in ceremonies for 16 family and 42 crime justices; attended the swearing-in of four coroners; and championed the benefits of the Family Drug and Alcohol Courts.

The volunteer groups, individuals and young people I met are the golden threads that weave such a rich tapestry across the county, enriching all our communities. Originally part of Lancashire, Greater Manchester is a young county. As only its 50th High Sheriff, I am honoured to have served its people and I've loved every minute of this special year.



Observing Greater Manchester Police public order training



With David Cam DL (Under Sheriff of the Duchy of Lancaster) and Torsten Gill, the youngest recipient (aged six) of a Greater Manchester Young Citizen Award for raising £4,000 for a food bank, a toy bank and children being treated for cancer at Manchester Royal Infirmary

I could not be prouder



Amelia Riviere JP DL

High Sheriff of Hampshire 2023-2024

I have seen a lot in my shrieval year but really it has only been a snapshot. In that time, I have learnt about the challenges and long-term risks emergency service workers face. I have met people who habitually fight the natural urge to flee and instead run towards danger. These people are not exceptional in their own minds; they are just doing their jobs. Jobs the great majority of us could not even consider doing and are barely aware are being done daily on our behalf.

The British criminal justice system is a jewel but a sadly undervalued one. Wander into a courthouse and tell me you really think the criminal law is a valued institution. I'm not sure I've ever been in a courthouse, a prison or a police station that doesn't have a stock of metal bins to catch the water coming through the stained ceiling tiles.

Commentators describe the criminal justice system as broken. It's tired but it's not actually broken and won't be until the current pressures result in the undermining of its fundamental principles balancing the protection of society and individual rights; all defendants

are innocent until proven guilty and should receive a fair trial, with the high burden of proof beyond all reasonable doubt shouldered by the prosecution.

There's a risk we take the criminal justice system for granted because, if we are lucky, we will never come into contact with it. Unless you are unfortunate enough to be a victim, witness a crime or offend you are happily unlikely to be touched by it.

When Legal Aid was cut there was some spurious reasoning that habitual offenders shouldn't be financially supported by the taxpayer – although the taxpayer pays for custody – despite the fact that everyone enters the dock for an offence innocent until proven guilty. In reality Legal Aid is for the victims not defendants. How else do the two per cent of adults who are victims of crime every year move on and reclaim their lives if they have to wait years for the catharsis of a trial?

The inevitable consequence of delays in trials is long remand times – in effect imprisoning the innocent, flying in the face of the precious held principle of innocent until proven guilty. We are at a 50-year high in the number of those on remand. These people remain unconvicted but incarcerated sometimes for as long, or longer, than they would

With recipients of a High Sheriff's Award at the Wessex Learning Centre near Winchester Cathedral Photo: Joe Low

be on conviction and sentencing – 17 per cent of all imprisoned men in England and Wales are on remand.

I started the year interested in the many volunteers contributing to the criminal justice system. These volunteers do extraordinary things and make a real difference to people's lives. But what I had failed to understand was quite how many unsung heroes also exist in public service away from the front-line roles.

There is no question that the criminal justice system needs some care and attention. More significantly those working and volunteering in criminal justice deserve recognition by society and a greater acknowledgement of the service given and received.

However, despite all the challenges I have been blown away by the people I have met in the criminal justice system – ordinary public servants and volunteers doing extraordinary things for us, the public.

For me the high point of my shrieval year was the opportunity to recognise a very few of these people with a High Sheriff's Award. I could not be prouder of either the criminal justice system or my county.

'Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope'

– Kofi Annan

Liz Green

High Sheriff of Hertfordshire 2023-24

During my year I have sought to highlight the challenges faced daily by people with low literacy. Many of us take for granted that we can travel almost anywhere in the world and someone will speak English, yet for over 16 per cent of those living in the UK a utility bill, a bus timetable, or an appointment for a medical check would be beyond them.

In November 2023 I hosted a symposium at the University of Hertfordshire on my theme of 'Reading, writing and rehabilitation'. We brought together charities, the emergency services, those working in the criminal justice system, and businesses which help those with lived prison experience back into work. Workshops and panel discussions took place, and we heard from two representatives from Timpson, who spoke candidly about the benefits of employing those with lived prison experience. Our keynote speaker, Her Honour Judge Wendy Joseph KC (a retired Old Bailey judge and award-winning author), spoke powerfully about the link between literacy and levels of crime, and at the end of the symposium I asked myself and those present: 'what next?'

Since 2020 I've volunteered for Shannon Trust, who work to improve literacy in prisons and have recently begun training in numeracy. With my focus on literacy, I'm delighted that Shannon Trust and Hertfordshire Probation Service are beginning a one-year pilot, with the objective of improving



At the literacy symposium with facilitator Greg Hurst (Head of Communications at Centre for Homelessness Impact and former Social Affairs Editor at The Times), Sam Onaguruwa (Founder Ascend Life Coaching), Caragh Arthur (Senior Policy Advisor HMPPS), Rachel Halling (Head of Education at HMP The Mount), Dan White (co-director DWRM Consultants CIC) and Matt Cannon (CEO of Herts Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders, HACRO) Photo: Elizabeth Dalziel

literacy levels for those on probation.

During visits to charities (Google is a useful search engine for discovering lesser-known charities) I've championed literacy, and both online and in-person training has recently taken place to help those in our communities who, for whatever reason, struggle to read. This new initiative has great potential, if we can encourage individuals to 'have a go'.

While some established charities 'expect a visit' from the High Sheriff it's been a joy to discover new ones, with some being chosen by our panel to receive a High Sheriff's Award at our annual ceremony. I hosted lunch for the judges at St Albans Crown Court and invited



At County Hall for the Hertfordshire Faith Covenant with Cllr Terry Douris (Chairman of Herts CC), representatives from the County Council Exec, Diversity and Inclusion Team, charities, Herts Fire and Rescue and others. Twenty-two leaders from Bahai, Christian, Hindu, Islam, Jain, Jewish, Quaker and Sikh faiths and Inter Faith leaders signed the Faith Covenant

representatives of charities to join us and to sit in court, which was appreciated by those present.

To promote literacy, and raise funds for Herts Community Foundation, between January and March, my mascot 'Herty' and I visited all forty-six libraries across Hertfordshire. I had no idea of the range of community activities that libraries organise, nor that library card holders (in Herts at least) can download most newspapers, magazines and audio

books free of charge via the BorrowBox, Libby and PressReader apps. Those who think that libraries 'only lend books' should go and visit – they are a warm, safe, non-judgemental space, which is so important to local communities, and often this is the only time an individual will talk to someone else that day/week. Some libraries are the only place locally to access printers and photocopiers. Activities include health and nature walks, 'Coffee & Chat', digital skills, a home library service, meeting their PCSO or councillor, Lego, virtual reality, 'Cosmic Curiosity', hearing aid checks, advice from banks. Libraries enable young people to volunteer, offer work experience to those with SEND or lived prison experience and much, much more.

I should close with the vital, nearly always unsung work – unless something goes wrong – of our judiciary, police, emergency services and faith leaders. In these troubled times it's been important to take part in Prayers for Peace, and interfaith gatherings. Those who work in the criminal justice system don't know what they will face on a daily basis, and we owe them a huge debt.



Meeting PCSOs and staff at Croxley Green Library



With award winners and cadets at Micklefield Hall, Sarratt

'You made me feel seen'

Henrietta Chubb JP

High Sheriff of Leicestershire 2023-24

I am contemplating what future, current and past High Sheriffs, as well as other readers, might want to hear about my year in office.

I could tell you about the hundreds of people I have been privileged to meet but this is documented on the High Sheriff of Leicestershire's website and social media.

I could share stories, like the time I sat among a prison choir, predominantly made up of people on life sentences, singing 'I Want to Break Free', or the time when a police officer almost shut me in a cupboard for my own safety when a situation got a bit lively, but there is simply not the space here.

I set out on my year with the brilliant advice to 'just do it your way', which was both most valuable and most useless because I had no idea what 'doing it my way' was going to look like.

In my year I chose to visit and recognise the smaller charities and organisations which don't normally attract the attention of the High Sheriff and perhaps are in the greatest need.

In the first half of my year, I realised that I needed to discover and make these contacts and get on invitations lists. I went out to meet people and was deeply touched and heartened by the warm reception I received from so many communities.

People were polite and welcoming, but it became apparent they were unfamiliar with the role of High Sheriff – its historical significance as a royal appointment, its non-political and independent nature, and its esteemed position in many counties.

It became a ritual at my visits to



Out with the team from Mansfield House Police Station, Leicester to observe the night-time economy

explain the modern role of the High Sheriff, a gesture that was well received and provided context, especially during award presentations, and gave greater impact for the people I met.

Dispelling misconceptions surrounding the role – that it was like a mayor or you needed a legal or an elite background – allowed me to engage more effectively with communities. It is about service to your county and not about self-promotion or business connections.

In my year, I learnt that many counties have a High Sheriff's fund; Leicestershire did not, so I set one up and have raised over £30,000 capital so far. Future High Sheriffs can then use the income only, generated from the invested capital, to give to charities in line with the shrieval role. I will continue to promote and watch over the fund; it is my legacy and gift to the county.

It has been a genuine pleasure to watch my police cadets grow in confidence and stature during their year of service and to become friends with their families.

