



WINTER  
2024

# The High Sheriff

Magazine of the High Sheriffs' Association of England and Wales



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

Burghley // Nomination Ceremony // Probation Service // Royal Humane Society // News from and about members



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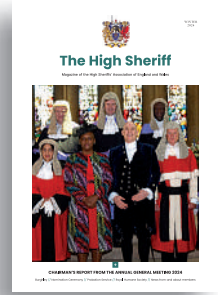
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Front Cover: Nottinghamshire service of thanksgiving at Southwell Minster  
Photo: @shaddha\_bagrodia

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The Editor welcomes articles and news stories from High Sheriffs concerning their year in office.

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## From the Hon Editor

Welcome to your magazine and my thanks to all the current High Sheriffs for taking time in their very busy schedules to contribute articles. *The High Sheriff* magazine is a window on some of the extraordinary voluntary work undertaken by High Sheriffs on behalf of this country without remuneration and at their own personal cost – giving back to their communities.

The general election in July saw High Sheriffs fulfilling their duty as returning officers and photographs capturing the occasions are on pages 14–16. They are looking remarkably fresh given that results came through in the early, and not so early hours of the morning!

The 250th anniversary of the Royal Humane Society is marked in this edition. Many High Sheriffs will not be aware of the Society and the awards they



make to reward acts of courage in saving life. I was fortunate enough to attend the very moving service in St Paul's marking the anniversary and to meet some of the award winners. It is humbling to find out about their acts of courage.

The Probation Service is too often overlooked by High Sheriffs during their year of office yet its impact on law and order is immense – not just in monitoring those leaving prison but also working to prevent others going there in the first place. Those lucky enough to hear Kilvinder Vigurs speak at Burghley will know how inspiring she is and how passionate she is about the difference the Probation Service can make. She has written about her journey and career, and how local services would welcome visits.

The reports from current High Sheriffs across England and Wales show a wide

range of different and effective initiatives: working to help reduce crime; highlighting issues and bringing people together across communities. They also show the power of a 'thank you' to those who are often not in the limelight but work to keep us all safe and help others. These stories should inspire those in nomination to see how they can make a similar difference in their bailiwick in the coming years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Gurney', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Michael Gurney, Hon Editor,  
Norfolk 2021**

## The reports ... show a wide range of different and effective initiatives

## From the Editor

Once again, thank you to all who contributed to this winter edition – it is always pleasing when the end result contains a good spread across England and Wales, the populous counties and those whose High Sheriffs clock up the miles just to reach a train station.

I'd like to cover off a couple of practical points regarding the summer edition of *The High Sheriff*; it may seem some distance away but the invitation



to write will be received during what will be, I'm sure, a busy final flurry of engagements during your term of office.

Next year's seminar for High Sheriffs in nomination falls a couple of weeks earlier than usual on Tuesday 24 June, so to make sure that the magazine has been distributed in advance you will receive an invitation to write at the beginning of March with a copy deadline date of Friday 4 April.

If there is a specific event happening

on or around that date that you would like to incorporate into your article, then please do get in touch ([editor@highsheriffs.com](mailto:editor@highsheriffs.com)) and we'll try to work something out. What we won't be able to do is find room for something three weeks after deadline that wasn't expected.

I hope you have a productive and enjoyable final few months in office and look forward to hearing from you for the summer edition of your Association's magazine!

**Jayne Lewis, Editor**





# Diary of Forthcoming Events

## MARCH 2025 HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR 2025

MARCH

The names of the High Sheriffs on the Roll for 2025 will be 'pricked' by His Majesty The King at a private meeting of the Privy Council to be held usually at Buckingham Palace.

## 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 20 January 2025. Finalists will be announced shortly after that.

## APRIL 2025 MEETING OF CO-ORDINATORS OF REGIONAL MEETINGS

TUESDAY 8 APRIL

There will be a meeting of the co-ordinators (who deal with the regional meetings for High Sheriffs in nomination) with members of the Council at Boodle's, 28 St James's Street, London SW1A 1HJ at 10.30am followed by lunch. Please address any queries to Simon Miesegeas at: [simonm@ccs-group.co.uk](mailto:simonm@ccs-group.co.uk).

## ZOOM FOR PANEL CHAIRS AND UNDER SHERIFFS

MONDAY 28 APRIL

To discuss matters of interest for Panel Chairs and Under Sheriffs at 5.30pm for about an hour

## MAY 2025 ZOOM FOR HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR 2026

MONDAY 12 MAY

To discuss matters of interest for High Sheriffs in nomination for 2026 at 5.30pm for about an hour.

## JUNE 2025 SEMINAR FOR HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR THE YEARS 2026 AND 2027

TUESDAY 24 JUNE

The 2025 Seminar for High Sheriffs in nomination will be held at Drapers' Hall, London. Details of the programme and speakers together with an application form will be sent in April 2025 to all High Sheriffs in nomination for 2026 and 2027.

## SEPTEMBER 2025 ZOOM FOR CURRENT HIGH SHERIFFS

MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER

To discuss matters of interest for High Sheriffs at 5.30pm for about an hour.

## OCTOBER 2025 THE RED MASS

WEDNESDAY 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 [tmsredmass@gmail.com](mailto:tmsredmass@gmail.com) by Monday 1 September. A modest charge will be requested to cover the costs to the TMS of organising the ceremony.

## THE LADIES' LUNCH

EARLY OCTOBER

The annual ladies' lunch will be held in London. When arranged, full details will be sent in May/June 2025 to those ladies who are in nomination.

## 54TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER

The Association's 54th AGM and luncheon will be held at Drapers' 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 September 2025.

## NOVEMBER 2025 THE NOMINATION OF FUTURE HIGH SHERIFFS

WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER

The ceremony will take place in Court 4 (the Lady Chief Justice's Court) at 2.00pm 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 2026, 2027 and 2028 will be read out in court. The Secretary will write in September to all High Sheriffs in nomination for 2026 and 2027 inviting them to attend. It may be possible for a few 2028 nominees to attend as well but space in court is limited. The Association will not know the names of the 2028 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 Clement Danes Church in the Strand. This event provides a good opportunity for those in nomination to meet each other.

## DECEMBER 2025 ZOOM FOR HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR 2026

MONDAY 1 DECEMBER

To discuss matters of interest for High Sheriffs in nomination for 2026 at 5.30pm for about an hour.

# Chairman's Report 2024

Ladies and gentlemen, good morning, and welcome to the Association's annual general meeting here at Fishmongers'. We are most grateful to the Prime Warden and Court for welcoming us here. The AGM is followed by what will be an excellent lunch, at which we are delighted that The Lord Lisvane KCB DL, crossbench Peer and former Clerk of the House of Commons, is our guest speaker. We are also welcoming the King's Remembrancer, Senior Master David Cook, and our old friend, Richard Tilbrook, Clerk to the Privy Council.

Your Association has been extremely busy over the past 12 months supporting High Sheriffs and High Sheriffs in nomination. The then new Lady Chief Justice, the Rt Hon The Baroness Carr, presided at the annual nomination ceremony last 13 November. I had the pleasure of meeting her before the ceremony and was delighted that she came to tea afterwards and spoke warmly to the High Sheriffs in nomination and their guests in St Clement Dane's. As the High Sheriffs' Association, we should be proud of and celebrate the work of our High Sheriffs across England and Wales as they support and champion the police, courts and communities in their counties and bailiwicks, recognising and thanking individuals, teams and organisations for the work that they do.

With our online and regional briefings, together with our flagship annual summer briefing, your Association does its best to prepare, inform and advise High Sheriffs in nomination. We also check online with High Sheriffs in office that what we have done is relevant and of value to them.

I attended all nine regional meetings, and report how successful, valuable and appreciated they are, bringing together current High Sheriffs, High Sheriffs in nomination, spouses and partners in a warm, family atmosphere. It is the support from you, the membership, that



**Andrew Tuggey,**  
Chairman,  
Gwent 2015

enables us to support the Shrievalty and I am grateful to you all.

My fellow Council members are terrific. Like High Sheriffs, their hard work is voluntary. Governance requirements nowadays mean that perhaps more is expected of them. My thanks to them for their diligence, advice, support and good humour.

Today, as you will have noted in the agenda, two step down from Council, and our Hon Treasurer Sarah Le May hands over the fiscal baton to Phillip Sykes. You'll also have noted that today is our Hon Secretary James Williams's last AGM as he also steps down after serving the Shrievalty in two offices since 1993 – but more anon.

In May, James and I went to Belfast to the inaugural annual general meeting of the High Sheriffs' Association of

Northern Ireland – initiated by their Chair and former High Sheriff of Co Antrim, Peter Mackie, who was at this AGM last year. It was lovely to meet them all and to convey warm greetings and support from High Sheriffs in England and Wales to High Sheriffs in Northern Ireland. We also had the pleasure of meeting the Lady Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, Dame Siobhan Keegan, who has been extremely supportive of Peter Mackie and the renaissance of the Office in Northern Ireland.

On Thursday 4 July, the general election saw High Sheriffs across England and Wales exercising their role as returning officers declaring the results from the ballot boxes. It is a great honour to be the returning officer and it's also extremely interesting. Meeting volunteers at the polling stations and at the counts, as well as announcing the results, gives a fascinating insight to our parliamentary democracy. The winter edition of *The High Sheriff* magazine, so ably edited and prepared by Jayne Lewis and Hon Editor, Council member Michael Gurney, will cover the broad spectrum of the work of the High Sheriffs 2024 and I commend it to you.

On the day after the general election, High Sheriffs in nomination gathered at Burghley for the last time for your Association's annual summer briefing. A highlight of the event was the morning panel comprising a Chief Constable, High Court Judge, Prison Governor and Probation Director. The presentations were extremely insightful for all of us.

July 2024 saw the last annual summer briefing at Burghley. Next year, on Tuesday 24 June, we are moving to London, to Drapers' Hall, after which the City Sheriffs will host a reception for High Sheriffs in nomination and their spouses/partners. It is a wrench leaving Burghley with that very special 'wow' factor and your Association is extremely grateful to the Cecil family and especially to Miranda and Orlando Rock who have

**We marked the retirement of Secretary James Williams and Council members Amanda Parker and Tom Birch Reynardson, and said thank you to Kelly Sadler of Hall-McCartney**





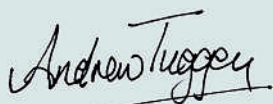
supported us over the years.

Last year I said that I would report back on how we are addressing affordability. We have an excellent paper on the website authored by Tom Birch Reynardson, which has gone down extremely well with High Sheriffs in nomination. It offers sensible advice as to how to reduce costs and address the culture of expectation which still exists in certain counties and bailiwicks. Interestingly too, at regional meetings, High Sheriffs in office are happy to report on their spend to date. That is very supportive, but of course there will always be a cost to being a High Sheriff; there is no support from the public purse, and we encourage the Nomination Panels, which are in the majority now independently chaired, to address the matter in their deliberations.

High Sheriffs remain relevant. There are equal numbers of men and women; High Sheriffs increasingly reflect the communities they serve; they support the Lord-Lieutenants and the whole law and order spectrum in addition to the police and judiciary; High Sheriffs have cadets from the police, fire and rescue service, St John Ambulance; they support and are supported by their community foundations, and spend much time recognising and thanking those hidden heroes in our communities who do so much for others.

Thank you. I now invite James to present his report.

Thank you.



# 53rd Annual General Meeting

7 November 2024

**Deborah Hutchinson**  
Honorary  
Secretary to the  
High Sheriffs'  
Association

The 53rd Annual General Meeting and lunch took place at Fishmongers' Hall in London on Thursday 7 November 2024. It was with relief that all 120 attendees heard that the tube strike scheduled for that day had been called off at the last minute, although at least one former High Sheriff stuck to his plan B and used the No 17 bus!

At the meeting, which was attended by about 87 members, there were a number of changes to Council: Amanda Parker (who had also retired as Chair of National Crimebeat) and Tom Birch Reynardson had come to the end of their terms and Christopher Critchlow, Jeannie France Hayhurst and Mandy Thorn (who had taken over as Chair of National Crimebeat) were elected. Having retired as Treasurer Sarah Le May was elected to remain on Council and Michael Gurney was re-elected. Philip Sykes was elected as Honorary Treasurer and Deborah Hutchinson was elected as Honorary Secretary in place of James Williams who retired after 15 years in the post. James paid tribute to the help he and the Association had been given by Kelly Sadler at Hall-McCartney

Top: Nathaniel Hone (Herefordshire 2018), Penelope Lewis (Worcs 2012), Kenelm Lewis, The Lord Lisvane KCB DL (guest of honour), John Lee (Devon 2013), Bav Shah (Beds 2024)



Roberta Dixon, Peter Dixon (Somerset 2026), Richard Tillbrook (Clerk of the Privy Council)



Alex Schaafsma (US Cambs), Nick Rubins (Notts 2024)



Biagio Fraulo (US Gtr London), Hugh Tollemach (past Chairman, Glos 2013)



## RECENT EVENTS



Left: Andrew Morgan (Gtr London 2009), Senior Master David Cook (King's Remembrancer), Amanda Parker (Chair National Crimebeat, Council, Lancs 2015)

Right: Henrietta Chubb (Leics 2023), Jo Pearson (Norfolk 2026)



Left: Richard Bickersteth (E Sussex 2023), Christine Holmes (Shropshire 2016)

Right: Philip Wolfgang (US Devon), Bill Jackson (Herefordshire 2016)



After the meeting we had a very good lunch in the spectacular hall

and the Association presented her with a High Sheriffs' Association Award. It was then the turn of the Association to pay deservedly glowing tributes to the service James himself had given to the Association. Each Chairman he had worked under praised his charming efficiency, his professionalism,

tact and endless good humour. He was made an Honorary Member of the Association. Following the meeting the excellent lunch was made all the more enjoyable as we listened to the hugely entertaining talk from our guest speaker, The Lord Lisvane KCB DL, telling us how he nearly became High Sheriff.