As my year in office drew to a close, I held a 'thank you' reception for the remarkable individuals and volunteers that I had met during my year. With over 250 attendees representing 80 organisations, it was my attempt to ensure they felt valued and appreciated.

Serving as High Sheriff has been an unbelievable privilege and is absolutely what you make of it – a role I was told was the coolest job someone had ever heard of and they are right.

We are in a unique position to connect a wide range of people and can be a catalyst for unity and collaboration.

Though my term has ended, my commitment to serving the community continues and I will continue, quietly and unobtrusively, to connect and help those organisations which I had the privilege to meet during my year in office.

A final story: a recipient of a High Sheriff's Award, upon spotting me at an event, called out, 'It's the High Sheriff, she gave me an award and it was first time I had felt seen.' Job done!



Presenting Diane Taylor (left) and members of the New Testament Church of God with a High Sheriff's Award



At Eyres Monsell Club for Young People for inclusion group night where I ran a mock trial and presented High Sheriff's Awards

Communities developing solutions to issues



Dr Naomi Maynard, Director at Feeding Liverpool, receiving a High Sheriff's Certificate



Afrah Qassim, CEO Savera UK, receiving a High Sheriff's Certificate for work on tackling culturally specific abuse in the UK, including forced marriage, 'honour-based' abuse and female genital mutilation

Dr Ruth Hussey CB OBE DL

High Sheriff of Merseyside 2023-24

It has been a great honour to serve as the 50th High Sheriff for the County of Merseyside. During the year, the range of activities that I have been involved with has been remarkable and very enjoyable.

There are five councils in Merseyside and mayoral activities are always interesting and varied. I have attended Freedom of the City/Borough awards, flag-raising for memorial days, civic services, charitable fundraising events and the Lord Mayor's Civic Day which showcased Liverpool at its best, featuring St George's Hall, Speke Hall and Strawberry Field.

It was also a pleasure to go on board ship with the Liverpool Seafarers Centre to give Christmas presents to merchant sailors. Hearing their stories about being away from home and their families was very moving and the support provided by the centre is greatly appreciated. The carol concert at the Savoy Chapel was very special and it was fascinating to be shown the hassock used during 'pricking the lites' when the bodkin is pushed through the paper (when appointing High Sheriffs for the three ceremonial counties of Lancashire, Greater Manchester, and Merseyside).

My theme for the year was health inequalities, recognising the link between crime and disorder and disadvantaged circumstances. It was particularly evident when sitting in the family court with His Honour Judge Steven Parker,

highlighting the impact of addictions and mental ill health and in visiting charities addressing domestic violence.

The Judges' Service to mark the start of the legal year is held at Liverpool Cathedral. In her sermon, Professor Dame Carol Black DBE spoke powerfully, based on her national report, advocating that vulnerable people with substance misuse problems get the support they need to recover and turn their lives around, both in the community and in prison. The Crown Court in Liverpool is trialling a new approach to sentencing for substance misuse which will help people find a new path in life.

Another example of how communities are responding to current challenges is in relation to the cost of living and the need for affordable and sustainable food production. Feeding Liverpool is the City of Liverpool's food alliance, connecting and equipping people and organisations to work towards good food for all. I visited the Kindling Trust which is starting regenerative farming and educational sessions; an RHS award-winning Brickyard garden at Everton in the Community which is growing food with the community; Emmaus in Sefton which provides services for those who are homeless with its allotment garden and community space; a YMCA farm which supports people in recovery; and many food providers including St Matthew's community pantry in St Helens which provides affordable food and holistic support. It is very encouraging to see communities

developing their own solutions to issues.

Someone who has done precisely that is 16-year-old Khan Oditia, to whom I awarded my first High Sheriff's Award Certificate for the work he has done to create a community garden and to eliminate fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour in his neighbourhood. I was delighted to attend the National Crimebeat Awards in March and to witness Khan winning first prize as well as an award for best presentation!

As the year draws to a close, it has been a privilege to learn about the fantastic work done by organisations and charities on Merseyside. In order to highlight the issues and efforts being made to reduce health inequalities, I have spoken at conferences on child poverty, housing, food, the economy and health and I will do more of that once the year is over. My sincere thanks go to all who have supported me through the year. It has been an immense privilege to serve as High Sheriff.



With Professor Dame Carol Black at the Judges' Service, Liverpool Cathedral

Traditions and awards



Presenting a High Sheriff's Award Certificate to Sue Taylor-Franklin of Cwm Taf Morgannwg MIND



With members of 415 (Merthyr Tydfil) Squadron, No 1 Welsh Wing, RAF Air Cadets

Professor Jean White CBE

High Sheriff of Mid Glamorgan 2023-24

I realised in my preparation for my year as High Sheriff that traditions and expectations are many and varied, unique to the county in which you serve and in support of the 1,000 years plus heritage we all become part of. I was keen to play my part to keep these traditions alive during my tenure because I recognised that building on the past ensured continuity and often led to greater impact long term.

In 2009, Anne Morgan, the then High Sheriff, decided to raise money and give awards to young people who had done good work in the community. This initiative has since grown and is now a large annual High Sheriff's event. I joined the steering panel made up of past, present and future High Sheriffs in my nomination year and will continue to support its fundraising activities in future years. This year's main sponsor, Sony UK, also offered week-long paid work experience to two exceptional young people. Past winners have gone on to be winners of the national St David Awards in Wales. I am proud to have acknowledged these young people and I believe these awards serve to inspire future activities.

Throughout my term I have witnessed countless examples of voluntary activities. These activities often provide vital contributions to the services we all rely on, for example, special constables who work alongside regular police officers. About five years ago High Sheriffs in Mid Glamorgan began awarding long service certificates to the magistrates working at Merthyr Tydfil Magistrates' Court. Magistrates are volunteers and the bedrock of our court system. I enjoyed the Christmas party where I presented the certificates for 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service and thanked them all for their dedication and hard work.



Supporting the St John Ambulance Cymru Defibrillator campaign

Conventionally High Sheriffs recognise excellence through the awarding of certificates each year. I awarded ten certificates to various organisations and individuals. To give an example: one sunny afternoon I found myself presenting the certificate, attired in court dress, to Porthcawl Lifeguard Club in their clubhouse which stands on the headland overlooking Trecco Bay. I was surrounded by scantily clad volunteers, young and older, ahead of their normal lifeguard training on the beach, so felt somewhat overdressed! This club was formed 60 years ago and is one of the longest established surf lifesaving clubs in the UK. Often overlooked as essential emergency



Presenting a High Sheriff's Award Certificate to members of Hawthorn Ambulance Station, Pontypridd



Celebrating 25 years of Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisation with CEO Heidi Bennett

services, this club, and the others like it, save countless lives every year.

Acting as host is probably one of the nicest traditions. I certainly enjoyed hosting dinners with various judges. I was determined to promote awareness of men's mental health so hosted a fundraising concert in my hometown, Pencoed, along with the town mayor and my nominated charity, Cwm Taf Morgannwg MIND. The money raised is being used by the charity for counselling services. In February, I hosted high tea for the staff and volunteers, where I awarded certificates to those nominated by their peers for having made the greatest impact in their work with people affected by poor mental health.

It can be surprising what you learn in your year and who you meet. I had a go at weaving a willow basket with a mental health support group and learnt to sign my full name with the Wales Council for Deaf People. I met charity worker Sue Taylor-Franklin, who, with her wife, holds the Guinness World Record for pulling a 48-tonne Airbus A320!

It was hard to choose my favourite moments from a year packed with hundreds of wonderful activities. I am very grateful for having been given the opportunity to carry the traditions of the Shrievalty forward.

Unexpected consequences



At a meeting of the Northumberland Partnership Against Rural Crime on the day that the Sycamore Gap tree was cut down

Diana Barkes

High Sheriff of Northumberland 2023-24

Having been a magistrate since 1999 I was keen to use my year as High Sheriff to gain a fuller understanding of our legal system. One of my first engagements was the swearing-in of new magistrates at the court in Newcastle and I went on to attend four more of these events over the year. At the suggestion of the High Sheriffs' Association I spent an interesting morning watching proceedings in a Tribunal Court and I also visited the Coroner's Court, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Probation Service. I made three trips to HMP Northumberland, not only to see the prison itself, but also to meet with those charities that support prisoners and their families. My final prison visit was to HMP Frankland at the invitation of the High Sheriff of Durham.

I was fortunate enough to be invited by two High Court judges to join them for the day to hear their cases. One day was spent in the Family Court while the other was spent watching a murder trial

involving a child and in both cases I heard pretty harrowing evidence. I am full of admiration for our judges who listen to the very worst aspects of humanity on a daily basis. Both the judges I sat with were among those who came for dinner at home. I tried to make these evenings very relaxed (home-cooked kitchen supper in most cases) in the hope that the judges could unwind to some extent and I hope they all enjoyed themselves as much as I did.

Northumberland is the least densely populated county in England and, although I was not born and raised here, I consider myself extremely lucky to have called it home for 35 years. Having no city or cathedral the iconic feature of the county was the tree at Sycamore Gap on Hadrian's Wall – sadly the tree was cut down in an act of vandalism at the end of September. This had unexpected consequences for me in that I found myself being interviewed that evening by Evan Davies on Radio 4 and the following morning I had to make my way to Sycamore Gap to be interviewed by BBC Breakfast TV which was immediately followed by an interview by Radio Newcastle.