James Manamara (Oxon 2024), Margaret Miles (Trustee National Crimebeat, Rutland 2019), William Alexander (Kent 2015), Mandy Thorn (Shropshire 2023)



Michael Foster (E Sussex 2016), Christopher Critchlow (Council, Surrey 2022)



Richard Brooks (Leics 2012), Sally Bowie (Leics 2013), David Jones (Gtr London 2013)



Michael Gurney (Hon Ed, Council, Norfolk 2021), Jeannie France-Hayhurst (Council, Cheshire 2022), Nigel Lanceley (Merseyside 2021)



# Nomination Ceremony

## Thomas Sheppard DL

Council Member; Somerset 2021-22

**O**n Tuesday 12 November High Sheriffs in nomination gathered with their friends and family at the Lady Chief Justice's Court at the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, London. The court's Gothic revival style lends a sense of occasion to an ancient ceremony where the names of those in nomination are read out and the list is updated with 'new names' added for the next year group. This is a centuries-old ceremony where the Lady Chief Justice, supported by senior judges and the King's Remembrancer, reviews the nomination list county by county.

The ceremony ended with the Lady Chief Justice addressing the court and speaking with enthusiasm from her own experience as a judge on circuit about the important role of High Sheriffs and the great value they can bring in their year to civil society.

*'As a High Court judge and President, it was my universal experience of High Sheriffs that all immersed themselves in the legal aspects of their counties, many concentrating on youth justice, re-offending adults and the underlying causes of crime. I was always struck by the remarkable energy and dedication of High Sheriffs in their support of local community projects.'*

*The Lady Chief Justice, Baroness Carr*

As someone in nomination it would be hard not to be affected by the moment when your name is read out by and added to the nomination list. It is a special moment that should be enjoyed at least once in the years of nomination.

It is then the Association's pleasure to host a tea party for all who have attended the ceremony at nearby St Clement Danes. This is the Royal Air Force central church and also immortalised by the nursery rhyme 'Oranges and Lemons'. The tea party is an excellent opportunity to meet others in nomination and cement friendships which will be valuable in making the most



Katherine Tanner (Shropshire 2026), Tamsin Clive (Hereford 2026), Edward Clive, James Tanner



Meldin Thomas (Leics 2026), Alexia Fetherstonhaugh (Gtr London 2027), Kirsty Rae Thomas



Richard FitzHerbert (Derby 2025), Ralph Griffin (Gwent 2025), Louise Griffin

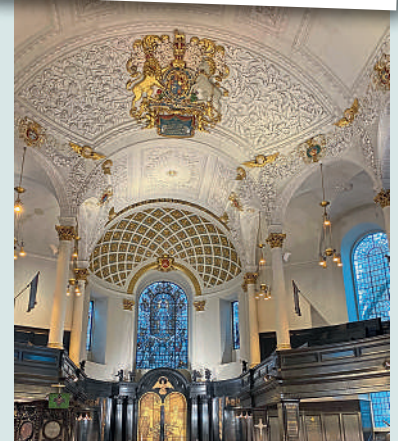


Jawaid Malik (Oxon 2026), Rahat Malik

Below: Rhys Davies (Gwynedd 2025), Sasha Davies, Chris Birds (Dep US Derby), Sue Jennings (US Derby)



Right: Edward Attenborough (Notts 2025), Elizabeth Chesterfield, Merlita Bryan (Notts 2026), Amarah Bryan-Brown



Inside St Clement Danes, venue for the tea party

of the Office of High Sheriff.

As a member of the Association if you have never been to this ceremony – even if your year has passed – it is an event still worth attending. Next year it is on Wednesday 12 November.





# Burghley 2024

**Andrew Howell MBE**  
South Glamorgan  
2020-21;  
Council Member

**Below: Andrew Tuggey with James Williams and the panel of guest speakers: Kilvinder Vigurs, Judith Feline, His Honour Judge Kinch, Chief Constable Jason Hogg**

**Bottom: Elizabeth Hunter (President, Hereford & Worcs 2010), Simon Miesegaes (Council, Warks 2019), Mel Thomas (Leics 2026), Chief Constable Jason Hogg, Andrew Howell (Council, S Glam 2020)**

It was terrific to be back at the magnificent 16th-century Burghley House for our 2024 seminar for High Sheriffs in nomination. The sun shone on the righteous, including of course the approximately 130 High Sheriffs and speakers, so we were able to enjoy a small part of the beautiful gardens on what was a very busy and informative but very enjoyable day.

The morning programme began with the Association's Chairman Andrew Tuggey (Gwent 2016) warmly welcoming all the attendees and speakers. The excellent speakers' panel, wonderfully arranged by Heather Phillips (Gtr London 2022), ran through the legal process, from getting caught to probation.

The first speaker of the morning was Jason Hogg, who was appointed Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police in 2023. He has been a member of the National Police Chiefs' Council and is a Strategic Firearms Commander, Public Order Gold Commander,

National Terrorism Commander, and Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Gold Commander. Jason spoke about the rise in shoplifting and knife crime; however, fraud and cybercrime have dropped by 50 per cent. Notably, there are now fewer police officers than in 2010.

He also mentioned the importance of power and influence and encouraged all those in nomination to reward, recognise and thank the un-thanked; to encourage those who are doing good; and to bring partners together. High Sheriffs should use their past experience and contacts to good effect and be a voice for the vulnerable both during their year and, hopefully, after it.

Next to speak was Tom Birch Reynardson (Oxon 2015), who talked about 'Getting Court', an excellent project giving young people an insight into the workings of the criminal justice system ([gettingcourt.com](http://gettingcourt.com)).

This was followed by a talk from His Honour Judge Kinch, Resident Judge at Woolwich Crown Court, and formerly a barrister and QC, head of Essex Street Chambers and Chair of the Bar Council. He now trains fellow judges and tries murder, rape, sexual offences and terrorism cases. His Honour stressed the importance of visiting the Crown Court – including the officers and clerks – and how big a deal it is for the judges. Wear your finery and sit with the resident judge – a great experience. He talked very frankly of the difficulties the judiciary face with the backlog of prisoners and very tight budgets.

Prison Governor Judith Feline, on the board of trustees for the Prisoners' Education Trust, was next up. Judith joined the prison service in 2009 and retired in 2022. She worked in five prisons in various roles, before becoming the Governor of HMP Maidstone over the Covid period.

Judith informed those in nomination that the cost for each prisoner per



**Above from top: Harry Chrisp (US Northumberland), Merlita Bryan (Gtr London 2026), His Honour Judge Kinch, James Williams (Secretary) Ammar Mirza (Tyne & Wear 2026), Sue Liburd (Lincs 2026)**

**Peter Cluff (Surrey 2025), Suzanne Cluff, Neelan Devesher (Surrey 2026)**

**John Charles (Mid Glam 2026), John Gillbanks, Julie Gillbanks (Clwyd 2025)**

year is c.£50,000. Britain has a higher percentage of people in prison than Europe. Norway managed to reduce re-offending by means of smaller prisons and education.

Kilvinder Vigurs, Regional Director at Probation Service (Yorkshire and the Humber), gave the final talk before the morning's Q&A session. Kilvinder was until recently London's Regional Probation Director and holds the national portfolio for National Security and numerous policy roles. Kilvinder highlighted the importance of supporting released prisoners through rehabilitation and reintegration into the community.

We then enjoyed a drinks reception in the beautiful and fragrant garden, followed by a delicious lunch with





## RECENT EVENTS



Above left: Edward Attenborough (Notts 2025), Rebecca Judd, Jane Bryan, Stephen Bryan (Leics 2025), Elizabeth Chesterfield, Richard Chesterfield (Rutland 2025)



Right: Maynard Burton (Worcs 2026), Caroline Burton, Ian Smith (Worcs 2025)



the opportunity for attendees to make connections and share their experiences with others in nomination.

After lunch we heard from Amanda Parker JP (Lancs 2015), Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire and Chair of National Crimebeat. Amanda has served on the Council of the High Sheriffs' Association since 2017. National Crimebeat is a youth crime prevention charity, established as the Association's official charity to recognise the most innovative and successful crime prevention projects carried out by young people in England and Wales. Free of charge to enter, High Sheriffs can nominate any organisation or individual to win one of six prestigious annual awards at a ceremony in London. Full details and criteria at [national-crimebeat.com](http://national-crimebeat.com).

Elizabeth Hunter, then closed the seminar and shared her hope that the day's speakers and topics had reassured all those in attendance.

Thank you to Miranda Rock and the Burghley House Preservation Trust for once again allowing our seminar to be held in their majestic house and gardens.

Due to space requirements (demand for places normally outstrips availability) and ease of location, the Association has decided to hold the next seminar for those in nomination at Drapers' Hall, London on Tuesday 24 June 2025.

This was followed by an excellent Q&A session with a panel of recent High Sheriffs (Henrietta Chubb, David Kelham, Crispin Holborow, Theresa Peltier, Amanda Parker), plus Deborah Hutchinson (Under Sheriff and Hon Sec Elect HSA) and Andrew Phillips (High Sheriff's consort). They covered a diverse range of topics including Under Sheriffs, county nomination panels and parliamentary elections as well as High Sheriff's Awards, safeguarding, affordability and fundraising.

Many thanks to the rest of Council for your assistance.



Our Association's President,



Above from top: Pritpal Singh Nagi (Staffs 2026), Ruby Nagi

Edward Ziff (W Yorks 2025), Caroline Harlow (Devon 2025)

Jonathan Neame (Kent 2025), Lucie Neame, Michael Bedingfield (E Sussex 2026)

Left: Andrew Tuggey, Anna Charlton (Northumberland 2026), Neil Sanderson (ER of Yorkshire 2026)



# National Crimebeat and the 2025 National Crimebeat Awards

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

National Crimebeat is the High Sheriffs' Association's own charity and fulfils a vital role in supporting the link between High Sheriffs in their counties and the police and crime prevention charities and community groups working with young people to reduce crime.

National Crimebeat was incorporated as a charity in 1997 to promote crime prevention projects involving young people under the age of 25. As crime trends have changed and extended since that time, so have the efforts, energy and ingenuity of young people to help to reduce crime. Whether helping to reduce knife crime, substance misuse, cyber-crime or other types of offending it is inspiring to see the outstanding contribution that entrants for National Crimebeat Awards make to keeping people in their local community safer from crime and its associated harms.

Our National Crimebeat Awards recognise the most innovative and successful crime prevention and victim support projects carried out by young people. The awards encompass the whole of England and Wales, and projects can be submitted from any organisation or individual, as long as delivery is executed by young people. Entries can be made via our website ([national-crimebeat.com/application-forms-downloads](http://national-crimebeat.com/application-forms-downloads)) and each entry needs to be endorsed (electronically) by the county's High Sheriff. Submissions for the 2025 awards opened on 1 November and will close on Monday 20 January 2025.

National Crimebeat has been wonderfully led by Amanda Parker for the past six years and together with a dedicated and hard-working group of trustees she has enabled the annual awards ceremony in March to develop and flourish as a

major fixture of the High Sheriffs' Association calendar. At the November AGM Amanda stood down as Chair and from the Board of Trustees and handed over her role as Chair to Mandy Thorn (Shropshire 2023-24).

Our AGM also saw Elizabeth Fothergill retire from the board after seven years as a trustee. The board of National Crimebeat is so grateful to both Amanda and Liz for their amazing service to the charity. Two new trustees joined the board at the AGM: Andy Bliss (West Sussex 2023-24) and Theresa Peltier (Derbyshire 2023-24).

The trustees of National Crimebeat are all volunteers and we rely on the generosity our sponsors, including the High Sheriffs' Association, and support from former, current and future High Sheriffs in promoting the awards and endorsing entries from their counties.

This year we are really proud that we have been able to increase the prize money for the shortlisted and winning projects and the 2025 National Crimebeat Awards is offering a



**Mandy Thorn**  
MBE DL

Chair, National Crimebeat;  
Council Member;  
Shropshire 2023-24

On the London Eye (Photo: Michelle Butler) and on the Big Bus (Photo: Grania Phillips); finalists and High Sheriffs at the 2024 awards

total of £9,500 of prize money for projects that have prevented or reduced crime or antisocial behaviour, or supported victims of crime. The first prize is £3,000, second prize £2,000 and third prize £1,500. There are three Highly Commended awards of £1,000 each.

The awards are taking place in central London on Tuesday 18 March; following the ceremony and lunch all the prize winners are taken on a tour of the capital by open-air Big Bus, followed by a trip on the London Eye.

It is a wonderful opportunity for High Sheriffs and supporters of the awards to attend and help celebrate the amazing young people and their real achievements in reducing crime and protecting people from harm in their local communities. We would very much welcome High Sheriffs in nomination to attend the awards –

you will be blown away by what you hear and enthused to discover projects in your own county to enter for the next annual awards!

Do check our website for more information on the inspirational projects that have been recognised in previous years ([national-crimebeat.com](http://national-crimebeat.com))

And finally, if you are interested in becoming a trustee of National Crimebeat and in particular have IT and/or website development and management skills please do get in touch – we would love to hear from you via [chair@national-crimebeat.org.uk](mailto:chair@national-crimebeat.org.uk).



Submissions open:  
Friday 1 November 2024  
Closing date for entries:  
Monday 20 January 2025  
Awards Ceremony:  
Tuesday 18 March 2025



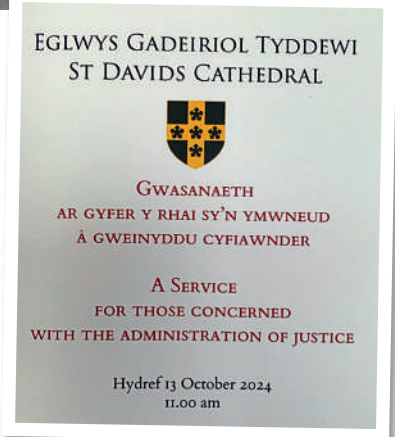
# Wales Legal Service at St Davids Cathedral

All eight Wales High Sheriffs attended the Legal Service at St Davids Cathedral in Pembrokeshire on Sunday 13 October when, thankfully, the weather was kind and the velvet remained dry. Lessons were read by Lord Lloyd-Jones, Justice of the Supreme Court, and by the Right Honourable the Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill, Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales. The sermon was given by the Right Reverend Dorrien Davies, Bishop of Saint Davids. The prayers of intercession were led jointly by Miss Sara Edwards, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Dyfed, and Mrs Helen Jones, High Sheriff of Dyfed. Music was provided by the cathedral choir directed by Mr Simon Pearce, Organist and Master of the Choristers, and the organ was played by Mr Laurence John, Assistant Director of Music. A further piece of music was performed by Miss Chelsie



Robinson who sang 'Embroidery Aria' from *Peter Grimes* by Benjamin Britten.

The High Sheriffs would like to thank HM Courts and Tribunals Service for organising the event at St Davids and for the invitation to attend; they would also like to acknowledge what a fabulous event it was – the feedback from the judiciary and everyone involved was extremely positive.



# Ladies' Lunch

## Professor Dame Robina Shah DBE JP DL

Council Member; Greater Manchester 2018-19

The High Sheriff's Ladies Luncheon, hosted on October 10 2024 at the Royal Thames Yacht Club in London, brought together distinguished current Lady High Sheriffs, those in nomination from across England and Wales, supported by members of the High Sheriff Council; the gathering reflected the dedication and commitment which define the High Sheriff community.

The event offered attendees an invaluable networking opportunity and the chance to explore formal displays of court dress. Exhibits of Jeannie's uniform samples and Katherine's bespoke hats evoked engaging conversations about the traditions and nuances of court attire.

At noon, a formal welcome from Dame Robina introduced a stimulating discussion

on court dress and its role in upholding the dignity of the Office. This dialogue offered attendees clarity, practical guidance, and a supportive forum for questions on the expectations and responsibilities which accompany the role.

Following the traditional group photo, guests proceeded to a seated luncheon where a further exchange of ideas and reflections on their unique roles was encouraged.

The highlight of the afternoon was an address by Professor Dame Clare Gerada, who shared insights from her remarkable career, leadership, and dedication to public service. Her talk resonated deeply with the audience and was followed by an interactive Q&A session, allowing for

a deeper exploration of themes central to public service, resilience and effective stewardship.

The Ladies' Luncheon remains a highly regarded tradition, distinctively tailored to lady High Sheriffs and their unique contributions. This exclusive event serves not only as a touchstone for advice and support but also as a platform to build lasting professional connections. It continues to play an essential role in strengthening the sense of shared purpose among lady High Sheriffs, preparing each one to fulfil their duties with confidence, integrity and a renewed sense of commitment to the communities they serve.





# General Election July 2024

Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, s 24, the High Sheriff is the official returning officer for county constituencies (but not for borough constituencies) at parliamentary elections. This recalls the distinct historical responsibilities of High Sheriffs or Mayors (or Lord Mayors of boroughs with city status) within their respective jurisdictions, although the Redistribution of Seats Act 1885 ensured little practical difference between the two types of constituency.

High Sheriffs can find guidance in a HAS Elections Paper in the members' area of the Association's website.

Twenty-three High Sheriffs reported declaring results in 34 constituencies after the general election held on 4 July 2024. Lucia Bridgeman, Northumberland, managed to declare for Blyth and Ashington just before midnight of 4 July; the remainder were declared between 1 am and 7 am on Fri 5 July.



1. Kurshida Mirza, Buckinghamshire, declared for Milton Keynes North at 3 am

2. David Way, Cambridgeshire, declared for Huntingdon and St Ives at 3 am Photo: Huntingdonshire District Council

3. Ian Morgan, Derbyshire, declared for Derbyshire Dales at 6.30 am

4. Christopher Henson, East Riding of Yorkshire, declared for Bridlington and The Wolds at 4.16 am

5. David Hurst, Essex, declared for Rayleigh and Wickford at 1.38 am

6. Mark Hurrell, Gloucestershire, declared for North Cotswolds at 6.04 am

7. Annie Brewster, Hertfordshire, declared for Welwyn Hatfield at 3.09 am

8. John Chatfield-Roberts, Leicestershire, declared for Melton and Syston at 4.41 am

9. Dr Richard Lewis, Mid Glamorgan, declared for Bridgend at 2 am (the first constituency in Wales to declare)

10. David Flux, Norfolk, declared for North West Norfolk (shown) and South West Norfolk at 4.30 am and 7 am respectively

11. Amy Crawford, Northamptonshire, declared for Corby and East Northamptonshire, Wellingborough and Rushden, and Kettering at 6 am, 6.20 am and 6.30 am respectively Photos: Alison Bagley, NationalWorld

12. Lucia Bridgeman, Northumberland, declared for Blyth and Ashington (shown), Cramlington and Killingworth, Hexham and North Northumberland at 11.26 pm, 1.10 am, 3.05 am and 4.45 am respectively Photo: Andy Commins, Daily Mirror

13. Lady Katherine Silk, Powys, declared for Montgomeryshire and Glyndŵr and Brecon, and Radnorshire and Cwm Tawe (shown) at 4.45 am and 5.15 am respectively Photo: Powys County Council

14. Richard Cole, Rutland, declared for Rutland and Stamford at 5.30 am Photo: Rutland & Stamford Mercury







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15. John Baddeley, South Yorkshire, declared for Stocksbridge and Penistone (shown), and Sheffield Hallam at 4.15 am and 4.45 am respectively



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18. Janey Howell, South Glamorgan, declared for the Vale of Glamorgan at 2.11 am

19. Yvonne Gilchrist-Mason, Suffolk, declared for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich (shown), and Waveney Valley at 4 am Photo: Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

20. Professor Adeeba Malik, West Yorkshire, declared for Keighley and Ilkley, and Shipley at 5.30 am

21. Melanie James, West Glamorgan, declared for Swansea West (shown) and Gower at 2.30 am and 2.45 am respectively Photo: Athena Picture Agency

22. Charles Moyle, Worcestershire, declared for West Worcestershire at 3.45 am Photo: Lise Evans, *Malvern Observer*

23. Bav Shah, Bedfordshire, declared for North Bedfordshire at 4.25 am

24. A sight that will be familiar to many High Sheriffs across England and Wales – this one taken at the Milton Keynes North count

Revd Richard Pendlebury, Bristol, attended the count but as a borough constituency, was not the returning officer.



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# The Royal Humane Society

**A**mir Hamadamin should never have been on the A46 near Dyrham, Gloucestershire, in the early hours of a Sunday morning in March 2022. A taxi driver from Newport, he accepted a fare to Bath, way out of his usual orbit and, as a result, he almost certainly saved an old lady's life. What he thought was a bonfire behind a café turned out to be the house next door on fire, the flames reaching the roof. After screeching to a halt, he had to run around the back after failing to gain entry by the front door and broke in using a discarded fence post to rescue a confused old lady, who spoke little English and refused to leave as she thought he was an intruder. She kept trying to return to get her dog, so he went back in with her and retrieved the pet. For his bravery that day, Mr Hamadamin was awarded the Royal Humane Society's Bronze medal, one of its highest awards.

The Royal Humane Society is a charity that grants awards for acts of bravery in the saving of human life and also for the restoration of life by resuscitation. The King is Patron of the Society and Princess Alexandra is President. Awards may be granted to those who have put their own lives at risk to save or attempt to save someone else. The awards granted for these acts of bravery include bronze, silver and gold medals, certificates and testimonials on vellum or parchment – all may be awarded posthumously.

High Sheriffs may well be asked to present these awards as many nominations come through the Chief Constable, though as they are a Royal Award they will also be presented by Lord-Lieutenants.

This year the society celebrates its 250th anniversary. The society was founded in London in 1774 by two eminent medical men, William Hawes and Thomas Cogan, who were keen to promote techniques of resuscitation. It became apparent that people were putting their own



lives in danger rescuing others and awards were given in recognition of these acts of bravery. This remains the purpose of the society today. Since its foundation the Royal Humane Society committee has reviewed over 88,000 cases and made well over 200,000 awards.

London was where the society started, yet its influence soon stretched across the Empire. Eligibility embraced all British subjects and, even today, those in Sri Lanka, Australia, Canada and New Zealand are put forward for the highest award. Stories cover a wide range of highly dangerous situations requiring quick thinking, determination and incredible bravery by those going to the rescue, often of people they have never met.

Incidents include people saving sailors swept overboard mid ocean, a boy and his father being savaged by a crocodile before being rescued by a teenager on his gap year, a bystander confronting a sword-wielding terrorist and a man leading more than 60 passengers to safety from a burning coach. What is it that makes people act in this way? It's a question that even they cannot answer sometimes, but the instinct to save the lives of others, even if completely unknown to them, is a strong one.

Emily Greenwood was awarded the Stanhope Gold Medal for the most meritorious case of this year. She was pushing her disabled son in his



wheelchair along the coastal path at Holywell Bay in Cornwall on a cold winter's day in January, when she saw a young boy being swept out to sea by a riptide together with his stepfather, who had rushed in to help him. They were fighting the current, becoming tired and distressed in the process. Without hesitating, she swam out through the surf, calmed them down and began towing them across the current even though the man was by then in a state of hypothermic collapse. Covering some 440yds in cold water, repeatedly struck by huge waves, there is no doubt she saved both their lives. Thank goodness Emily was there. She, and all the people like her, deserve our gratitude.

Details of the Royal Humane Society and some of the extraordinary cases of saving life can be found at [royalhumanesociety.org.uk](http://royalhumanesociety.org.uk).

With thanks to Rupert Uloth, author of *Bravery Beyond Belief*, detailing stories from the 250 years of the Royal Humane Society, and to *Country Life* magazine for their kind permission to print.

# The Probation Service

Kilvinder Vigurs, Regional Director at Probation Service (Yorkshire and the Humber)

I'm delighted to have this opportunity to tell you about the Probation Service, my role, and how you can find out more about us and perhaps even arrange a visit. As High Sheriffs, you can help us to raise our profile through events, opening up networks and promoting conversations that develop the prospect of increased joint working. We greatly value your support in raising awareness of the work we do.

I've been busy in recent weeks visiting Community Payback projects across Yorkshire. I saw the remarkable work of people on probation at the RSPCA centre in Sheffield where they routinely completed ground works, allowing the centre to stay open during COVID. This work is hard, but people on probation did a tremendous job. I also saw the amazing work along the canal pathway in Rotherham, opening it up and making it more inviting for people to walk and even stop to sit for lunch – it has completely changed the environment. At St Luke's Hospice warehouse in Sheffield, people on probation were helping to sort through donations, tagging and increasing the worth of the donated items through gift aid. These are just a handful of the wonderful projects benefitting our communities in Yorkshire and right across England and Wales. You are welcome to get in touch and visit projects in your area.



Canal & River Trust, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

I have had a long and varied career to date in the Probation Service which began one fateful day when an advert caught my attention. The advert was for a position working with the disenfranchised, individuals with real problems and the subjects of court orders. I thought: Why not? At the time, my family and friends did raise a collective eyebrow. I had, as a young adult, completed some voluntary work with children in underprivileged areas, so something somewhere was drawing me to helping individuals.

I joined the Probation Service in 1994 before starting my training and qualifying as a social worker three years later. At that time this was the academic route to becoming a probation officer. I was one of the last cohorts trained this way. Today, the professional qualification focuses on criminal justice studies, with more on-the-job training, balanced

with academic studies in topics like criminology and psychology.

Training to be a probation officer is unique and takes on elements of many other professions, including understanding people's thinking and how it impacts on their behaviour, mental health, neurodiversity, substance abuse, the law and how it applies to community orders and prison licences, how to make decisions like enforcement and recalls to prisons. We were often called 'do-gooders', and my response was: Yes, and what is wrong with wanting to make our societies better places for everyone?

Over the years, the Probation Service has changed significantly; things that are now very common practice, like significant partnership work with our police colleagues, had previously been quite rare. Now we have daily contact, often co-working cases due to their risk status or complexity. The Probation Service is all about partnership work, starting with the courts – where we were once described as court officers – providing support by writing presentence reports, helping explain the backgrounds of individuals in front of the bench, the motivation for their offending and making recommendations for sentencing. Either way, there are strict conditions to be followed. Other important elements of probation include our interventions, including group work programmes called Accredited Programmes and the Community Payback/Unpaid Work projects



At St Luke's Hospice warehouse in Sheffield



mentioned earlier (making direct reparation back into communities).

Probation is varied, as has been my career. Having qualified at the University of Manchester, I journeyed south to the Home Counties. As a relative newbie in the office, I took on most of the public protection work (the new way of working), becoming a subject expert in risk assessment and risk management for my old probation trust, training both probation and police colleagues, and even undertaking some European work on radicalisation. Public Protection became 'my thing' in the 1990s and early 2000s: working with violent and sexual offenders, balancing both the focus on community safety and motivating individuals to change their offending behaviours. A new partnership world called MAPP (multi agency public protection arrangements) was introduced via legislation. It's a very challenging vocation, but incredibly rewarding. There are more successes, but they do not make the news. This was a period when we learnt what each organisation could bring to the table and we have a good partnership with police through MAPP.

I worked across the counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Hertfordshire. My first management post was as senior probation officer in an Approved Premises. I worked with a great team to support high-risk individuals who were being homed after release from prison, supporting their transition into the community. Again, we worked closely with the police and other partners like health services. The work with residents focused on stabilising them and giving them a routine, helping them secure employment, accommodation and managing their risks. The premises had strict curfews and other behaviour rules.

I then moved on to managing a community and court team for two years. This brought me into the work of community safety partnerships and trying to promote the work of probation with local authority colleagues. The people being supervised by the probation service need to be integrated into their communities if there is to be a chance of rehabilitation. For most, it is about access to opportunities

like education, training, employment, accommodation, medical support including for dependency and recovery from substance abuse and alcohol.

I became my Trust's MAPP Coordinator, working closely with the police to triage our MAPP cases, ensuring risk assessment and plans were correct. I also managed our Victims' Unit. When the MAPP legislation came in, so did the legal obligation on probation to work with victims of serious crime (violence and sexual offending) when individuals were sentenced to prison or hospital orders for more than twelve months. This work is emotionally challenging, but really galvanised me into ensuring we have victims in mind when working with the perpetrators. It was incredibly rewarding, but my opportunity to advance into senior management arrived and I became an Assistant Chief Probation Officer and Director. I held strategic portfolios for Female Offenders, Mental Health & Learning Disabilities, RISK, and overseeing operational activities.

My public protection work gave me opportunities to work with policy colleagues to develop new strategies and, as previously mentioned, I was part of a three-year project working with other European countries to share our learning on radicalisation. In this period, I also completed a Master's degree at Cambridge, sponsored by HMPPS. Given my experience of partnership working and seeing how close we were becoming to other criminal justice organisations, I completed my thesis on leadership in the police, prison and probation service, focusing on ways of working, cultures and influences.