Although I may not have attended as many civic ceremonies as some High Sheriffs I did have the opportunity to visit a lifeboat station, HM Coastguard



Unconventional court dress footwear at Morpeth Group Riding for the Disabled

and the Mountain Rescue Service where I met the volunteers who give up their time to keep us safe and come to our rescue when needed. Their dedication and professionalism is truly awe-inspiring, particularly as they are often working in extremely challenging circumstances. The rural aspect of the county necessitated taking wellies on some of my visits but only once did I wear wellies with court dress. This was on a visit to the local Morpeth Group Riding for the Disabled when, after a tour of the stables, I gave out long service awards at a celebratory lunch.

I was delighted to celebrate those charities which work with children and young people at our recent awards ceremony where we distributed over £50,000 from the Northumberland High Sheriff's Fund to 48 different charities including Scouts, Guides, Young Farmers, Air Cadets and charities supporting children who have witnessed domestic abuse or have been permanently excluded from school. Meeting all the amazing volunteers who give so much to the county has been truly humbling but has also been the highlight of my wonderful and memorable year.



With Dylan Gibson (who continues to share his passion for karate despite losing his sight in November 2022) receiving his High Sheriff's Award, accompanied by his sister Gemma and pictured with Caroline Pryor (Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Northumberland) Photo: Verity Johnson



Wellies not needed visiting the mountain rescue team, but woolly hat essential

Commencing a really useful dialogue



Presenting a High Sheriff's Award in York Minster to Graeme Robertson for an outstanding 50 years' service to York Talking News – just one among an astonishing number of voluntary roles, including 20 years as a guide at York Minster

Clare Granger

High Sheriff of North Yorkshire 2023-24

Although everyone keeps saying to me that I must feel my year as High Sheriff has flown by, I have to reply that I do not feel that way. There is so much to reflect on. I have met so many fabulous people and had so many incredible experiences that it seems impossible that only one year has passed since my Declaration.

Looking back to the beginning of the year, we held a garden party in the sunshine to celebrate His Majesty's Coronation and, incredibly, having to relay the almost 400 people by taxi from the village due to the bog in the parking field did not seem to dampen spirits. I have been very gratified to hear subsequently of the many beneficial connections that were made that day. Making such connections is one of the great opportunities of the role and this continued through various social events and also with an evening introducing members of the judiciary to several charities working in the area of domestic violence. That particular evening commenced a really useful dialogue which is now set to continue.

My year was, to some extent, modelled by the dual themes that I had set for it. The first of these – in view of their strained relations with the public – was to support the police. I sought throughout the year to understand policing in the county by



In the custody suite, North Yorkshire Police

visiting many and various aspects of the work of both North Yorkshire and Cleveland police forces. At the same time, I did my best to encourage a better understanding in the wider community through the various talks and speeches that I made. I was pleased to be able to facilitate a day at Harrogate Police Station for IDAS, a charity supporting victims of domestic violence. This day is set to be replicated. I was so particularly proud that the Cleveland Police Cadets were Highly Commended at the National Crimebeat Awards.

My second theme was to encourage those charities which use creativity as a therapeutic tool. As a painter myself, this is particularly close to my heart and I know, at a time of such severe mental health challenges, what an enormous difference this work can make. It has been wonderful to meet so many inspiring people who encourage others to find a way through their difficulties by being creative. Together with the Two Ridings Community Foundation, we held a photographic competition, inviting charities to submit photographs which they felt best represented the work that



Declaring the result of the Selby and Ainsty by-election

they do. This raised some vital funds for the charities and was a joyful experience for everyone involved. It is clear that getting people to gather together to do an activity – whether photography, painting, gardening, music or dance – is key to improving how people feel about life.

With an election in sight, I must also say how much I enjoyed being the returning officer for the Selby and Ainsty by-election. I would encourage all High Sheriffs to take up this part of the role if they can. It was so fascinating to see our democratic process at work and to feel the weight of history as the sheets of paper marked with a cross are counted.

Finally, it is such a joy to be able to present High Sheriff's Awards and in this way to give recognition to the thoroughly deserving people in our communities. It is an honour and an extremely humbling experience to meet so many such people and I am very grateful to have had this incredible opportunity.



At Pioneer Projects, Bentham, a community-based arts and health charity Photo: James Drury Photography

My most memorable year

Sally Scott

High Sheriff of Oxfordshire 2023-24

I began my year somewhat nervously, suffering from imposter syndrome; I'd love to say that I overcame this, but I always wondered... why me? Despite that, I have thoroughly enjoyed my year and learnt so much. I was inspired and humbled by the wonderful work being performed across the county by individuals, charities and organisations.

I chose as my focus the criminal justice system. Among the fun of police ride-alongs, days with the fire service, prisons and the judiciary, I was lucky enough to achieve a legal hat-trick involving three senior members of the judiciary.

My first, the Attorney General, the Rt Hon Victoria Prentis KC MP, gave the High Sheriff's Law Lecture at the University of Oxford Examination Schools. Over 250 students and many more members of the legal profession attended.

Second, the Court Sermon at Christ Church Cathedral was given by Baroness Hale (past President of the Supreme Court); her sermon addressed the issues arising from the dynamic between freedom of the press and freedom of religion. It was a tour de force on a highly pertinent issue.

And finally, the Court of Appeal judge, Lord Justice Peter Jackson, addressed a meeting attended by police, judiciary, probation and child services to discuss the introduction of Family Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDACs) into the county. I have started the ball rolling in Oxfordshire and my successors are keen to follow up what will be a 'slow burn' project.

I was also delighted to have been involved in an open day at the Oxford Combined Courts, the first in over 15 years. It was an enormous success. The objective was to educate the public as to the work of the criminal justice system and highlight its relevance. The police dogs sniffed, the drones flew, the cells and Serco vans were visited, and the firearms officers displayed their weaponry. This was all topped off with mock trials with members of the public acting as jurors – Dumbledore (from Harry Potter) was, to all the children's relief, found guilty of attacking Hermione.

It was not only great fun, but the feedback was overwhelmingly positive from the over 750 members of the public and the many representatives



With member of the TVP firearms unit at the Oxford Combined Courts Open Day Photo: Dr Nicholas Posner



With Katy Barrow-Grint (Assistant Chief Constable Thames Valley Police) and Marjorie Glasgow (Lord-Lieutenant) at the Oxfordshire Schools Mock Trial Competition



Seventeen High Sheriff's Awards were presented for outstanding work in the county. The youngest recipient was 11-year-old Oscar Rogers who demonstrated outstanding initiative at the scene of a motoring accident. The ceremony was attended by His Honour Patrick Eccles KC, Shrieval Remembrancer and Mrs Marjorie Glasgow BEM (Lord-Lieutenant) Photo: Cyrus Mower

of other organisations working in the criminal justice system.

For those events that I hosted, I chose to use social enterprises to do the catering. I used three charities with back-up from my local publican/entrepreneur. The three were: Waste2Taste (a charity running a café for homeless people using 'waste food' from supermarkets); The Clink (a prison-based catering charity); and Damascus Rose (a social enterprise run by women refugees). A real hit – not only was the food delicious but it was a way of giving financial support to social enterprises and to help promote them locally.

I chose not to have a summer party and instead a launch party on GivingTuesday. The launch related to 'Oxfordshire Uncovered' a report co-written by the Oxfordshire Community Foundation and academics, which I also funded.

The report highlights the issues we face in Oxfordshire and the wonderful local initiatives and charities addressing them. The evening raised around £50,000 and



The High Sheriff's Cup and the Best Defendant Cup were presented to Didcot Girls' School at the Oxfordshire Schools Mock Trial Competition

the report will continue to be used by the Oxfordshire Community Foundation for future fundraising campaigns.

The best advice I received was: be selective in your acceptances to ensure that you cover as much of the county both geographically and socially and, second: remember to enjoy the year, even when feeling out of one's comfort zone... or when suffering from imposter syndrome!

Multum in parvo – the proud motto of Rutland



With 'Queen Edith' Photo: Richard Adams

Geraldine Feehally

High Sheriff of Rutland 2023-2024

During my year I chose to celebrate volunteers – to encourage and share with people of good heart, determined not to be served, but to serve in various ways. So I held three receptions in three different areas of the county and with three different foci – food, wellbeing, and youth and the young – and I met so very many. Modest but skilled and enthusiastic, the volunteers identify needs in their immediate communities and more widely, and address them with energy and skill, thereby developing community cohesion and sustainability. I found volunteers at the heart of village hall coffee and lunch groups, dementia, bereavement and carer support groups, the youth uniformed movements, sports teams, gathering 'use by' dated supermarket foods for Community Fridge, running regular bereavement support groups and so much more....

By linking a fundraising concert to each reception, I raised funds to distribute among some of Rutland's volunteer-lead groups, nascent and established, formal and informal. The many local and largely volunteer musicians of Uppingham Jazz and Soul Band, the British Wind Ensemble, Rutland Sinfonia, and Rutland and Oakham choral societies played and sang to full houses, giving their talents and time generously and



With JPs and a school governor for the mock trials in Oakham Castle

sharing delight and enjoyment liberally.