Work in probation was shifting and moving closer to the prison service. Evidence showed that a minority of offenders caused most of the crime and they often received short sentences in prison, and so it became a revolving door. Prison and probation working together could improve people's chances of rehabilitation.

I took on another public protection role and focused primarily on developing our work in Approved Premises, safeguarding children and developing consistency in practice in the newly formed

**With a supervisor at RSPCA in Sheffield where those on probation complete groundworks as part of Community Payback project**



National Probation Service. This took me across South Central and the South West, before I became the operational director for London, where I stayed for seven years.

I have been in the Probation Service for thirty years. While there have been many challenges, I'm proud of the vocation and organisation. We give people opportunities for rehabilitation, restoration and we're an organisation that takes the tough decisions to ensure community safety. Probation colleagues are often the hidden heroes, working with partner agencies which people recognise and support.

So, please do make contact in your regions and try to get out to visit some of our Community Payback sites to see people on probation working on projects that support charities and community safety initiatives – it's a great way to see for yourselves the positive impact community orders can have.

I have met several High Sheriffs over the years and had the pleasure of them supporting my work. I unexpectedly received a certificate from a recent High Sheriff of London, just as I was transferring to move back north, in recognition of my thirty years of service and work in London specifically. I did not realise that it would mean so much to me until I received it. Thank you for your work and continuing support.



# You think you know your county...

## Bav Shah

High Sheriff of Bedfordshire 2024-25

I was asked just yesterday, what the most interesting part of the role of High Sheriff is. My answer was: 'You think you know so much about what is going on in your county but you actually do not!'

I have been involved with community work for a number of years; however, I very quickly learnt that I was just scratching the surface with the great work that is happening in Bedfordshire.

It is absolutely incredible. On an almost daily basis I come across new organisations, individuals and groups of people who are tirelessly serving their communities without publicising what they are doing to the public or on social media. We have so many unsung heroes in the county who are being brought to my attention – a new task is now to find out who they all are!

Being Bedfordshire's youngest ever High Sheriff, starting the position at 39 years old, has certainly opened a few conversations about the role with younger people; in turn this has helped create awareness about what the role entails. Saying that, there are many older people who do not have a clue about the role of the High Sheriff either!

In summary, the first six months have seen: two royal visits (the Duchess of Edinburgh opened a care home in Caddington and discussed the farming industry at Jordans Mill, Biggleswade); declaration of general election results; meeting three high commissioners; visits to various faith and religious groups, education establishments, the police and law courts. There have also been a number of legal services across the county and it has been wonderful to be a visiting High Sheriff at these to support my fellow High Sheriffs.

It is an absolute honour to be a High Sheriff and to be in a position to meet so many people on a daily basis who are making a positive impact in their communities and to have the opportunity to try and support them.



At the Bedfordshire Legal Service held at St Pauls Church, Bedford with among others (front centre) the Honourable Mr Justice Cavanagh, the Right Honourable Lady Rose of Colmworth and the Honourable Mr Justice Leech



With cadet volunteers who supported the Love Luton charity run



Below: Attending Indian Independence Day Celebrations at Navnat Centre, Hayes, London with Millicent Grant (High Sheriff of Greater London)

My Declaration ceremony was held at BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Hindu Temple, Luton





# With imagination and energy



With The Restore Trust team which enables ex-offenders to access training and employment

## The Revd Richard Pendlebury MBE DL High Sheriff of the County and City of Bristol 2024-2025

The role of High Sheriff is so multifaceted that a particular focus is very helpful during your year. Having spent the last 30 years establishing charities which have tackled poverty, homelessness and those who have offended, I chose to concentrate on initiatives which are involved in rehabilitation and prevention, including those that work with young people.

A key component in rehabilitation of those who have been in prison is employment. I visited The Restore Trust, a not for profit social enterprise which works to enable those who have come out of prison to get into employment by providing industry-relevant courses. For example, their ten day construction course gives students the knowledge and qualifications to apply for the Construction Skills Certification Scheme Labourer card. This health and safety qualification, which is paid for by The Restore Trust, makes them eligible to apply for work on a construction site. In addition, there are courses in hospitality and catering and a short course in warehousing which leads to a guaranteed interview. This impressive organisation extends its reach to anyone in the community who is experiencing barriers in accessing training and employment.

Another highlight has been participating in the celebration evenings of MentorMe, a project of local prison charity Sixty-One. MentorMe provides mentors for those leaving prison, working to enable them to achieve their goals following release. All the mentors are trained volunteers who engage in one-to-one sessions with the beneficiaries. At each celebration evening there is a meal, activities and an

opportunity for those on the programme and their mentors to share progress. During one of the evenings, I spoke to someone who had not returned to prison in six years, had a good job and a stable family life. He was full of praise for the support given by his mentor which had enabled him to stay away from the criminal justice system.

Bristol has a wide network of charities and initiatives working with children and young people particularly from challenging backgrounds. It has been an absolute pleasure to visit some of these over the last few months. I visited Bristol City Football Club and had the privilege of spending time with Bristol City Robins Foundation CEO, Daniel White, Chief Development Officer, James Edwards, Sam Downes and Jade Bailey. Sam and Jade lead the foundation's ADD-Mentor project, an extraordinary programme mentoring vulnerable young people in Bristol identified by the police as being at risk of going to prison. What is so special about the project is that Jade and Sam were both mentored by James and now bring their lived experience to support young people.

Bristol High Sheriffs have a fund managed by the Quartet Community Foundation and one of the projects supported this year is Community of



A forest school experience as part of Community of Purpose activities

Purpose CIC which provides a range of activities for children and young people. It was great pleasure to attend the celebration of their Break Free holiday activity programme. This addresses holiday hunger by providing high-quality activities and free food for young people aged 8-13 across areas with the most need in South Bristol. The celebration was held at Lawrence Weston Community Farm in Bristol and I had the opportunity to participate in a forest school with some of the children who have benefited from the programme. This early investment, I am certain, will lead to better outcomes for these young lives.

These are just a few of the highlights in my first six months which have been a privilege and a joy. I am particularly heartened that charities and initiatives involved in prevention and rehabilitation are now being driven by younger people with imagination and energy which bodes well for the future.



Celebrating with mentors and beneficiaries of the Sixty-One MentorMe programme



# A Justice Service with a twist!

## Kurshida Mirza BEM

High Sheriff of the Buckinghamshire and the City of Milton Keynes 2024-25

October marks the start of the legal year and it is incumbent on the High Sheriff to host a service to mark the start of that year and to give thanks for the work of all those involved in carrying out justice. The beauty of the role is that we can all individualise and personalise how we traverse our year, including the kind of service we want.

So, I took the opportunity of my Justice Service to share some of the teachings and prayers of Islam which relate to the theme of my year – Peace, Justice and Love for Humanity.

I want my year as High Sheriff to represent our shared connection as human beings and to work towards peace for the love of humanity. I believe we will not achieve true equilibrium in this life and the hereafter until we have peace; and peace can only come if we respect the rights of each other and learn to love and respect each other recognising the uniqueness of our differences and shared humanity.

Peace is undeniably one of the greatest human needs. Peace is also a fundamental aspect of Islam. In fact, the word Islam means peace and submission. Allah says in the Quran:

‘Seek the life to come by means of what God has granted you, but do not neglect your rightful share in this world. Do good to others as God has done good to you. Do



Sheikh Ridha Jichi reciting the opening passage of the Quran, Surah Fatiha



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With some of my readers, multi-faith drummers and multi-faith chaplains





With visiting High Sheriffs from Oxford (James Macnamara), Berkshire (Alexander Barfield), Hertfordshire (Annie Brewster), Northamptonshire (Amy Crawford), Bedfordshire (Bav Shah) and Essex (David Hurst)

not seek to spread corruption in the land, for God does not love those who do this.' (Quran, 28:77)

My Justice Service was a departure from the traditional. It was not held in a place



Milton Keynes's Tree Cathedral

of worship such as a church, mosque or a temple, but outdoors in the Tree Cathedral. The Tree Cathedral is a unique cathedral in Milton Keynes, not made of bricks and mortar, but of trunks, branches, bark and leaves. Designed in 1986 by Milton Keynes Development Corporation landscape architect Neil Higson, it is based on the outline of Norwich Cathedral. It epitomises the uniqueness of Milton Keynes as a green city and my own belief that bricks and mortar can create barriers.

In Islam, a fundamental aspect of every Muslim's worship is to give thanks to the Creator by admiring, maintaining and preserving His creation, the green canopy that we are blessed with on planet Earth. Planet Earth is a blessing from God – a gift. We, its custodians, have the responsibility to take care of it and those who inhabit it – humankind and the animal kingdom – with love and affection.

My Justice Service was also unusual in that I did not wear my High Sheriff's court dress; similarly His Majesty's judges, magistrates and all those concerned in the administration of justice also wore civilian clothes. There was no procession of dignitaries. The lack of formal robes and a formal procession was partly practical given our glorious and unusual setting, but it also contained an important message:

we all meet together this year in a spirit of human unity.

In Islam, when Muslims gather for prayers and especially when they go for the pilgrimage (Hajj and Umrah), everyone is equal, wearing the same white clothes to cover their body. Men, women and children gather together only for the sake of Allah and no one else. At that moment we leave our status, qualifications and titles behind as servants of God. A memory I will cherish all my life is when I circled the Kab'ah during my Hajj and realised that worldly titles are nothing. What is important is the oneness of Allah and to do good in this world because you are given only one chance. We arrive in this world with nothing and return to Him with nothing, leaving behind our loved ones and all our worldly possessions.

I was able to curate pieces for the readings and music to evoke the oneness of God and humanity. I love drums, both the Daff from my Islamic roots and the Dhol and Tabla from my Asian roots; combining these with the Buddhist drum, the musicians created a sound to represent the shared beauty to show how – regardless of faith, background and culture – we can find 'one voice' – a voice for Peace, Justice and Love for Humanity.



# What is the best thing about being High Sheriff?



Saying thank you to the Coroners' Courts Support Service (CCSS) on their 21st birthday with Philip Spinney (Senior Coroner for Devon) and Roey Burden OBE (founder of CCSS)

## Commodore Jake Moores OBE DL

High Sheriff of Devon 2024-25

A question I am often asked and which I always answer in the same way. It is the privilege of being able to say thank you to so many different groups and individuals who make a contribution to the county.

The High Sheriff holds a unique position, acting as a bridge between the past and present, and underscoring the importance of continuity and community. Over the centuries, the role has evolved, but remains just as important with continued focus on the judicial functions along with a greater emphasis on community engagement and support for the voluntary sector.

Among the many responsibilities, one often overlooked, is the expression of gratitude. Saying thank you, though simple in nature, resonates deeply, especially when delivered by a figure like the High Sheriff. Within the modern context, I feel that the act of expressing gratitude emerges as a crucial component of the High Sheriff's role.

Gratitude, when articulated by someone in a position of authority, carries a significant weight. It acknowledges the contributions of individuals and groups, validating their efforts and inspiring further acts of service. I have seen that as the High Sheriff, and have enjoyed attending police commendation awards days, visiting prisons celebrating success days, and recently the Coroners' Courts Support

Service 21st birthday party as well as numerous visits to charities which support the community. Publicly recognising the hard work and dedication of volunteers, the blue light services, and community leaders not only boosts spirits but also fosters a culture of appreciation and mutual respect.

Police officers and emergency service personnel often operate under challenging conditions, with their efforts frequently taken for granted. The High Sheriff's public expressions of thanks serve to remind the wider community of these individuals' sacrifices and hard work. I made a point, after the disturbances in Plymouth in early August, to write to the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner to express, on behalf of the county, the excellent way in which the police contained and controlled the situation. I then visited two police stations in the centre of Plymouth to personally express gratitude for what they do on a daily basis. This recognition can bolster the morale of these crucial personnel, reinforcing the community's trust and cooperation with those who keep us safe.

Engaging with the community is a cornerstone of the High Sheriff's role. By attending events, such as civic services, I can use my platform to spotlight the importance of community cohesion. During these engagements, the act of saying thank you, whether through formal speeches, letters of commendation, or personal interactions, can galvanise community spirit and encourage broader



Thanking the Devon Air Ambulance Trust (DAAT) crews for their excellent work with Darren Goodwin (Operations Manager DAAT), the Venerable Martin Poll (High Sheriff's Chaplain) and Helena Holt (CEO of DAAT)



Expressing the gratitude of the people of Plymouth and Devon to the councillors, officers and staff of Plymouth City Council; with The Lord Mayor of Plymouth, Cllr Tina Tuohy, at the lighting of the beacon to mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings

participation in communal activities.

The voluntary sector relies heavily on the goodwill and selflessness of individuals. As the High Sheriff, promoting and supporting the voluntary sector is paramount. Acknowledging volunteers through High Sheriff's Awards, investiture ceremonies, or simply thank-you notes, can significantly enhance the visibility and value of their contributions. This not only rewards current volunteers but also inspires others to get involved, creating a ripple effect of generosity, civic-mindedness and a sense of duty.

In conclusion, while the responsibilities of the High Sheriff are diverse and multifaceted, to me the act of saying thank you stands out as a fundamental aspect. Through sincere expressions of gratitude, the High Sheriff can effectively honour the past, enrich the present and inspire the future, ensuring that the spirit of community and service continues to thrive.



# Breakfast with the High Sheriff

## David Hurst DL

High Sheriff of Essex 2024-25

Given that one of the High Sheriff's roles is to convene, I wondered what a good way to get people together would be. A dinner or supper perhaps? A lunch? The trouble is that I am impatient. I don't like doing anything for more than two hours and I'm a bit thrifty.

Dinners are expensive and will no doubt include alcohol (I have no objection), which can often mean the quality of discussion diminishes as drinks flow!

So, I decided to invite people to breakfast: inexpensive and, at a couple of hours, the ideal length... and also at a time to catch people at their best.

The first one I held at home. I prepared and cooked the food so it was ready to serve on arrival. Introductions were made over tea and coffee then followed by buffet-style help yourself – find a seat around table! I was expecting six people – and in the end eight turned up. I served extra toast and drinks as they ate, then cleared away plates.

My thinking was not to have an agenda. I invited a couple who in their spare time had started a foodbank, a representative of our county's community foundation, a thoroughly decent hard-working local councillor, a hedge fund owner, a retired accountant from a large county-wide accountancy firm and both the CEO and new chair of trustees of a homeless charity.

I sat by the side of the table and conversation flowed. I chipped in, linking people around the table with the



At the Essex Justice Service with, among others: the Honourable Mrs Justice Arbuthnot, Jennifer Tolhurst (Lord-Lieutenant), Roger Brice (Under Sheriff of Essex), and the High Sheriffs of Bedfordshire (Bav Shah), Kent (Dr Gill Fargher), Hertfordshire (Annie Brewster), Greater London (Millicent Grant KC) and David Flux (Norfolk)  
Photo: Paul Starr Photographer

conversation and occasional questions. It went very well, with people sharing challenges and people providing solutions; details were shared, useful websites made note of. Help was offered.

I had emails of thanks after the event. It did go well. A couple of days later I received another email from the new chair of trustees, who holds a very senior role in a bank in London: 'Wanted to say thanks again. I'm still reflecting on all that

we learnt on Friday and for me, I believe it was the best meeting I've attended inside outside of corporate life.'

Low cost, easy to organise and perhaps great impact – time will tell. My advice: pick your guests carefully; you never know what might be achieved.

A second scaled-up High Sheriff's breakfast took place at Garons Park, Southend, at the beginning of October. The focus this time was helping young people through sport and we had 40 or so people – a mix of organisations and real influencers met and talked. Thank you those who attended and to Active Essex Foundation for helping to make it happen. If 40 people engaged in conversation leads to just one positive outcome it was worth the bacon rolls.



October's breakfast meeting at Garons Park





# A real privilege

## Mark Hurrell DL

High Sheriff of Gloucestershire 2024-25

'You'll have a marvellous time, meet all sorts of interesting people and visit every corner of our glorious county.' If I heard this once I heard it at least half a dozen times from people who held the post before me as I prepared to take on the honour of being High Sheriff for Gloucestershire.

The welcome from people around the county has been wonderful and I have enjoyed hearing about activities that take place in small communities for the benefit of their local residents. For example, in Blockley in the north of the county, the villagers had come together to organise their 'Better Living in the Countryside' exhibition. All the community groups met in the village hall to show off what they did and encourage new people to join them.

In the city of Gloucester I was able to join in with the Polish Day in the park, where there was music, dancing and food. My most amusing event was to be part of the team of volunteers making 800 sandwiches at 5 am for primary school children for their day out to Cattle Country Farm Park in Berkeley. This annual trip is paid for by the Gloucester Rotary Club.

I have been able to support the police and other blue light services and have attended



Opening the Community Day in Blockley



Making sandwiches with the volunteers from the Cathedral Breakfast Club in the Parliament Rooms at Gloucester Cathedral

and spoken at passing out parades and their volunteer events.

I believe it is important to highlight the work of volunteers who do so much for our county. We need to remember to say 'thank you' to all those people who put 'service before self'. We have over 100,000 people who regularly volunteer, which is one in six of the population of Gloucestershire. That's one of the reasons why I asked the Dean of Gloucester Cathedral, the Very Reverend Andrew Zihni, if he would put on a special 'volunteers service' at the end of the national week of volunteering at the beginning of June. This was a new initiative and over 150 people came. The Dean was so pleased with the response that he has decided to make it a regular part of the cathedral's calendar.

Another change that I have initiated involves the 'Getting Court' programme which takes place in the Crown Court in Gloucester. Secondary school children spend a morning in court, observing what goes

on and listening to talks from our resident judge and an ex-prisoner. I did not feel that sitting with them added value to their visit. I am fortunate that my wife, Julia, is a magistrate, so we have put together a joint talk for secondary schools. I do a section on citizenship, explaining the history and roles of the Lord-Lieutenant and the High Sheriff, and Julia talks about the role of magistrates. She also illustrates her talk with examples of things that have happened over her 30 years in that role. Most of the Year 10 students haven't a clue about how our judicial system works and the sort of crimes that they might encounter. We are hoping that we will be able to continue with these talks after my year of office has ended.

Previous High Sheriffs were right. Although I'm only halfway through my shrieval year, I've already met new people and visited places around the county that I knew about but had never been to – despite living and working here for 34 years! It's a real privilege.



# No ordinary court

**Dr Eamonn O'Neal DL**

High Sheriff of Greater Manchester 2024-2025

This was no ordinary court. After a couple of defendants were found guilty and some were judged to be innocent, they all gathered with the witnesses, magistrates, barristers, and court officials to tuck in to their packed lunches and discuss how the day had gone.

This was the annual Year 6 Mock Trial Competition organised by the Greater Manchester branch of the Magistrates' Association (Magistrates in the Community) and it was an incredibly special day. There were 150 students from 16 schools in attendance, populating two virtual court rooms, running in parallel. The theme was knife crime. The young people had been provided with a detailed script in advance, had designated roles, which they had rehearsed, and, on the day, they acted out the scenarios 'in court' with impressive aplomb. The event was overseen by sitting magistrates and there was significant support from partner organisations including Crimestoppers, Greater Manchester Police, BTP Travel Safe and Salford Fire and Rescue Service.

I was struck by just how much effort these 10- and 11-year-olds had put into the competition, and it was clear how impactful it had been. I think a career with the judicial service beckons for many of them.

As I have been a broadcaster and journalist for most of my career, it seemed an innovative idea to try and blend elements of my activities as High Sheriff with the 'day

job'. Consequently, I have been delighted to produce a monthly High Sheriff's audio diary, which is broadcast on BBC Radio Manchester.

Of course, it is important that I remember to record some soundbites and audio actuality when I am at an event. If this were 20 years ago, I would have to be carrying some bulky recording equipment but luckily, these days, everything can be recorded and edited on a smart phone.

This is an excellent way of sharing, with a wide audience, the work of the vast number of impressive individuals and organisations in the county. It is also proving invaluable for constantly reminding people of the role of High Sheriff itself.

Every second Wednesday through the entire year, veterans gather in the Regimental Chapel at Manchester Cathedral for the 'Turning of the Leaves' ceremony. This honours those who fought and died serving monarch and country in The King's



At the 'Turning of the Leaves' ceremony, Manchester Cathedral

Regiment and its precedent regiments across several wars and conflicts.

Within the chapel there is a polished display cabinet containing six volumes of detailed books, filled with the names of those who served. Every fortnight, flanked by standard bearers and with prayers from a cathedral canon, the leaves of the large books are turned by veterans, mayors and, in this case, the High Sheriff. The leaves of the books are turned in order that a new selection of names is visible to – and noted by – visitors during that two-week period. In this way, every name is honoured through the year. It is a simple, respectful ceremony, which I have been proud to attend.



In the BBC Radio Manchester studio



'In court', and with pupils from Whittaker Moss Primary School in Rochdale, the winners of the mock trial competition



# Journey towards High Sheriff



## Her Honour Helen Mifflin DL High Sheriff of Gwent 2024-25

It is a pleasure to provide a personal perspective about my journey to becoming High Sheriff and to highlight the particular focus that we in the Gwent Shrievalty are bringing to the role. We have recently refreshed our selection processes for our County Nomination Panel and this article hopefully will share our journey towards making the role of High Sheriff relevant to all.

I recently retired as a Circuit Judge in

order to take up the role of High Sheriff of Gwent, where I was born and where I have lived for nearly all of my life. I was born in a small mining village, having come from generations of mining families on both sides. I was the first person in my family to go to university, then to be called to the Bar, becoming a part-time judge before taking up a full-time role in 2008, and becoming a deputy High Court Judge in 2012.

The role of High Sheriff has therefore been informed by many years sitting as a judge, primarily in the Family Court where a large percentage of my work related to child protection. I have always

Above, below and top right: Engaging with young people in Gwent – some very young!

tried to do my best for children in difficult circumstances. I feel keenly the poverty of opportunity for children and young people in my county, and have made this my shrieval theme for my year in office. It is my primary ambition to try to use my year to make the Shrievalty more relevant to young people in Gwent. Many of these young people have not heard of the Office; others know nothing about the role of the High Sheriff. Many feel that those who hold the Office have little understanding







or experience of the issues they face as they progress towards adulthood. I want to try and change that perception and give a voice to young people – through me and the office I hold.

I have actively sought to engage with young people in Gwent in particular, visiting schools, children’s play projects, youth charities and supporting our police force in their crime prevention initiatives, as well as also undertaking the more traditional engagements attended by the High Sheriff. I am conscious that this is a role only for a year and that means that there is no time to lose.

One of my key responsibilities is to recommend a candidate to serve as High Sheriff in five years’ time. To that end, our County Nomination Panel, which was reconstituted and refreshed under my predecessor last year, has been drawn together with the aim of reflecting the diversity of the communities in Gwent. We have followed the HSA’s helpful guidance in appointing an independent chair and in

appointing panel members which represent different faiths and minority communities, such those with BAME backgrounds and the LGBTQI+ community. We also have representation from business, health, education and the justice sector. Our panel’s mission is to seek out and recommend suitable candidates for the role of High Sheriff, irrespective of their background or social circumstances. While keeping the process confidential, we have put in place procedures and training to ensure that our panel members understand principles of fair recruitment and selection; we have formulated a list of key skills and qualities looked for in potential candidates for High Sheriff, and we have adopted a model terms of reference to ensure consistency and fairness in all that we do.

A key aim for us in Gwent is that the financial burden of serving as High Sheriff should not preclude a suitable candidate from taking up the role. Each High Sheriff who has recently served in our county has sought to set an example to the next

incumbent to serve without incurring significant expense, which might be seen as a deterrent to potential candidates. We are also concerned about the optics as so many families in our communities are struggling financially. This is why we in Gwent feel that the High Sheriff should not be spending monies on lavish entertainments and hospitality for judges – and I can assure you that, as a very recently retired judge, the vast majority of my brethren do not want a formal dinner after a hard day in court, but would much prefer a simple supper, or a trip to a nice pub! We know that this advice has been echoed by the Lady Chief Justice herself, Dame Sue Carr. The High Sheriff should be capable of being drawn from all echelons of society and our conduct in office must be commensurate with that impression.

I will continue during my year of office to shining a light on the poverty of opportunity for children and young people in Gwent, who I know could achieve great things with the right support and services.



With Monmouthshire Veterans’ Support Hub and SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, at the annual Usk Show which celebrates the very best of Monmouthshire farming and rural life



# Enlightening and educational

**Jon Whitaker JP DL**

High Sheriff of Hampshire 2024-25

I was warned by my predecessor that, once declared, the invitations would arrive thick and fast – she was right! I have tried to accept most invitations and indeed have sought invites to as many events that have slotted into my theme of youth and service as I possibly could. The sheer range of youth projects and youth organisations operating in the county is astonishing. Behind each are a dedicated band of adult volunteers ensuring young people are fulfilling their potential, learning new skills and having fun – in effect preparing them for adulthood, citizenship and service.

I am fortunate to be encouraged and supported by the Lord-Lieutenant, himself a patron of many youth organisations, and we met a number of the key leaders of the youth organisations at an inaugural meeting of the Hampshire youth leaders' network. We intend to meet with youth leaders annually to share ideas and learn from one another in a relaxed environment. Following this meeting I have spent time with army cadets, Scouts, police cadets, fire service cadets and St John Ambulance cadets as well as their adult volunteers and it is evident that Hampshire offers young people from all backgrounds huge opportunity to grow, develop and enjoy themselves.

While youth and service is my theme, I have had a busy six months continuing the traditional role of supporting the law and judiciary. The county has three Crown Courts and I have developed excellent working relationships with the Honorary Recorders. As a magistrate of 27 years, sitting in adult and youth courts and sometimes on appeals in Crown Courts, I



Inspecting the standards of the Royal British Legion at their dedication ceremony

felt I had a reasonable basic knowledge of the lower court system. The opportunity, therefore, to sit regularly with Crown Court Judges and High Court Judges visiting the county has been a privilege. Sharing meals with them outside of court proceedings has been enlightening and educational for me! Conversation easily flows and the wealth of their sitting experience readily shared. I am thinking it will help me when I return to magisterial duties after my year's sabbatical.

Aside from the judiciary my focus a priority has been and support for the emergency services. Police, fire and ambulance services have been superb in allowing me to make visits to their headquarters and operational units. Attending award and commendation presentations has been inspiring. Listening to citations of bravery, devotion to duty and selflessness is a constant reminder of the vital work they do often above and beyond

the call of duty. Humbling!

I have particularly endeavoured to support our police service including the special constabulary, support officers, staff and cadets. The Chief Constable has been brilliant in allowing me access to a range of divisions including dog handling, firearms, marine, control room and operational units. Hampshire Police are blessed with the traditions of their own band, choir, chaplain and ceremonial unit and they form important parts of the police family. In fact, when attending the Police Families Day and Police Cadets Day, it was evident that they are a family and support each other incredibly well.

I am halfway through my year and everywhere I go I remind myself of the privilege I hold and the importance of recognising and thanking those who work so hard for us in maintaining law and order in all its various forms.



With the Lord-Lieutenant, Nigel Atkinson, presenting The King's Coronation Medal to former High Sheriff Mark Thistlethwayte (2018)



Supporting the charity Youth Options in Eastleigh



# Flat shoes, breeches and a jolly good tailor



Sport for Good!

## Annie Brewster JP

High Sheriff of Hertfordshire 2024-25

Flat shoes, breeches and a jolly good tailor have allowed greater participation than expected in my High Sheriff's theme.

Being passionate about the power of sport and physical activity as a cost-effective and successful vehicle for social change in areas such as crime and disorder reduction, health and mental wellbeing, social inclusion, community cohesion, educational attainment and the development of skills leading to employment and economic prosperity, I adopted 'Sport for Good' as the theme for my year in office.

I have been both delighted and astonished to find so many charities and organisations embedded within both our urban and rural communities, which improve lives by getting the county active. In response, I have teamed up with the Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership to thank the armies of volunteers who enable others to reach their goals and improve their lives.

My visits have taken me to all corners of the county. A highlight was an invitation to HM Prison The Mount, a Category C men's prison, to witness the 'Mount Olympics' during the Paris Games. The weightlifting was particularly impressive and I was moved by the camaraderie and encouragement to one another throughout the competition.