The primary school at which I am a governor sang at my Declaration in Oakham Castle a year ago, and it has been my pleasure to watch the developing accomplishments of the young at inter-school sports events, speech days, concerts and plays. Working with MICE (Magistrates In Community Education), I hosted four groups of Rutland secondary school students for mock trials in Oakham Castle (considered the oldest Assize Court in the country). Using the modified script of a case heard in the Magistrates' Court and prompted by two excellent JPs, the students played each role and afterwards the JPs led thorough and thought-provoking discussions. The students learned much; however, they were not at all impressed to find out that justices of the peace are volunteers and receive expenses only for their immensely responsible work!

During a recent celebration weekend to commemorate Queen Edith who owned much of the land of Rutland and died 1,000 years ago, I was called upon as Shire Reeve to judge the medieval case of Edwin and the Stolen Pig. Again a script, this time imagined, was used by a class of nine-year-old primary school pupils dressed as Anglo Saxons. Despite the evident wishes of the children enacting the trial and the very great anticipation of my sword bearer, I found Edwin, their class teacher, not guilty and therefore all set for school lessons on Monday!

I have enjoyed the support of previous High Sheriffs of Rutland throughout my year and also that of my regional High Sheriff colleagues. To cultivate the latter, I invited them with their partners to lunch before we took on our roles and we have been able to encourage and support each other since through our WhatsApp



Young and old were awarded at the bi-annual Ride And Stride, which raises funds to support historic churches throughout the county Photo: Peter Lawson



With my police cadet

group. We too are all volunteers and it has been good to share ideas and practices and to support each other at events including our respective Legal Services.

My year has brought me new friends, new learning and new interests to pursue which I shall enjoy, and immense pleasure which I shall always remember... but perhaps a holiday first!

Finally, at the conclusion of my year I reflect on the role of High Sheriff as I perceive it. You are there for others, for the pomp and the circumstance, for encouragement and support, for highlighting excellence and prompting and celebrating successes, so I close with four tips that I have realised over the year:

Walk slowly
Listen attentively
Thank generously
Smile continually



An incredible privilege

Mandy Thorne MBE DL

High Sheriff of Shropshire 2023-24

Being High Sheriff brings so many opportunities to meet interesting people, visit so many community and voluntary groups, and undertake activities which are rather outside one's comfort zone!

Having the privilege of sitting in the Family Court alongside a learned and wise Crown Court judge and being able to watch the work of the barristers, lawyers, court staff, social workers as well as the judge himself was fascinating. The opportunity to observe the end of a long criminal trial at one of our courts was enlightening, not least in watching the detailed summing-up from the judge and, while in his chambers, learning more about the legal process and application. As a High Sheriff with no legal background, I have found the interaction between my role and the judiciary to be a real eye-opener; the welcome that I received from whichever court I attended and the patience of all the magistrates and judges I met and their willingness to share their insights – it has all been an incredible privilege.

One of the highlights of my year was organising – together with the High Sheriffs of Herefordshire and Worcestershire – a seminar showcasing the work of the Family

Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDACs) to the local authorities, the NHS and charities across the West Mercia region. We were brilliantly supported by two former High Sheriffs and were privileged to have the Rt Hon Sir Andrew McFarlane (President of the Family Division), Lord Justice Peter Jackson (Court of Appeal) and Her Honour Judge Venables (Member of the Family Justice Council) as our keynote speakers. We aspire to see FDACs set up in our region so watch this space.

Traditionally in Shropshire we celebrate our outstanding young citizens with an awards ceremony in March where young people from across the county are nominated by their school or community group for doing amazing things. This year saw over 55 nominations which celebrated the best of our young citizens – the awards evening will be an event I will remember for ever.

Shropshire is blessed with so many amazing people and organisations and presenting High Sheriff's Awards has been a real privilege. We asked communities to nominate individuals or groups for an award as well as identifying worthy recipients ourselves and the last few months of my shrieval year have been interspersed with fascinating visits to meet incredible people. From the Ellesmere

With Cllr Paul Davis (Mayor of Wellington) for Pancake Day celebrations in Wellington

Phantom Yarn Bombers who decorate post boxes and lamp posts in the lovely town of Ellesmere to junior rowing coaches in Ironbridge; from youth club leaders of over 30 years' experience in St Martins to the Wellington-based veteran who has created a wonderful organisation to support other veterans with mental health needs; from the inspirational member of the Telford Youth Parliament to the two Bridgnorth-based young farmers who organise charity tractor runs... I have had the good fortune to meet so many fabulous individuals who do so much for our communities.



With West Mercia Search & Rescue

A voyage of discovery

Robert Drewett DL

High Sheriff of Somerset 2023-24

Having lived in Somerset for all my life – bar a period away for education and a stint in London – and chaired the regional agricultural society, been a Deputy Lieutenant for some time and trustee of a variety of other locally based charities, I thought I had an inkling about the county. How wrong I was!

As I discovered, the marvellous thing about being High Sheriff is that you learn so much about the county in which you live. But it can take time...

Somerset maintains a tradition of encouraging each new High Sheriff to be a free spirit and take whatever path they choose. This had the merit of making me think hard about what it was that I wanted to achieve but, equally, the lack of any form of central database meant wasted hours identifying groups to visit and discouraged continuity. In a small break with tradition within Somerset (always a dangerous thing to contemplate for a High Sheriff) I created a list of contacts to lodge with the Under Sheriff (so that we can be GDPR compliant). Many will do that already and it is hardly rocket science, but I hope that it might be a small assistance to those that follow.

One thing that I struggled with throughout my year was how best to explain the relevance of the role of High Sheriff in the modern world. That you are The King's representative for law and order



Hitching a lift with the Wadworth heavy horse team at the Royal Bath & West Show



Preparing to join the Chard carnival procession with a light sabre rather than a sword for the occasion



Planting an oak tree to mark the Coronation of HM The King in Victoria Park Bath with Gloria Craig DL, Cllr Dine Romero (Mayor of Bath), Cllr Sarah Moore (Chair of Bath & North East Somerset Council), Cllr Kevin Guy (Leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council) and Mohammed Saddiq (Lord-Lieutenant)

should be sufficient, but the nuances of the role mean that, in practice, you do far more, as all High Sheriffs will attest. One way in which I addressed this was to maintain a regular presence on social media and sought to post a record of what I'd been up to most days. It was hard work, but it was rewarding when I met people who told me that they enjoyed following my exploits – and the number of negative responses were mercifully small. I hope that my amateurish exploits may have helped in a small way to enlighten people as to the multi-faceted nature of the role.

What was wonderful was how keen organisations were to share with you their stories and how that, in turn, enabled me (as the current incumbent of the Office)

to say thank you to them. I seem to have been particularly lucky to have worked in parallel with a great group of local civic leaders. Tapping into their knowledge and encouraging them to host me for a day and to introduce me to charities within their towns was a great way to meet a diverse group of organisations – but with a common theme, which was the enormous dedication and enthusiasm of every group of volunteers that I met. I was glad to have postponed my tea party until September, as it gave a chance to invite more of those that I had visited, and a lunch at the beginning of March to introduce those in leadership roles to the High Sheriff in nomination allowed me to include others that I had met in the intervening period.

While I very much enjoyed sitting with judges and magistrates, and getting to know the police and other emergency services better – is there any former High Sheriff who did not enjoy a shift with the response team or the chance to get behind the wheel of a (stationary) fire engine? – it was meeting the small local charities and, in particular, the movers and shakers within those organisations, that is my lasting memory.

Finishing my year with a far greater knowledge of my county – and having made many new friends – has been an enormous privilege.

Building a better future together

Professor Jaydip Ray DL

High Sheriff of South Yorkshire 2023-24

It is hard to summarise such an eventful and enjoyable year in brief, but I'll try...

The courts have provided a fascinating lens into society. It was most interesting to observe the special roles of the criminal, family, civil, employment, magistrates' and coroner's courts, and reassuring to see the principles of fair justice applied universally to uphold the rule of law and to protect our freedoms.

Increasing homelessness, drug-fuelled violence, knife crime, domestic violence and child exploitation are serious concerns. Many charities and voluntary organisations do extraordinary work to address them and their interactions with the courts and the probation services are immensely valuable. I have had the privilege of recognising South Yorkshire's Community Foundation, Sheffield Wednesday FC Community Programme, Roundabout, the Archer Project, Military Community Veterans Centre and the Samaritans, to name but a few, for their work in tackling these challenges. It was most humbling to join a pre-Christmas breakfast shift at the Archer Project which provides support to the homeless in Sheffield.

The police, fire and ambulance services do a great job with limited resources. Visiting various arms of these services be it public order, road policing, serious crime or A&E, or at graduation events, offered great opportunities to thank many of these unsung heroes. Joining a dawn raid to find Class A drugs was quite illustrative



With Cllr Duncan Anderson (Civic Mayor), Cllr Ros Jones (Mayor), Damian Allen (Chief Executive of Doncaster Council), Alison Clark (Bench Chair, South Yorkshire Magistrates) and others with recipients of a High Sheriff's Award at Doncaster Mansion House



Pre-Christmas breakfast shift at Archer Project for the homeless

of the risky nature of their jobs. Visits to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance made me appreciate their critical support to the community which is reliant on charitable support.

My theme was 'Building a Better Future Together' through our younger people. Supporting the cadets was therefore crucial. The cadet movement provides a unique opportunity for many to develop knowledge, skills, aptitude and confidence which not only enhances their career prospects but has a great positive influence on their peers. They were recognised with the Cadet Awards. Similarly the Public Bravery Awards and the Court Awards recognised the civilians who have taken enormous risks to protect others.

To encourage young entrepreneurs, we ran a High Sheriff's 'Building a Better Future Together' competition in conjunction with the Work-wise Foundation. Twelve schools signed up. Groups of students age 13 and under met industry leads and then came up with innovative projects from 'solar-powered first responder drones' to 'self-sorting garbage vans' to 'floating airports using green energy'. A total of £1,000 was given out in prizes.



On a visit to Yorkshire Air Ambulance



Students gathered for the High Sheriff's Work-wise 'Building a Better Future' competition

Many individuals from various walks of life provide extraordinary services to industry, education, government, healthcare and youth engagement through selfless sacrifice. It has been a privilege to recognise them for their huge contribution and concerted effort working in synergy to deliver many of the community revival and regeneration projects. The Market Street at HMP Doncaster (Marshgate) does impressive work on offender rehabilitation through skilling-up for future jobs. The CVP (cloud video platform) link to remote courts was also run efficiently and professionally.

On the cross-cultural side, visits to the Hindu Temple for festivities were always very warm. Joining the community for 'breaking the fast' (Iftar) at the Madina Mosque with some of the local consultants and community leaders was thoroughly enjoyable. The Hospital Service at the Sheffield Synagogue is a unique local event where I joined other civic dignitaries including the local mayors. Others had a more social and frivolous touch, for example, the classical and Bollywood singing in Rotherham Civic Theatre with the all-women Rotherham Sangeet and Choir Group and the ushering in of the Chinese New Year with the Dragon Dance were great fun.

The culmination of the wonderful year came with the Legal Service held at Sheffield Cathedral followed by a drinks reception and lunch at the historic Cutlers' Hall. We were joined by neighbouring Lord-Lieutenants, High Sheriffs, High Court judges, The King's Remembrancer, the Recorder and senior judiciary as well as senior police and civic dignitaries. However, the cadets and the police horses stole the show. The cathedral choir and the South Yorkshire Police Brass Band created the right environment with their lovely music enjoyed by all the guests.

Overall, a wonderful, varied, fulfilling and enjoyable experience.

A must for every High Sheriff...

Tim Wates DL

High Sheriff of Surrey 2023-24

Time has flown by and I now sit here as the previous High Sheriff of Surrey having handed over to Shahid Azeem DL at an excellent event at Royal Holloway University. The past six months have been busy and satisfying in equal measure and it will be a struggle to fit them into the strict word limit rightly imposed by *The High Sheriff* magazine!

'Are you a pirate?' – a question posed by a pupil at Ewhurst Infant School. Closely followed by: 'Do you live in a castle?' A visit to your local primary school is a must for every High Sheriff... The children are agog at the outfit and the history and who cannot laugh at some of the questions posed. I also enjoyed visits to special schools and secondary schools where I was privileged to address school assemblies, meet superb and dedicated staff, and be quizzed by school councils.

Engagement with civic life was busy – I saw the Coroner's Courts and the Family Courts in action – sharing a sandwich lunch with a dozen family judges was quite an experience. I was there for (humbling) bravery awards in the Crown Court and I supported the Lord-Lieutenant at the (uplifting) British Empire Medal presentation ceremony. Vespers at Arundel Cathedral with the High Sheriffs of West and East Sussex was a special event as was attending the High Sheriff of Greater London's Judiciary Service at Southwark



At Guildford Crown Court with a bravery award recipient and HHJ Fraser MVO DL, HHJ Rufus Taylor and HHJ Patricia Lees Photo: Jean Dimond



With Mary Creswell (Vice Lord-Lieutenant), Michael More-Molyneux (Lord-Lieutenant) and Sir Stephen Lamport (previous Vice Lord-Lieutenant) for British Empire Medal presentations at Loseley Park Photo: Andy Newbold Photography

Cathedral and the installation of the new Archdeacon at Guildford Cathedral. I also enjoyed prison visits to HMPs Bronzefield and Downview where I saw at first hand the pressure on our prison system and some great work training and supporting prisoners for life after their sentences.

I met with numerous charities and my theme of mental health was a consistent topic whichever charity was concerned. All charities are finding that the pervasive impact of social media and the backwash from Covid have reduced the resilience of many people. Despite this my visits were all marvellously positive. I met wonderful people doing superb work who were really pleased and happy to see the High Sheriff, giving me a sharp insight into why the role of High Sheriff – including thanking and acknowledging people and organisations – is so positive for society. To pick out a few: York Road Project and Transform Housing & Support provide supported housing, allowing people to flourish and lead their best possible lives; Lighthouse in Woking and Surrey Care Trust mobilise hundreds of volunteers to help others; Citizens Advice and St Catherine's Hospice continue outstanding work at the very centre of our communities; Artventure Trust and the Grange bring joy to the lives of those with physical and learning disabilities via art and other activities.

Continuing with my theme of mental health, I concluded my specific work on 'Understanding the impact of police as first responders to mental health crisis cases', working closely with Surrey Police, Surrey County Council, the third sector and the NHS. The final report was launched after Christmas and I was humbled and delighted that it catalysed positive action from all parties involved in this fraught



A visit to Artventure where they use art to have fun and build community and self-esteem Photo: Andy Newbold Photography



Meeting a funny, talented young man at the Grange – unfortunately it transpired he was a Chelsea fan! Photo: Andy Newbold Photography

and difficult issue. This will benefit the police and all involved in the system, not forgetting those individuals who are suffering a mental health crisis – they are unwell and need to be cared for and protected in the best way possible. The convening power of the High Sheriff's role, especially around areas of law and order and the police, was what enabled us to make such positive progress.

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as High Sheriff of the great County of Surrey.

Buckle up

Dame Irene Lucas-Hays DBE DL

High Sheriff of Tyne and Wear 2023-24

It was a great honour to be installed as the fiftieth High Sheriff of Tyne and Wear on 3 April 2023. I knew it was going to be busy combining my High Sheriff's duties with my day job running Hays Travel, but I was determined to meet as many of the people and organisations doing excellent work to help others in our region that I could fit in. What followed was an astonishing and enriching year.

Supporting young people to reach their full potential, whatever their personal circumstances, has been a common theme throughout my career, so making support for young people my focus as High Sheriff was the natural choice.

I was delighted to work with the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland to allocate financial support to organisations working with youngsters through the annual High Sheriff's Awards Fund.

For 2023-24 we supported 37 organisations and gave out £43,000 in awards; the awards evening hosted at the Stadium of Light, home to Sunderland AFC, was a personal highlight. It was a wonderful evening where we celebrated the achievements of the children and young people involved and the valuable work the organisations do. I was honoured to meet and congratulate representatives from community organisations from across Tyne and Wear and present them with their certificate.

Now, as I hang up my ostrich feather hat and head back to focusing on



With members of the Bad-Landers Motorcycle Club for South Tyneside Armed Forces Day
Credit: Tim Richardson

the day job, I say to all those taking up this ancient office: buckle up, you're in for a tremendous year!

My highlights include:

- Being thrilled by the spectacular Armed Forces Day celebration organised by the Bad-Landers Motorcycle Club with South Tyneside Council. The bikers raise a great deal of money for our armed forces and their respect for serving and veteran personnel is clear. The cacophony of noise generated by their parade of 500 motorbikes was absolutely incredible.
- Spending a moving time at a commemoration service of the Falklands War, populated with wonderful stories and evidence of the camaraderie that exists in our armed forces, full of authentic recollections and gratitude.

- Joining armed forces personnel and veterans at Sunderland's Remembrance parade and services to pay tribute to those who fought in conflicts past and present.

- Being fascinated by the expertise on display during a complex training exercise with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.

- Enjoying an evening of amazing music, dancing and food to mark India Independence Day, as a guest of the Indian Association North East.

- Representing His Majesty The King when I witnessed a cohort of new British citizens take the Oath of Allegiance at Sunderland City Hall.

- Visiting South Tyneside Magistrates' Court, where I was impressed by the compassion and respect those in office displayed to people experiencing challenging times.

- Celebrating the voice of young people at the Key Awards.

- Meeting the passionate team at Community Grocery Newcastle, who are delivering a fantastic service to those struggling financially – their corned beef pie is exceptional!



With Cllr Dorothy Trueman (Mayor of Sunderland) and Cllr Harry Trueman for the citizenship ceremony at Sunderland City Hall



With recipients of High Sheriff's Awards Photo: Focal Point Photography



On a visit to Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service



On a visit to South Tyneside Magistrates' Court with District Judge Zoe Passfield, Nicola Burns JP (Family Panel Chair), Chris Graham JP (South Northumbria Bench Chair) and Doreen Stoneman JP (Youth Panel Chair)

Connecting, community: young and old

Sophie Hilleary

High Sheriff of Warwickshire 2023-24

In this virtual age, connecting young and old in our communities is increasingly important. Initiatives that bring the two together in almost any activity usually create respect and understanding between young and old alike.

I have seen that connection being made to work by volunteers throughout my year as High Sheriff in many of the locations that I visited: a boxing club, a dementia choir, a planting programme, the 'bicycle bus', or the brand-new fishing charity Reel Rod Squad with their motto 'Pick up a rod not a knife', inspired by the astonishing *Knife Angel* sculpture that we had in Nuneaton for the month of June.