The 'Friday Night Project' was another uplifting initiative. External coaches attend a school in a challenging neighbourhood on a Friday evening to coach football, basketball and volleyball with over 120 pupils attending. It is the only three hours on the police's weekly 'Tartan Rug Dashboard' that is green, demonstrating no reported antisocial behaviour is taking place.

I was amazed when sitting with Her Honour Judge Lana Wood, Resident Judge at St Albans Crown Court, as she reviewed the progress of offenders on the court's 'Choices and Consequences' project. This is an inspired collaboration between the courts, police and probation service.

One offender after the other referred to

organised physical activities such as tennis, fishing or boxing that the charity HACRO (Hertfordshire Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders) delivers as making the biggest difference in reducing their drink and drug habit and preventing their reoffending. It is equally evident that carpentry and walking football offered by the brilliant homelessness charity Emmaus are also changing lives.

In the next few months the project hopes to embark on a scheme with probation to train ex-offenders to oversee 1-2-1 gym sessions in the community, targeted at those struggling with harmful addictions to encourage them to follow a different path.

Improvements in mental wellbeing have been clearly showcased in all the Hertfordshire Health Walks I have attended – various guided walks of different lengths led by wonderful volunteers. I have loved hearing the volunteers' back stories and what has brought them to the walks – often injury or loss of a partner – and how much better they are navigating life now.

My High Sheriff's 'Making a Difference' and 'Lifetime Achievement' awards have been presented to many of our county's unsung heroes together with 'Contribution to Parkrun' Awards to many of the volunteer marshals who turn out in all weathers. I have thoroughly enjoyed visiting all 34 Hertfordshire junior and senior parkrun events and meeting thousands of Hertfordshire residents who benefit from them.

I've also witnessed sport and physical activity being used effectively in domestic abuse victim recovery, neurodiversity programmes, young people excluded from school and much more. I feel most fortunate to have this unique experience in my shrieval year and I cannot wait to see what further delights I discover and support in the second half of my year.



With participants in the HM Prison The Mount Olympics



At my High Sheriff of Hertfordshire's 'Sport for Good' Awards for parkrun volunteers



# Scratching the surface



On the *Medway Queen* for the 100th birthday of the paddle steamer following restoration (she and her crew rescued over 7,000 from Dunkirk). With sea cadets, the Very Revd Dr Philip Hesketh (Dean of Rochester Cathedral), The Lady Colgrain (Lord-Lieutenant), Admiral Lord West, Cllr Nina Gurung (Mayor of Medway) and Mr Gurung

## Dr Gill Fargher

High Sheriff of Kent 2024-25

I became High Sheriff of Kent in early April 2024 in the magnificent and historic surroundings of Rochester Cathedral in the presence of my distinguished guests – a very special day.

I am a former GP and have lived and worked in Kent for 41 years. Conscious of the advice to 'hit the ground running' and 'do it your way' I spent a significant amount of time preparing for my shrieval year. I am fortunate to have retired from clinical practice so was able to meet key personnel, secure dates for the Justice Service and my garden party, and listened to and learned from former High Sheriffs, who are, without exception, invaluable. I participated in every event offered by the High Sheriffs' Association of England and Wales.

Kent is a big county with a population of over 180,000, has two cathedrals, two Crown Courts, seven prisons, and over

4,000 charities. Undoubtedly, despite my good intentions, I know I will only scratch the surface.

I have been especially lucky that there are a number of special anniversaries during my year, both in Kent and nationally, and I have participated in many. The 80th anniversary of D-Day started for me in Chatham Historic Dockyard at the National Destroyer Memorial where I was honoured to recite the Exhortation. I then moved on to New Romney and joined the mayor for a fish and chip charity lunch for armed forces charities. My day ended at Canterbury Cathedral for Evensong to commemorate D-Day. Chatham Historic Dockyard also celebrates 40 years this year and the RNLI, whose Lifeboat Museum is at Chatham Historic Dockyard, celebrates 200. I have been fortunate to be able to join celebrations for both.

In August I unveiled a plaque commemorating 150 years of HMP Rochester. The plaque had not only been made with the expertise and skills of those

in the prison stonemasons' workshop, but also had my name on it!

Law and order, areas of significant responsibility for High Sheriffs, have been a primary focus. To date I have visited both Crown Courts a number of times, sitting with judges and witnessing the swearing-in of new magistrates. The Witness Service and its remarkable volunteers invited me to a celebratory thank you tea as well as a visit to see their work at Maidstone Crown Court. I have visited two of our prisons more than once with plans in progress to visit the others.

My involvement with Kent Police has been significant and is continuing. I have been honoured to join the Chief Constable or his deputy at a number of award ceremonies and passing out parades. The citations I have heard are simply astonishing and it is truly humbling to participate in these events.

Presenting awards is a joy. Whether this is a High Sheriff's Award, a police award, a reward and recognition certificate in a prison, a volunteer or any other group or individual, it is a very great honour to recognise such richly deserving people.

My best invitation to date was from Kent Search and Rescue to join an exercise. My role – to be a body and be found by dogs!

I have made many visits to charities, organisations and events and have a packed diary in the months ahead. I am delivering many speeches and am particularly enjoying and sharing some fascinating aspects of shrieval history as well as explaining the role of the High Sheriff.

The recognition, acknowledgement and thanks that I can give to the inspiring people of Kent in this role is an honour and a privilege. It is also immensely enjoyable.



On board HMS *Cavalier* at Chatham Historic Dockyard for the 80th anniversary of D-Day with, among others, Dennis Potter (Chairman Royal Naval Association Chatham Branch) and Brigadier Peter Gilbert QVRM TD DL



On the nave steps in Rochester Cathedral for the Justice Service with (centre front) David Hurst (Essex), Mr Justice Murray, Lord Justice Males, Mr Justice Johnson, Catherine Lloyd (Under Sheriff), Lucinda Fraser (East Sussex) and Samantha Price (Deputy Chief Superintendent Kent Police)



# My first one hundred days



With Michael Pace (Under Sheriff) and Richard Lake (outgoing High Sheriff of Lincolnshire)

## Philip Dymoke

High Sheriff of Lincolnshire 2024-25

Starting out on the path as a High Sheriff seemed easy and fun. Much advice was received from many people – those who had undertaken the role previously and those who knew best, which was often not the same. Anyway, the main suggestions were to do as much or as little as I wanted and that a PA would prove invaluable. The turnover went without fault and my predecessor departed happily, the responsibility now being with me.

Having decided to take on this role in retirement I had no intention of having a PA. I had many emails and invitations to respond to, social media to follow and realised early on that maintaining a diary

correctly was vital. It was a task I was to do alone but I do have much needed assistance in the social media area and a kind consort, my wife. Knowing the distances to be travelled and timings to be adhered to was vital. Lincolnshire covers a very large area. I had no desire to receive an unnecessary speeding fine or parking ticket if avoidable. It was interesting to read a recent article in the High Sheriffs' Association magazine where one of last year's High Sheriffs had completed many journeys on foot or by bicycle. The distances involved in Lincolnshire prohibit this for me.

A piece of advice to future High Sheriffs is to ensure they know what to wear, where to park, who will meet them and, if necessary, where to change. These small points certainly make the many events much simpler. Once an engagement is accepted that is what will be attended, even if something else that is considered to be more worthwhile emerges.

Having seen the police, been to court and visited all Lincolnshire's prisons in my time thus far has been both fascinating and rewarding. The warmth with which I have been welcomed is most touching. In no way have I ever felt an outsider. I have had the privilege of presenting long service medals to the police and some 52 Coronation medals to prison staff and this I will continue to do in thanks for all their hard work.

I have attended dinners of the highest standards and been greeted with great



Taking the salute at the Armed Forces Day parade in Spalding with Major (Retd) Tim Brown and the Revd John Bennet

kindness. Much time has been spent in Lincoln Cathedral both in services and presentations which have included university degree ceremonies. As the year progresses it is clear that I can continue to acknowledge making some peoples' contributions more valued by showing an interest and giving praise where praise is due.

I have had the honour of taking salutes for retired service personnel, attending parades and being the returning officer for a county constituency during the general election, a task that has been a responsibility for High Sheriffs for many years gone past. The value of presenting awards can never be underestimated, and this is such an important and helpful task to fulfil which I will continue with in the coming months with the issuing of High Sheriff's Awards and Certificates.

This initial period has given me great insight into how I may be of use and how I may help others over the coming months. The first one hundred days are now over and, as we head into the autumn and winter months, much remains to be done, with more visits planned. A recent visit to the Air Ambulance with other High Sheriffs from the East Midlands group was fascinating. It also provided a useful catch-up and insight into what we have all individually been doing over the past months. The year so far certainly seems to be most fulfilling for all of us.



East Midlands High Sheriffs visiting the Air Ambulance: Nick Rubins (Notts, second left); John Chatfeild-Roberts (Leics, third left); Philip Dymoke (Lincs, fourth left); Ian Morgan (Derby, third right); and Richard Cole (Rutland, far right)



# A compassionate visit to Southport



His Majesty King Charles III signs the book of condolence at Southport Town Hall Photo: Ryan Birchall



Dr Ruth Hussey (Vice Lord-Lieutenant), Cllr June Burns (Mayor of Sefton) and His Majesty The King look at the array of flowers and teddy bears in the centre of Southport Photo: Ryan Birchall

## Professor John Mohin OBE DL

High Sheriff of Merseyside 2024-25

The tragic events that took place at Southport at the end of July probably require no further explanation. What transpired from the bleak darkness of that moment was a radiant beam of light that effectively helped the healing process of bringing a community back together.

This took the form of a visit by His Majesty King Charles III, taking time out from his holiday in Balmoral to come and express his personal concern – a remarkable gesture that was both welcome and deeply appreciated.

The King met with the bereaved families and took time to extend his deepest sympathy; he later signed the book of condolence at Southport Town Hall.

Outside, he inspected a sea of flowers and messages laid in sympathy by mainly local people but which also included floral tributes in memory of those who had died from Prime Minister Keir Starmer, the Home Secretary and others, together with a wealth of teddy bears.

All the time, His Majesty was greeted by the many smiling faces of children – boys wearing T-shirts depicting favourite logos and girls in pretty summer dresses, some of whom presented The King with gifts of pictures and cufflinks which he graciously accepted.

The King met with members of the emergency services who had attended the incident and spoke with the police officers who had first confronted the scene, including PC Luke Holden and PCSO Tim Parry. He talked with the paramedics who administered emergency medical attention and listened to

some of their own personal stories.

Imam Ibrahim Hussein, who kept vigil inside Southport mosque, was introduced to the King and described his personal experience as the building was attacked and the perimeter walls torn down.

Local builder, Bill Parkinson, ably assisted by Matthew Carroll and Sam Eaton, who repaired the mosque and helped rebuild the walls, were thanked personally by His Majesty. Daniel and Diane Martin who had willingly extended the use of their home for members of the emergency services to use also spoke with The King.

Chanaka and Jhanuja Balasuriya, owners of the mini mart that was damaged, also met with The King, as did Mike and Eva Ainscough, who made sure the floral bouquets were well watered and went to great lengths to look after the teddy bears, taking them in at night and dutifully rearranging them outside again each

morning. The King took special interest in the care and counselling provided by local faith leaders and met with Canon Kevin McLoughlin and Reverend Rachel Bray.

What emerged overall was a visible and sincere demonstration of a local community coming together in harmony to confront adversity, to overcome the pain and to care for each other at a time of unprecedented tragedy. They each showed in their various ways, all very poignant and deeply significant, that we will remember those who suffered and especially those died, but at the same time continue to look to the future with a spirit of confidence and optimism.

We have a great deal to be thankful for in Merseyside, not the least of which is the strength of our wider community as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the County of Merseyside and also the centenary of the consecration of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral in 1924.



His Majesty The King meets with Jhanuja and Chanaka Balasuriya, owners of the mini mart impacted by the riots in Southport



# Declaring your intentions

## Dr Richard Lewis MBE DL

High Sheriff of Mid Glamorgan 2024-2025

Preparing for the office of High Sheriff was, for me, a roller coaster of emotions ranging from thrilling, exciting, energising, and anticipatory to scary, daunting and at times simply overwhelming. The feelings varied as the date of the Declaration ceremony – which had once seemed an age away – was suddenly only days away, with still so much to do and think about. I imagine the same emotions prevail for most of us.

Six months into a busy but enjoyable and absorbing shrieval year, the Declaration ceremony with its challenges and importance is easy to forget. In your county it may have a well-established format, but it is a unique event for every High Sheriff and an opportunity to lay the foundations and set the tone for your year in office.

Your Declaration can be conducted around the dinner table in the intimate surroundings of your own home with just the outgoing High Sheriff, a High Court Judge or Justice of the Peace, your Lord-Lieutenant, Under Sheriff and nearest and dearest. Alternatively, it can be as public as you want, thanking those from every aspect of your life whom you appreciate, admire, love and who have helped you along the way, and including those you want to engage with during your shrieval year. I chose the latter.

Regardless, confirming a date, venue, and availability of key players is a prerequisite. My Under Sheriff and shrieval assistant were vital in this. Undertake the groundwork very early.

The number of guests dictates the size of venue and securing your desired venue may mean booking many months ahead. My original choice was unavailable due to



With South Wales Police Halberdiers, His Honour Judge Hopkins KC, Prof Jean White CBE (outgoing High Sheriff), and Prof Peter Vaughan QPM (Lord-Lieutenant)

over-running refurbishment, which required flexibility and a switch from town hall to sports centre, but all's well that ends well as it proved a great success. Trust the experts at your venue to ensure all goes well but have a clear plan, visit in advance and express your expectations clearly and comprehensively.

A guest list is essential, as is a timeline and process for sending out invitations and collating replies whether electronically or by post, as this guides seating plans and catering. Catering is of course a job in itself and I elicited the support of the stewardess from my local rugby club who arranged everything impeccably. Canapes and cava taster sessions were events in themselves!

Directions to the venue, parking, an event programme, business cards, banners, social media accounts all require consideration and advanced planning.

You may wish to appoint a chaplain or faith leader(s) as well as a police cadet.

Traditionally, in Mid Glamorgan, the Declaration is attended by the South Wales Police band fanfare team and

by Halberdiers who provide a unique ceremonial presence, but they do need to be booked early.