Early in my year, the idea of launching a 'Young High Sheriff for a Day' competition was suggested. The aim was to engage young people aged between 14 to 18 years old with the role of the High Sheriff. The entrants were required to submit an essay or a video on why they would make a good Young High Sheriff for a day. I enjoyed all the varied entrants' enthusiastic ideas, but thankfully we had independent judges to select the winner, so it was not my responsibility to make that hard decision.

At a ceremony held in the Old Shire Hall in Warwick, beneath the High Sheriff's javelins that adorn the walls, the finalists were celebrated surrounded by their families and staff from Myton School – a gathering of over 150 people, with local media present. After some of the best entries were highlighted and the runners-up congratulated, Aaron Dhesi was robed (in a robe created by outfitters Michaels Civic Robes) as the winner and the first ever Young High Sheriff.

The Old Shire Hall was designed by Sanderson Miller and was the Warwick Justice Centre until 2012. Everyone who came to the ceremony also visited the courts, the cells and the dungeons, which gave the whole event a suitable gravitas.

'The motivation behind my aspiration to be High Sheriff for a day is a blend of historical fascination, a commitment to community service and a strong and lasting appreciation for the importance of the role,' said Aaron Dhesi. As Warwickshire's 'Young High Sheriff' Aaron accompanied me on several charity visits and supported me at the citizenship ceremony.



With Aaron Dhesi, Young High Sheriff for a Day, at the citizenship ceremony

An unexpected outcome came from the finalists themselves. Inspired by the High Sheriff's role as The King's representative for law and order, they set up sessions to discuss crime issues that concerned them in their school. From their discussions they produced an initiative to tackle bicycle vandalism, which they presented to Crimebeat. Myton School council hopes to now implement the project.

I also set out to shine a light on services around dementia, not least because this increasingly affects young and old in so many ways. As our population ages, this devastating diagnosis is upending lives for ever-increasing numbers of families.

Through many meetings and formal visits, I have had the pleasure to meet and formally thank the many people who



Planting oaks with the Woodland Trust



With volunteers at VASA, a charity in south Warwickshire connecting people through community transport and activities



The *Knife Angel* in Nuneaton with the Police Cadets



The Rod Squad motto

work and volunteer in our community health services. This included day centres, singing and dancing groups, nurses, carers' support groups, care homes and all the services that try to link families with the support they need.

I have been the 689th High Sheriff of Warwickshire. To highlight the scale of that timeline (an extension to the theme of connecting the young and the old), I endeavoured to personally plant a sapling in Warwickshire for each High Sheriff before me. I have failed. I have only managed 443! So, Sir Edward Boughton of Lawford Hall, Rugby (1778) will have to wait until this autumn, when I intend to plant the last 245. I hope some will become mighty oaks for future generations.

It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as High Sheriff of Warwickshire and I would like to thank all those who have supported me in my year. I wish my successor Raji Gill a wonderful year in office.

History is for everyone

Andy Bliss QPM

High Sheriff for West Sussex 2023-24

Struggling to decipher a letter in ancient script from Henry VI written in 1440 to the Sheriff of Sussex, cared for by the brilliant team at West Sussex Records Office, I suddenly realised that I was looking at something rather familiar! As a former Chief Constable I have seen a few arrest warrants in my time but this was an instruction to apprehend two men who had stolen two cows and two bullocks 'by force'. For me it was a fascinating point of connection but it was also striking that when the letter was written to my predecessor, Sheriffs had already held office in the county, serving the Crown, for some five hundred years.

My main focus during my year in office was on the charities and voluntary groups which protect the public and keep them safe, focusing particularly on homelessness and poverty. But, holding historical office in a county rich in history, it also seemed very appropriate that I should also support the organisations – mostly charities – that care for and promote its distinguished history and cultural heritage. That's why I invited quite a few representatives of those organisations to a summer reception in the Roman Garden at the fabulous Fishbourne Palace to celebrate the pleasure and interest that they contribute to our interest and quality of life.

West Sussex has a wealth of 'heritage assets': grand historic estates, two splendid cathedrals, castles, forts and,

of course, many modest old buildings.

That's not to mention the many significant archaeological sites and the array of museums, large and small, across the county; plus the impressive range of historic maps, plans and documents held at the Record Office in Chichester.

So, as I travelled around West Sussex meeting curators, archivists, archaeologists, volunteers and public visitors, what did I learn?

I have found that many of the charities had, like many other sectors, struggled financially during the pandemic and are now striving to attract more visitors and funding. Many are using technology to enhance people's appreciation of and access to heritage. And many are engaging communities in new ways – archaeology walks run by Worthing Museum where people get a chance to handle actual artefacts while visiting sites are just one example of this approach.

At every single place I visited I was greeted by dedicated and knowledgeable staff, frequently supported by brilliant and enthusiastic volunteers who contribute so much to our historic places. The number of people who volunteer to support heritage organisations – ranging from the

National Trust to small local museums – is seriously impressive and I found many that I spoke with did other voluntary work too.

Understanding the past can help us to understand the present and inform our plans for the future. So, it was heartening to see many heritage organisations thinking about how to explain history from a contemporary perspective while also ensuring that history is for everyone – including people from new communities or those who are less well off.

In challenging economic times, many people are looking for inexpensive ways to sustain their morale. Beyond the necessity of a warm, dry home and adequate food, for so many people enjoying the arts, watching sport or, in this case, visiting historic places enriches our lives. Many of the places I visited were free or inexpensive to visit and offer fun, interesting and informative days out for families and friends.

During the course of my year in office I was invited to speak at numerous museums, community groups and also to police cadet units – on a couple of occasions ably assisted by my police cadet, Alex Nikolov. On each occasion I spoke about the history of the role, the court dress and what the role of High Sheriff entails today. I found that this history intrigued most people that I met, prompted all manner of positive conversations and helped me to explain the relevance of the role in contemporary Britain.



With Marilyn Le Feuvre DL on a visit to Crawley Museum Photo: Peter Mansfield-Clark



At my summer reception at Fishbourne Roman Palace in conversation with Sam Pettifor, Sussex Archaeological Society Photo: Andrew Mardell



At a West Sussex Constabulary history exhibition organised by Alan Moore (centre) and supported by Mike Rumble (left)

Be ready for anything



At the High Sheriff's Forum with (below) Judith Ford (CEO Wyre Forest and South Worcestershire Nightstop and Mediation), Rachel Tucker (trustee Wyre Forest and South Worcestershire Nightstop and Mediation), Sue Saddler and Beryl Cuckney (business mentor and coach)... and numerous others



Louise Hewett DL

High Sheriff of Worcestershire 2023-24

We are advised before we take up this honourable position as High Sheriff to 'make it your own'. I believe this allows us to play to our strengths and shape our year accordingly.

I have always worked with various charities and projects alongside my career and into retirement and recognised that there was a huge need in the area of vulnerable children and young people. It was a natural progression for me to follow my passion and it was an excellent opportunity to make this the focus for my year in office.

I researched all charities in Worcestershire that offer a wraparound service for vulnerable children and young people in distress or crisis... those facing homelessness or abuse. I arranged to meet and understand the wonderful work they do and the many challenges they face. I enjoyed being able to thank them for their brilliant and much-needed support and care.

It became clear to me that many of



Presenting a High Sheriff's Award to Charlotte Jaynes (community support leader at Birchen Coppice Primary Academy)

these charities – all working towards similar aims – could support and help each other in so many ways. In business, we have many opportunities and forums to share ideas, support, educate and network together.

From further discussion and enthusiastic response, we created the 'High Sheriff's Forum', supported by Nightstop (one

of the charities I was working with), which we held in the training room of a local business. Together we invited over 50 representatives from charities, and voluntary and statutory sectors with an overall theme of prevention and early intervention.

West Mercia Police were very welcoming and encouraging, allowing me to follow my nose around various police departments, trying to understand the reality of some of the current and evolving threats to young people and the challenges they face, particularly the burgeoning online sexual exploitation of children.

I invited some of those brilliant police representatives to speak at the forum leading to animated discussion and more understanding. More than that, it became clear how much our members value this opportunity to be brought together in an independent forum. As Lia Palios-Hayden from YSS said, 'This forum has enabled us to network with other local organisations and to play a role in discussing and promoting the important issues facing children and young people ... generating external meetings and



A gala dinner was held in the nave of Worcester Cathedral

collaborations.' I have received many messages like this, enabling faster lines of support, communication and referrals towards the common goal of making children and young people's lives better in Worcestershire. I'm thrilled to say that my successor is continuing this legacy into his term of office.

Following these meetings we also have an exciting pilot initiative due to commence in September between the police, the University of Worcester and a local media communications specialist. The aim is to work together to find better platforms, format and media opportunities to communicate emerging online AI threats and to engage with all those caring for children and young people to enable them

to better protect those in their care and be as informed and updated as possible.

The opportunity to thank the outstanding individuals and volunteers I have met along the way culminated at my red carpet High Sheriff's Awards ceremony and was an absolute joy.

I also invited and thanked all the businesses and trusts at that event which had joined my 'High Sheriff's Role of Honour' by donating much-needed funds to my chosen charities. Together we raised £120,000. I must add that fundraising is not a requirement for a High Sheriff, but I was able to rally my extensive business network to give much-needed assistance at this difficult time when charities are so short of funds. It seemed



With Sir Edward Pepperall, Mr Justice Pepperall KC, who presided at my Declaration and at the end of my term in office



the right thing to do.

Hearing the stories from those amazing volunteers brought much cheering and a few tears. It was an emotional evening and

I know for sure those charities won more support and pledges of help from the businesses who attended. I love this kind of cross-fertilisation!

My final event was a glittering grand gala dinner in the nave of Worcester Cathedral to mark the end of my term in office and to raise funds for St Richard's Hospice where I have been patron for many years. A spectacular evening where local celebrity Philip Serrell (of *Bargain Hunt* and *Flog It!* fame) held the auction and we raised an amazing £40,000.

I've learnt so much in my year: sat in on Magistrates' Courts and a murder trial; entertained judges to dinner at my home; visited prisons and schools; held the High Sheriff's Lecture at the University of Worcester and so much more.

I've even sang 'Karma Chameleon' karaoke at the top of my voice at the request of one of the students at a local SEN school. You have to be ready for anything in this job... it's been joyful and I will always hold the experience close to my heart.

High Sheriffs of England and Wales for 2024–25

England

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bedfordshire | Bav Shah |
| Berkshire | Alexander Barfield |
| Buckinghamshire | Kurshida Mirza BEM |
| Cambridgeshire | David Way |
| Cheshire | Clare Hayward MBE DL |
| City of Bristol | The Revd Richard Pendlebury MBE DL |
| Cornwall | Sam Galsworthy |
| Cumbria | Christopher Holmes DL |
| Derbyshire | Richard Morgan OBE |
| Devon | Commodore Jake Moores OBE DL RN |
| Dorset | Anthony Woodhouse |
| Durham | Harry Swan |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Colonel Christopher Henson QGM |
| East Sussex | Lucinda Fraser DL |
| Essex | David Hurst DL |
| Gloucestershire | Mark Hurrell DL |
| Greater London | Millicent Grant KC |
| Greater Manchester | Dr Eamonn O'Neal DL |
| Hampshire | Jonathan Whitaker JP DL |
| Herefordshire | Patricia Churchward |
| Hertfordshire | Annie Brewster JP |
| Isle of Wight | Graham Biss BEM DL |
| Kent | Dr Gillian Fargher |
| Lancashire | Helen Bingley OBE DL |
| Leicestershire | John Chatfeild-Roberts |
| Lincolnshire | Philip Dymoke |
| Merseyside | Professor John Mohin OBE DL |
| Norfolk | David Flux |
| Northamptonshire | Amy Crawford JP |
| Northumberland | Lucia Bridgeman |
| North Yorkshire | Dr Ruth Smith |
| Nottinghamshire | Nick Rubins |
| Oxfordshire | James Macnamara JP DL |
| Rutland | Richard Cole TD |
| Shropshire | Brian Welti JP |
| Somerset | Robert Beckley QPM |
| South Yorkshire | John Baddeley |
| Staffordshire | Julia Mitchell |
| Suffolk | Yvonne Gilchrist-Mason OBE |
| Surrey | Shahid Azeem DL |
| Tyne and Wear | Dr Lindsey Whiterod CBE |
| Warwickshire | Raji Gill JP |
| West Midlands | Douglas Wright MBE DL |
| West Sussex | Philippa Gogarty |
| West Yorkshire | Professor Adeeba Malik CBE DL |
| Wiltshire | Dr Olivia Chapple |
| Worcestershire | Charles Moyle JP |

Wales

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Clwyd | Karen Farrell-Thornley |
| Dyfed | Helen Jones |
| Gwent | Her Honour Judge Helen Mifflin DL |
| Gwynedd | Sarah Foscett JP |
| Mid Glamorgan | Dr Richard Lewis MBE DL |
| Powys | Lady Kathryn Silk JP |
| South Glamorgan | Janey Howell |
| West Glamorgan | Melanie James JP |

New Members

| Name | County | Year of Office |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Ismael Anilmis DL | Bedfordshire | 2026 |
| Mark Ansell | Devon | 2026 |
| Michael Bedingfield DL | East Sussex | 2026 |
| Francis Burkitt | Cambridgeshire | 2026 |
| Maynard Burton | Worcestershire | 2026 |
| John Charles TD DL | Mid Glamorgan | 2026 |
| Dr Anna Charlton | Northumberland | 2026 |
| Tamsin Clive DL | Herefordshire | 2026 |
| Helena Conibear DL | Dorset | 2026 |
| Nigel Corner DL | North Yorkshire | 2026 |
| Joanne Curry MBE DL | Tyne and Wear | 2025 |
| Neelam Dharni-Devesher DL | Surrey | 2026 |
| Peter Dixon | Somerset | 2026 |
| Emrys Elias OBE | West Glamorgan | 2026 |
| Susannah Fish OBE QPM | Rutland | 2026 |
| Sam Galsworthy | Cornwall | 2024 |
| Jacqueline Gazzard | Isle of Wight | 2025 |
| Dr Alex Goodwin | Wiltshire | 2026 |
| Jane John | South Glamorgan | 2026 |
| Renu Kapur MBE | Berkshire | 2026 |
| Julie Kent MBE | Gloucestershire | 2025 |
| Sue Liburd | Lincolnshire | 2026 |
| Martin Lukehurst | Kent | 2026 |
| Muhammad Malik | Oxfordshire | 2026 |
| William Maltby | Hampshire | 2026 |
| Ammar Mirza CBE | Tyne and Wear | 2026 |
| Pritpal Nagi MBE DL | Staffordshire | 2026 |
| Anne Nisbet DL | City of Bristol | 2026 |
| Llinos Owen | Gwynedd | 2026 |
| Oliver Paul DL | Suffolk | 2026 |
| Jonathan Pearson | Norfolk | 2026 |
| Susan Rasmussen | Warwickshire | 2026 |
| Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE | Gloucestershire | 2026 |
| Neil Sanderson | East Riding of Yorkshire | 2026 |
| Jeremy Sharman | Northamptonshire | 2025 |
| Gary Shipton DL | West Sussex | 2026 |
| Katherine Tanner DL | Shropshire | 2026 |
| Meldin Thomas QPM | Leicestershire | 2026 |
| James Timpson OBE DL | Cheshire | 2026 |
| William Watkins | Powys | 2026 |
| Dr Lindsey Whiterod CBE | Tyne and Wear | 2024 |
| Miranda Wixon DL | Northamptonshire | 2026 |

We are pleased to announce that all Under Sheriffs have taken up the offer of free membership of the Association in recognition of the work that they do for High Sheriffs in their counties.

Only honours, awards and appointments emanating from the Crown and the office of DL have been included.

Nomination of High Sheriffs of England

| County | 2025/2026 | 2026/2027 |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bedfordshire | Camilla King | Ismal Anilmis DL |
| Berkshire | Sean Taylor DL | Renu Kapur MBE |
| Buckinghamshire | Philippa Kirkbride | Nicola Ross |
| Cambridgeshire | The Hon Frances Stanley DL | Francis Burkitt |
| Cheshire | Joelle Warren MBE DL | James Timpson OBE DL |
| City of Bristol | Kalpna Woolf | Anne Nisbet DL |
| Cumbria | Dr Geoffrey Jolliffe | Shirley Fawcett |
| Derbyshire | Sir Richard FitzHerbert Bt | Syed Iftikhar |
| Devon | Caroline Harlow | Mark Ansell |
| Dorset | Callum Bremner JP | Helena Conibear DL |
| Durham | Mike Poole JP DL | Dr Arnab Basu MBE |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | Mike Rice | Neil Sanderson |
| East Sussex | Annie Brown | Michael Bedingfield DL |
| Essex | Julie Fosh Rogers DL | Susannah Dutton |
| Gloucestershire | Julie Kent MBE | Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE |
| Greater London | Alderman John Garbutt JP | TBC |
| Hampshire | Susan Elton | William Maltby |
| Herefordshire | Helen Bowden | Tamsin Clive DL |
| Hertfordshire | Nicholas Buxton | Meenal Sachdev |
| Isle of Wight | Jacqueline Gazzard | TBC |
| Kent | Jonathan Neame DL | Martin Lukehurst |
| Leicestershire | Stephen Bryan JP | Meldin Thomas QPM |
| Lincolnshire | David Chambers DL | Sue Liburd |
| Norfolk | Patrick Lines | Jonathan Pearson |
| Northamptonshire | Jeremy Sharman | Miranda Wixon DL |
| Northumberland | George Farr | Dr Anna Charlton |
| North Yorkshire | Sir Andrew Lawson-Tancred Bt | Nigel Corner DL |
| Nottinghamshire | Edward Attenborough DL | Merlita Bryan-Hilton |
| Oxfordshire | John May OBE DL | Muhammad Malik |
| Rutland | Colonel Richard Chesterfield | Susannah Fish OBE QPM |
| Shropshire | Jane Trowbridge | Katherine Tanner DL |
| Somerset | Janet Montgomery | Peter Dixon |
| South Yorkshire | Joada Allen | Giuseppe Di'Lasio |
| Staffordshire | Timothy Gillow | Pritpal Nagi MBE DL |
| Suffolk | Gulshanbir Kayembe DL | Oliver Paul DL |
| Surrey | Peter Cluff | Neelam Dharni-Devesher DL |
| Tyne and Wear | Joanne Curry MBE DL | Ammar Mirza CBE |
| Warwickshire | Karen Lynch MBE | Susan Rasmussen |
| West Midlands | TBC | TBC |
| West Sussex | Dr Timothy Fooks | Gary Shipton DL |
| West Yorkshire | TBC | Dr Ruby Bhatti OBE |
| Wiltshire | Martin Nye | Dr Alex Goodwin |
| Worcestershire | Ian Smith | Maynard Burton |

Nomination of High Sheriffs of Wales

| County | 2025/2026 | 2026/2027 |
|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Clwyd | Julie Gillbanks | David Jones OBE |
| Dyfed | Ann Jones DL | Andrew Phillips |
| Gwent | Lt Colonel Ralph Griffin | Shereen Williams MBE |
| Gwynedd | Rhys Davies | Llinos Owen |
| Mid Glamorgan | Sharon Dixon | John Charles TD DL |
| Powys | Sally Roberts | William Watkins |
| South Glamorgan | Janet Davies | Jane John |
| West Glamorgan | Diana Stroia | Emrys Elias OBE |

***Note:** Names for nominees in Cornwall, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside are only published shortly before the nominated High Sheriff assumes Office.