Entertainment is optional, but in a Welsh valley town a choir was the clear and obvious choice. Musical collaboration is notoriously difficult, but all allegiances were put aside as the musical talent from seven Maesteg choirs collaborated to form a 100-voice mixed choir and created the hiraeth with three heartfelt, spine-tingling and moving pieces.

A theme or charity for the year is not necessary but can provide a helpful focus. I chose school exclusion and the charity Dallaglio RugbyWorks to partner with me during my year in office. Seven out of ten people jailed were at some point excluded from school, so a charity focusing on prevention through a rugby skills programme seemed appropriate. A representative of the charity, a young person previously excluded from school himself, spoke at my Declaration to powerful effect.

The day will fly by, so make a record to look back on through photographs, video or webcast. Photography students from Bridgend College covered my day and did a fine job.

An unexpected pleasure was the amount of positive feedback I received from a community delighted to have been a part of this centuries-old ceremony.

I hope this brief resume of my own Declaration (planning spreadsheet available, just ask) will be of some assistance in your own preparations, and I hope your day will be as memorable as my own. Most importantly, enjoy every moment as it is the prelude to an extraordinary year.



Members of Mixed Maesteg Choir. All photos: Photography students from Bridgend College



# A fascinating and inspiring experience



Survivor Journey workshop with Lindsay Oliver (New Beginnings Peer Support), Laura Mounsey (Harrogate Family Law), Rachel Weir (My Sister's Place), Hannah Winbolt-Lewis (IDAS) and Holly Morgan (My Sister's Place)

## Dr Ruth Smith

High Sheriff of North Yorkshire 2024-25

As I approach the seventh month of my role as High Sheriff, I can reflect on what has been a fascinating and inspiring experience. I started the year unsure of what to expect, but the role has far surpassed my expectations.

While the Burghley seminar and the regional meetings were invaluable, and the High Sheriffs' Association provided extensive resources to understand the role, the turning point for me came when I became clear about how I wanted to make a difference in my county.

In the months leading up to my year, I set three key objectives: • Support children and young people affected by domestic abuse

(DA) by raising awareness among those working with children, enabling them to provide immediate support and connect with local charities • Improve best practices for DA survivors navigating the police and court systems • Support emergency services and the judiciary, whose challenging roles can also impact their wellbeing.

Everyone tells you that the year goes very quickly and this is particularly true when you want to achieve something meaningful. With my passion around the DA agenda, mental wellbeing and young people, I wanted to use my skills and knowledge as well as the unique opportunities we have to link with the judiciary, police and DA charities. I mention all this because being clear on my focus has really helped determine how I spend my time and set criteria for the volume of invitations that I receive.

It was a fabulous evening at Ripley Castle for my summer reception, when a couple of hundred people from the county attended: judiciary, emergency services, civic, church and charities. Fantastic connections were made among the guests and it provided the opportunity to set out my plans for the year.

It has also been insightful to learn more about the criminal justice system. I have spent time with North Yorkshire Police, met four High Court judges, sat in Teesside and York courts and visited two prisons.

These visits have been fascinating particularly through the lens of the impact of trauma on children and how a significant number end up in the criminal justice system as a result of their response to experiences in their younger years.

One of the key moments so far was organising a workshop with DA



Ready for a night shift with North Yorkshire Police

charities, survivors, the judiciary, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Safer Communities and North Yorkshire Police. Together, we mapped out the survivor's journey through the police and court processes and identified 36 action points to improve their experience. The workshop was a great success, with participants demonstrating a strong commitment to implementing positive change.

I have also developed an online conference, 'Supporting Children Impacted by Trauma', for anyone who works with children and young people. Currently, we have around 80 people registered.

It has been an absolute pleasure to spend time with the Lord-Lieutenant. I was invited to the British Empire Medal investiture – it was wonderful to meet the unsung heroes in our region as they received their medals. We also visited York Women's Counselling Service as they received The King's Award for Voluntary Services.

It has been so interesting to visit the ambulance and fire services as well as numerous charities, including those supporting disabled people, children in care, helping ex-offenders get into paid employment and counselling services for women and children. I always walk away feeling both humbled by people's resilience and appreciative of the people who give their time and energy to support them.

The first seven months have been a truly unique experience. I look forward to continuing driving positive change and supporting those who dedicate their lives to serving others.



With CEO Mags Godderidge of the charity Survive



# The human touch

## Lucia Bridgeman

High Sheriff of Northumberland 2024-25

Northumberland is the most sparsely populated county in England and visits can easily be 80 miles apart in two days. The legacy of the old mining towns and villages at the southernmost end and the isolation of the rural hamlets in the Cheviot Hills bring out different stories, but the astounding breadth and depth of the volunteering world has really been brought home to me over the last six months.

Making connections among different groups has been a real motivation, although these are not great headline actions. Very small steps that have emerged have been: confirming that a Turkish refugee involved in the inter-faith social cohesion charity The Dialogue Society has met the Dean of Newcastle Cathedral; a successful cookery book writer has been introduced to the local high school food tech teachers; and making the suggestion that a primary school applies for funding from our High Sheriff's Fund for transport having found out they go to a dementia club I visited; or a charity that supports prisoners' families is now in touch with a nearby forest school. I feel it is in these small, practical ways that a High Sheriff can be relevant.

The human touch of Nepacs charity (North East Prisoner After Care Society, est. 1882) involved in the justice system in the North East has been enlightening to witness. In many areas Nepacs' interventions could be replaced with vending machines, leaflets and tick boxes. Their visitor centres, tea bars, family support teams, early days and custody teams allow the families and those in prison to have practical, experienced and



At a meeting of Blyth Rotary Club with Wendy Atkinson from Newsham Primary School who has set up The Lighthouse Hub, supporting her school's families



At a 'tea party' afternoon with school children and the local community with Katherine Williams (chair, third right) and other trustees of the charity Boost, which supports the Duchess's Community High School, Alnwick

empathetic assistance. When organisations have given up time to talk to me I am very moved by the scope of their work and its indefinable nature. In a similar vein being asked to describe the role of a High Sheriff is difficult to sum up succinctly. One day I will be wearing a head torch and waterproofs, the next a feathered hat and lace jabot.

Taking on the role of High Sheriff has allowed me to ask questions and be shown round such a variety of places. I have visited prisons, police stations, alternative provision for education settings, domestic abuse charity headquarters, boxing clubs and youth centres, schools, art studios, a local radio station, colliery band concerts, and have taken part in the historic legal

services and the miners' picnic, karate on the beach, the awarding of MBEs and BEMs, Rotary Club meetings, the swearing-in of magistrates, cadet gatherings, voluntary award evenings and mountain rescue searches. And I return home after each very different event buoyed up by those who never lose hope in people. How many cups of tea, pieces of toast, and biscuits have soothed those who need time before being able to build trust and confidence, or just be given a boost? There is an anonymity in being High Sheriff that allows people to talk to us without any concerns around prejudice, assessment or financial justification. We may have invited ourselves or been introduced through another organisation, but we are predominantly there out of interest in seeing good ideas being put into action.

The one occasion I was expecting the anonymity to be certain was during the general election, with the focus being on the parliamentary candidates. However, the High Sheriff's hat proved to be an interesting distraction at 11.30 pm while there was little else to comment on. As returning officer in Northumberland there were four election results to read out, all based at Blyth Leisure Centre, which I became very familiar with after the nine hours I spent there. I wasn't aware in my Blyth bubble that 'the hat' had gone viral and was commented on by Laura Kuenssberg and others, but I hope it might have given many people good reason to investigate High Sheriffs and read something of the fascinating history.



With John Hollingsworth and Michelle Hardie of Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, who administer the fund for the High Sheriff of Northumberland, and the Rt Hon Alan Milburn, former Secretary of State for Health, who spoke at an event in London



# Welcoming the communities of Nottinghamshire

**Nick Rubins**

High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire 2024-25

The County of Nottinghamshire has traditionally celebrated The Queen's official birthday with a service of thanksgiving at Southwell Minster on the Sunday after the Trooping of the Colour. This is one of the most important events in the calendar of the High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire. Last year a special service was held to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, so this year was the first service to celebrate The King's birthday.

The Lord-Lieutenant was particularly keen that we celebrate the community of the county alongside His Majesty's birthday. We tried to ensure that as many different groups as possible were invited to 'A Service Celebrating our Communities and the Official Birthday of His Majesty the King' – a joyous occasion for all involved.

It is important to maintain the traditions of these occasions with all the pomp and ceremony this brings. The service started with the judicial and military procession led by Under Sheriff Deborah Hutchinson, with representatives of the emergency services, armed forces, the judiciary, Lord-Lieutenant Veronica Pickering and the Honourable Mr Justice Hildyard.

I was delighted to be accompanied by both of my chaplains, the Very Revd Nicola Sullivan, Dean of Southwell, who led the service, and Rabbi Gili Zidkiyahu. The sermon by the Rt Revd Paul Williams, Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, resonated with many – particularly as it included reference to Taylor Swift!

By inviting representatives of one of my chosen charities, Salaam Shalom Kitchen (SaSh), to address the congregation, we were delighted to include representatives of the Muslim and Jewish communities



With Veronica Pickering (Lord-Lieutenant), the Honourable Mr Justice Hildyard and members of the judiciary Photos: @shaddha\_bagrodia



With police cadets Jack Inquieti-Lamb and Leo Gardner, Rabbi Gili Zidkiyahu and HHJ Nirmal Shant KC

of Nottinghamshire. The reflection by Karen Worth and Ferzana Shan was very well received with many later enquiring as to how they could volunteer for the organisation. The SaSh is a joint Muslim/Jewish charity, founded on the belief that working together across communities and perceived boundaries helps build community cohesion and break down barriers. They provide a weekly hot meal and food bags to those in one of the most deprived areas in the city centre.

Lee Canoville, founder of my other charity, Brighter Futures Through Sport, told us of his work mentoring children with a wide range of needs, empowering them to identify and use their own solutions to the difficulties they face. It gave those present an insight into some of the challenges that many young people in our county face including grooming by county lines gangs and bullying. He also spoke about the improved connections we have jointly been able to make between his charity and police and civic leaders.

We were thrilled that representatives of the Nottinghamshire Hong Kong community attended. I had become aware that Nottinghamshire has become home for many relocating from Hong Kong and I reached out to their community. Several representatives joined us and told me afterwards how much they had enjoyed it and honoured to have been invited.

We wanted to include young and old in the service. I am not sure who the oldest congregant was but I suspect my 93-year-old father may have been in the running. Very ably representing the

younger generations was Evie Holder, Nottinghamshire Young Musician of the Year 2024. She sang 'Poor Wandering One' from The Pirates of Penzance which ends with an incredible cadenza, leaving us all in awe of her talent. The other young people who played an important role were my police cadets, Leo Gardner and Jack Inquieti-Lamb, providing invaluable support, as always.

We were really pleased that Shradha Bagrodia, a master's student at Nottingham Trent University, agreed to be our official photographer. The student population is an important community within our county with almost 80,000 studying in Nottinghamshire each year. I was very grateful to Shradha for representing them and for the incredibly professional photographs that she took.

The music at Southwell Minster is world renowned and the service was particularly special thanks to the contribution of the cathedral choir, directed by Paul Provost and organist Jonathan Allsopp.

What I learnt from helping to plan this event with Southwell Minster was that, with a lot of careful thought and hard work, we were able to be more inclusive. The service was an important celebration of our King and, importantly, his communities in Nottinghamshire.

By taking some time to think about those in our communities who may not feel as connected as others do, I feel that we were able to make a positive difference to the people of our county. I believe that this is an important part of my role as High Sheriff and will be focusing on it for the remainder of my term.



# Just one High Sheriff's experience

Being both a magistrate and boring, my shrieval focus has been on the justice system, especially seeking out and thanking its lesser known and unthanked contributors. First, though, I had to obtain leave of absence from the Bench, to be granted by its chairman – an easier conversation as it was me! From then on, I have been learning every day:

- **Innovation:** I am a bit of a dinosaur but traditions can often be improved – and failure has little downside as next year's High Sheriff can always revert. So, for example, a dramatic new venue for my Declaration and moving my Law Lecture to attract the universities seemed good to me and might in the future.
- **Connection:** introducing one of Kurshida Mirza's (High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire) charities to Oxfordshire possibilities; our two law faculties to our judiciary; tribunal members to the magistracy... A High Sheriff can make so many useful links with no possible harm, while some might become a powerful legacy.
- **Convening:** never underestimate the shrieval 'convening power'. Inspired by my predecessor Sally Scott's promotion of Family Drug and Alcohol Courts, I have tried to keep her agenda alive; and I may also have scored a hit introducing the youth justice innovations of Amy Crawford, my wonderful Northamptonshire contemporary, to my Police and Crime Commissioner and my Youth Panel Chairman.



**Introducing Simon Chesterman, Chief Constable of the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, to Lord-Lieutenant Marjorie Glasgow BEM Photo: Dr Nicholas Posner**

- **Recognition:** our national honours are so few and far between they barely skim the surface of all the unsung good going on in the county. A fellow in weird clothing turning up and saying 'thank you' can make a huge difference – and I try to leave behind a certificate as a lasting reminder for organisations and – when I can persuade them to nominate some – for individuals. IKEA is no doubt pondering the sudden spike in sales of their cheapest frames!
- **Discovery:** having thought I knew something about the legal system, I am constantly finding new organisations to recognise. A mayor-making brought me to a domestic violence charity; our VAWG (violence against women and girls) conference took me to, of all things, a people's theatre collective doing amazing work with teenagers around sexual violence and bullying; and sitting in the Coroner's Court introduced me to eight unsung volunteers supporting bereaved families in devastating circumstances – I won't stop looking!



**The sword was welcome... even in HMP Huntercombe**

- **Welcome:** the goodwill embodied in this arcane office is unbelievable. I have never been anything other than heartily welcomed wherever I have gone, presumably because our message is always supportive and positive. This naturally encourages further exploration – there seems to be no limits.
- **Administration:** don't underestimate the time needed to arrange engagements and, of course, to thank them afterwards. I am lucky enough to have the support of an event organiser (as I'd be hopeless at this) but it is vital to set aside enough time for logistics to avoid becoming overwhelmed. It's all in support of the good cause but, being invisible, can be overlooked.
- **Bling:** nobody's ever been disappointed when I've arrived in court dress, only when (because they've asked me not to) I haven't. The badge stands out quite well in photos but nothing beats the full rig. In the same vein, printing off smart certificates and a grandiose letterhead means I've been getting thank you letters for my thank you letters!
- **Publicity:** as a social media dinosaur, I've had to engage help with this but getting word out about both the shrievalty and the good people I visit is always welcomed. It takes very little effort and, I hope, builds a body of followers for my successors to do even more with.