Only honours, awards and appointments emanating from the Crown and the office of DL have been included.

Deaths

The Association has learnt with regret of the deaths of the following former High Sheriffs and members:

Major-General Nick Ansell CB OBE DL

Date of death: 18-Feb-24

Age: 86

County: Devon

Year of office: 2002

Sir Christopher Benson JP DL

Date of death: 21-Jan-24

Age: 90

County: Wiltshire

Year of office: 2002

David Bowen

Date of death: 19-Feb-23

Age: 80

County: Gwent

Under Sheriff

Christopher Brain DL

Date of death: 14-Mar-24

Age: 84

County: South Glamorgan

Year of office: 1978

Colonel David Davies MBE TD DL

Date of death: 31-Jan-24

Age: 85

County: Dyfed

Year of office: 2007

Sir Simon Day Kt

Date of death: 12-Jan-24

Age: 88

County: Devon

Year of office: 1999

Francis Dymoke DL – HM The King's Champion

Date of death: 18-Dec-23

Age: 68

County: Lincolnshire

Year of office: 1999

Dr Michael Fisher TD DL

Date of death: 16-Dec-23

Age: 93

County: Tyne and Wear

Year of office: 1996

Bartle Hellyer

Date of death: 5-Apr-24

Age: 73

County: Rutland

Year of office: 2012

John Holt DL

Date of death: 30-May-23

Age: 73

County: South Yorkshire

Year of office: 2015

Nicholas Longe

Date of death: 23-Sep-23

Age: 85

County: Suffolk

Year of office: 1984

Jasper Olivier

Date of death: 6-Aug-23

Age: 85

County: Derbyshire

Year of office: 2004

Michael Potts DL

Date of death: 19-Oct-23

Age: 85

County: Merseyside

Year of office: 2006

Simon Preston DL

Date of death: 20-Sep-22

Age: 86

County: Gloucestershire

Year of office: 2004

Michael Scott

1 Date of death: 6-Dec-23

Age: 78

County: Lincolnshire

Year of office: 2020

Michael Todhunter

Date of death: 30-Jan-24

Age: 88

County: Berkshire

Year of office: 1999

William Tudor John

Date of death: 10-Jun-23

Age: 79

County: Hertfordshire

Year of office: 2006

Michael Weston

Date of death: 24-Dec-23

Age: 85

County: Durham

Year of office: 1997



The High Sheriff's Badge

(for wearing round the neck) **£185.00**
41mm x 74mm



Chaplain's or Cadet's Badge

Single **£27.00**,
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(2 for preaching scarf/tippet)



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Gilt for serving and retired High Sheriffs, silver for High Sheriffs' spouses/escorts
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(on bow to wear on left shoulder)

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Association blue and white ribbon (as above) for badges and hats
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Blue and white umbrella **£39.50**

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All prices are inclusive of postage and packing.
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High Sheriff's Award Certificate

The High Sheriff's Award Certificate was introduced by the Association in 1992 to meet the request of High Sheriffs who wished for some means of recognising and rewarding the many 'unsung heroes' they encountered in their county during their year of office. The certificate over the years has provided High Sheriffs with a popular and practical method of achieving this goal.

The certificate, printed in 4-colour with gold border and illuminated Ts on 145 gsm parchment, can be provided in two formats:

HSA 1 has the text and name of the county already printed and blank spaces for the High Sheriff to insert the name of

the recipient, the date and High Sheriff's signature.

HSA 2 is a blank certificate. This enables the High Sheriff to overprint the recommended text which can be found on the Association's website in the members' section under Resource Library for Information and Advice.

The prices for these certificates, which include p&p, are:

HSA 1: 50 for £25

HSA 2: 50 for £20

Example HSA 1*



Crown Court Award Certificate

Not all counties have their own customised Crown Court Award Certificate for the High Sheriff to present or to send to the recipient of a Crown Court Award. With this in mind, the Association has designed such a certificate, printed in 4-colour with gold border on 145 gsm parchment, which can be provided in two formats:

CCA 1 has the text and name of the county already printed and blank spaces provided for the High Sheriff to insert the name of the recipient, the name of the Judge or Recorder, the date of presentation and the High Sheriff's signature.

CCA 2 is a blank certificate. This can be overprinted using the recommended text, again found on the Association's website in the members' section under Resource Library for Information and Advice.

The prices for these certificates, which include p&p, are:

CCA 1: 50 for £25

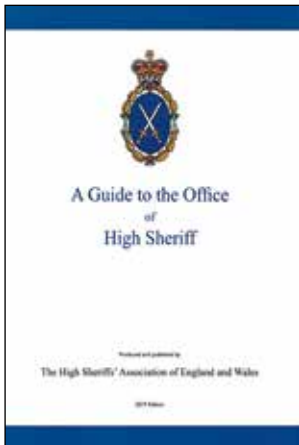
CCA 2: 50 for £20

Example CCA 1*



Publications

The Association reserves the right to vary prices at any time. *Available in Welsh



Guide to the Office of High Sheriff

This comprehensive and revised guide outlines the key elements of the role of High Sheriff in the 21st century and gives practical advice to those preparing to take Office
£2.80



Back issues of the Association magazine *The High Sheriff*
£2.00



A History in Commemoration of The Sheriff's Millennium (1992)
£1.00



Notes on the Office of High Sheriff (per pack of 50 folded cards)*
£7.50

In the news

Congratulations to Professor Veronica Pickering DL (Notts 2023-24) who was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire in March – and so covered both roles for a couple of weeks. Veronica was appointed by His Majesty King Charles III to succeed Sir John Peace Kt CVO.

Reception at the Old Bailey

On 19 May, all serving High Sheriffs were invited to a reception at the Old Bailey, kindly hosted by the two Sheriffs of the City of London, Alderwoman Dame Susan Langley and Alderman Bronek Masojada. Dame Susan gave a warm welcome to the guests who included several judges and other officials in the City of London. It was a perfect opportunity for us to see (many for the first time) the wonderful interior of the building and to hear about its fascinating history from the Recorder of London, his Honour Judge Lucraft KC. Judge

Lucraft, former Coroner for the City of London, encouraged High Sheriffs to attend their local Coroner's Court. The guests were then invited to a tour of Court 1 and were shown around by Mr Jay Patel (Finance, Administration and Communications Manager) who was very informative and entertaining with his anecdotes on famous cases held there. The whole evening was most interesting and enjoyable and the President of the Association gave a vote of thanks to our generous hosts on behalf of the High Sheriffs.

Elizabeth Hunter, President



Helen Jones (Dyfed), Janey Howell (South Glamorgan), Elizabeth Hunter (President), Alderman Bronek Masojada (Sheriff of the City of London), Sarah Foscett JP (Gwynedd), Kate Silk JP (Lady Silk, Powys), Dr Richard Lewis MBE DL (Mid Glamorgan) and Melanie James JP (West Glamorgan) Photo: Andy Howell

Next issue

The Editor welcomes articles and news stories from High Sheriffs concerning their year in office. The next edition of *The High Sheriff* will be published in December 2024. Closing date for receipt of editorial items will be Friday 11 October 2024.

Items for inclusion should be sent to:

The Editor, The High Sheriff magazine c/o Hall-McCartney Ltd, PO Box 21 Baldock, Herts SG7 5SH
Email: editor@highsheriffs.com.

To advertise in *The High Sheriff* please contact Grant Hosie: Tel: 01462 896688 Email: grant@hall-mccartney.co.uk www.hall-mccartney.co.uk

Consorts' Corner

The Editor would welcome any thoughts/helpful hints/observations from consorts. editor@highsheriffs.com



Veronica Pickering with pupils from Welbeck Primary School for a Windrush 75 reception

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court dress kits for
April 2025.



Court Dress made personally for you by Geoffrey Golding MVO

Starting as a tailor in Savile Row aged 15, I opened my own shop in 1963. Since then I have tailored for the Royal Family as well as officers of over 50 Regiments of the British Army and specialised in court dress for High Sheriffs.

In 2001 I received a royal warrant for tailoring from the Queen and in 2018 I received the Royal Victorian Order for tailoring services to the Royal Family.

I retired in 2021 but got bored and restarted at home. I do all my own measuring, cutting and

tailoring ensuring that you get a beautifully made and fitted garment at a reasonable price.

We can supply everything you need for your year as High Sheriff. If you would like a chat about your court dress I am in St Albans, Hertfordshire and please do call me.

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