**My Declaration took place in the Convocation House in the Old Bodleian Library, followed by a reception in the Divinity School Photo: Dr Nicholas Posner**

Of course, this is just one High Sheriff's experience and, as I'm only halfway through, I am sure I have much more to learn in the months to come. All the same, I hope my flight experience to date – scattering so much goodwill must be the most rewarding thing I ever done – is some help to those revving up on the runway.



# Counter-balance to disillusion with human nature

**Kate Silk JP**

Lady Silk, High Sheriff of Powys 2024-25

Powys is big and empty. At 2,000 square miles, it's double the size of Luxembourg and about the same size as Trinidad and Tobago. Around 130,000 people live here, but we only have two towns with more than 10,000 population (in both cases, just over): Ystradgynlais and Newtown. Agriculture, tourism and the public sector are main employers. We are a community of communities with many small villages where families have lived for generations. We have also welcomed many newcomers, attracted by our wonderful countryside.

Powys still exists as an administrative county so, unlike all other High Sheriffs in Wales, I only have one local authority with which to engage. But Powys is made up of three historic counties with strong identities: Breconshire, Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire. High Sheriffs are drawn from each of these historic counties in turn.

Transport is a problem. High Sheriffs must take on engagements anywhere in their county. We only have two railway lines – the mid Wales line with five trains a day meandering through the middle of the county, and a line which serves Welshpool, Newtown and Machynlleth. Neither is near me and my village has one bus a week. So driving is the only option. But to get to Machynlleth in the north-west means a drive of almost two hours; to get to Llanfyllin in the north-east it's over two hours; and even Ystradgynlais in the south-west is an hour away.

My shrieval mileage has been enormous,



At Llangoed Hall for a lunch with former High Sheriffs and those in nomination; with David Price (2018), Lt Col Mike Lewis (2015), Ann Tudor (2016), Sally Roberts (2025), Sue Thompson (2017), Tia Jones (Lord Lieutenant), David Jones Powell (2006), Reg Cawthorne (2023), Robin Gibson-Watt (1981), Rhian Duggan (2020) and David Peate (2019) Present but not pictured James Turner 2007

taking me to a fascinating variety of events: from preserving curlews to supporting refugees, from running clubs for those with disabilities to removing invasive species... and many more. The enthusiastic commitment which so many volunteers show is awesome.

It is a great counter-balance to any disillusion with human nature. Some of that disillusion comes from having been a magistrate for almost 30 years. The courts I sat in when first appointed are now closed, like others in the county. Now we have only magistrates' courts which sit occasionally in Llandrindod and in Welshpool. While having no visiting High Court judges may be a financial relief, I am concerned that local justice is no longer delivered in Powys. And the Dyfed-Powys Police are a stretched resource – one of the smallest forces in numbers in Wales and England, but covering the largest geographical area.

I am using my shrieval year to raise awareness of one area of criminality: domestic abuse. Over the years I have seen its pernicious effects on individuals and families. The national picture is depressing: over 2 million people are affected and the estimated cost is a staggering £74 billion. Only five per cent of perpetrators are brought to justice. In 2023, 242 people lost their lives. And there are particular problems in rural areas. It is much more difficult to be anonymous than it is in a city – and isolated people can be abused without anyone being aware.

Working with two local domestic abuse charities – Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre in north Powys and Calan DVS in south Powys – I have been able to talk to victims at length. Their stories can be shocking and harrowing. I have also met judiciary from the Family Court, senior police officers, politicians and businesses, all of whom share the aim to counter domestic abuse. In October I am holding an event which will be addressed both by Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, a Powys resident and former Lord Chief Justice, and by a victim of domestic abuse. I will be doing more.

It is a privilege to be a High Sheriff. You meet wonderful people and you have a platform for doing some good yourself. I am looking forward enormously to the rest of the year.



At my Declaration with the Rt Hon the Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, former Lord Chief Justice of England of Wales Photo: Lewis Chatfield



# Successful volunteering fair

## Rob Beckley QPM

High Sheriff of Somerset 2024-25

As High Sheriff I have been introduced to ‘Somerset exceptionalism’ – the county stands out for its community initiatives, volunteering groups and enterprise. Why is this? Some attribute it to the dispersed rural nature of Somerset with fewer of the central or local government interventions which tend to be set up in larger urban centres. This has led to a self-reliant and independent spirit, with many committed people providing their own solutions to problems or matters that need addressing.

Of course, an underlying streak of nonconformism has its challenges; after all, Somerset was at the heart of the Monmouth Rebellion and my predecessor in 1685, Edward Hobbs, had a busy year meeting the needs of Judge Jeffreys. But it is also a trait that should be celebrated. Early in my shrieval year I presided over the wonderfully anarchic and quirky Glastonbury Beltane (May Day) celebrations, and that spirit of enterprise and diversity is present across much of the county.

As a retired police officer at chief constable rank, I have many years’ association with High Sheriffs. In some respects, my appointment is payback as I have enjoyed the active support, friendship and largesse of many High Sheriffs over the years. Being an ex-officer, I know the emergency services well and have focused on some of the lesser known areas of their work, with visits to the local organised crime and counter-terrorist teams, along with support teams from different services who have never seen a High Sheriff before.



With Cllr Vanessa Garside (Mayor of Taunton), her consort Mansour and RE:ACT volunteers at the Join in Somerset volunteers fair Photo: Alain Lockyer

For many years, I had a national responsibility in setting policy and practice across the UK for volunteers in policing, so my biggest concern was the significant fall I had observed in active volunteering across the whole of England and Wales. The figures are stark. A decade ago, 27 per cent of adults in England volunteered once a month. Now it is just 16 per cent. The fall among young people (under 20) is even steeper. The indications are that it wasn’t as substantial a decline in Somerset as other counties, but it’s still an extremely worrying trend.

Like many High Sheriffs, I wondered what I could do about it. I eschewed a traditional garden party and decided to hold a volunteers’ fair, ‘Join in Somerset’, which provided an opportunity for volunteer organisations to showcase their work and services and to seek new supporters and volunteers. It was held in Somerset’s county town, Taunton, on a Saturday in September, and over 90 charitable and voluntary groups set up street stalls. Thousands of local people



With DS Henry Beckley and PC George Beckley for final patrol after 38 years as a police officer and first patrol as High Sheriff

visited the stalls as I had partnered with the town council who ran additional cultural celebrations that day. It was a massive success – all the organisations reported being inundated with inquiries and many signed up new volunteers.

A gathering of 90 organisations is a modest step, but the event has raised awareness of the problem of declining volunteering and has promoted an important discussion in Somerset about what we can do to change things. Some mayors of Somerset towns now plan to hold similar events and the Somerset councils have agreed to support a conference in February to explore potential solutions.

In the context of my previous 38-year career in the police, history was made at the start of my shrieval year. For three weeks I was both a chief police officer and High Sheriff. I had to conclude a statutory inquiry for the Home Office so advice was sought and permission granted for this unusual arrangement. It is believed I am the only High Sheriff to have held office while also a serving police officer.



Opening the Beltane Day Celebrations in Glastonbury



With Joanne Scofield and volunteers, Worthy FM Radio at Glastonbury Festival



# Together we are stronger

## Shahid Azeem DL

High Sheriff of Surrey 2024-25

It has been a great privilege to serve as High Sheriff of Surrey this year. This is my second term as High Sheriff as the first was much limited by the coronavirus pandemic back in 2020. I was very proud to be the first Muslim High Sheriff of Surrey. Back then I worked closely with the Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey, Michael More-Molyneux, to support the community during the pandemic and we initiated various community support groups which brought people together from different faiths in a very positive and proactive way, thereby proving my mantra – ‘Together we are stronger’.

I am now back in better times in the midst of serving the county for another twelve months and I believe I am the only High sheriff of Surrey to be honoured with the role by both a queen and a king!

There have been many highlights so far but for me my priorities have been to encourage groups of different faiths to work together for a better society, to improve health through sport and activity, to eradicate hunger in our county, to highlight charities in the county that are not on the radar, and to shine a light on the work undertaken by our emergency services.

In July I combined all of those initiatives at my garden party which was held at Sunbury Cricket Club. The catering was provided by the wonderful charity Surplus to Supper (surplustosupper.org), who used produce and drinks destined for landfill to create the refreshments for my event. Their ethos is to provide one free meal for charity from each meal catered by Surplus to Supper as part of their ‘Buy One Feed One Free’ initiative: providing free meals



Garden party food and entertainment provided by Surplus to Supper and the Include Choir



Part of the bocce team at LinkAble's fun day



Around the county for Surrey Day  
All photos: Andy Newbold Photography

for people in need within our community, helping bridge the gap between food waste and food poverty locally.

The police cadets helped on the day and our Chief Constable and guests from various faith groups were in attendance. Entertainment included the fantastic Include Choir (include.org/the-include-choir/), a charity that welcomes people with and without learning disabilities or autism.

Surrey Day was a fabulous event this year wrapping up with a reception at the iconic Brooklands Museum where the resident Concorde provided a unique backdrop. During Surrey Day I also attended the Reigate Park Run, a community day in Oxted, Mandira's Kitchen at Albury and a Surrey Minority



Ethnic Forum event in Woking where I was treated to brilliant performances by SMEF members. It was great to see the creativity of the groups involved which included dance, music and poetry.

There was also cake and refreshments and lots of happy faces. The Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey, Mary Creswell, and I then presented the children with gifts and met some of the performers (smef.org.uk).

One of the most memorable days for me was at Woking Sportsbox for an event organised by the charity LinkAble who held their first Paralympics community fun day, providing the opportunity for people with learning or physical disabilities and autism, along with non-disabled people and community groups, to enjoy accessible activities. It was an honour to be a part of such a well-organised community event and I joined in for a game of bocce which was great fun, as was biking around the track, which may have been even better had I realised I had to change gear – I did wonder why it was quite hard work! LinkAble and the many volunteers who helped to make it such a success did an amazing job and it was such fun for the many people who took part (linkable.org.uk).

Looking forwards, there is plenty more to do and more organisations to visit but I am very much reassured that our county is in good hands – there are a great many proactive members of the community who work hard to support those in need in Surrey. We have some real heroes and I hope to be able to identify as many as possible to say thank you on behalf of the county for their efforts – acknowledging people who make a difference is important too!



# Keeping West Glamorgan safe

## Melanie James JP

High Sheriff of West Glamorgan 2024-25

I wanted to take the opportunity during my year as High Sheriff to make a difference in our community of West Glamorgan. Having been a magistrate for 14 years and with particular awareness as a youth magistrate of an increase in the possession of bladed articles and knife crime, I decided that a missing and much need provision in West Glamorgan was publicly accessible and easy to use critical bleed control (CBC) kits.

The principal aim of my initiative is to equip public locations with readily accessible bleed control kits that are both highly effective and simple to use. This proactive measure will undoubtedly save lives by providing immediate life-saving assistance before emergency services can arrive.

Although natural assumption and media coverage often associate bleed control kits with knife crime, there are numerous instances where these kits have been used to control catastrophic bleeding due to accidents such as road traffic collisions, workplace incidents, impalements, dog bites, and more.

After several months spent consulting with the emergency services and relevant organisations, I decided to adopt the Daniel Baird Foundation bleed control kit, which has been deployed in 20,000 locations across England and British territories. Marty's Law is progressing as the government publishes draft legislation outlining requirements for venues and



At Bulldogs Boxing & Community Centre with Chief Inspector South Wales Police, PCSO and Station Officer of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service



In Swansea city centre with the CEO of Ospreys, Chief Inspector South Wales Police, Deputy Leader of City and County of Swansea, Member of Senedd Cymru, Station Manager Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Chairman of Heartbeat Trust UK and two members of the Magistrates' Association West Glamorgan

other organisations to ensure public safety, including the provision of bleed control kits. Cody's Law, currently at the petition stage, also calls for all public venues to have bleed control kits as well as metal detectors. Until now, there has been no provision in Wales.

The kit includes essential military-grade equipment such as a fox seal chest seal, Celox gauze, Code Red tourniquet, large trauma dressing, emergency shears, disposable gloves, foil blanket, CPR face shield, and a marker pen. The kit has a five-year expiry date, and single elements can be replaced if required. I am currently working on a training video which will be widely available and promoted on social media, and I am delighted that the Welsh Ambulance Services Trust will assist with talking through the instructions for use when a call is made to 999.

My intention, where possible, is to install these kits within our current defibrillator boxes. By working in conjunction with Heartbeat Trust UK and other defibrillator guardians, I can utilise the existing monitoring and registration systems. The boxes will then be rebranded as 'multi trauma boxes' and I also envisage placing kits in public venues, schools, shops, licensed premises, transport hubs, sports venues – the list is endless!

The initiative is supported by the Wales Ambulance Services Trust, South Wales Police, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, local authorities, Welsh government, and safety partnerships. The Office of High Sheriff undoubtedly opened doors and allowed me to reach the most senior and influential people. This ensures

a well-coordinated approach, enhancing the project's effectiveness and reach. The provision of these critical bleed control kits and associated training will empower citizens, increase community resilience and, ultimately, contribute to a safer environment for everyone in West Glamorgan.

I have carried out two awareness events, one in the Lord Mayor's Mansion House in Swansea and one in the Bulldogs Boxing & Community Centre in Port Talbot. Both events were extremely well supported and St John Ambulance Cymru gave a kit demonstration and S4C filmed us. I launched the installations on all social media platforms and have persuaded local celebrities and sports stars to feature in my campaign. Six months in and I have raised funds for over 200 kits which I am extremely proud of, with 50 already installed in the county.

The High Sheriff of West Glamorgan is helping to keep the people of West Glamorgan safe!



At Aberavon Beach, Port Talbot, with Chief Inspector South Wales Police, Station Manager at Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue, PCSO and Cllr Matthew Crowley, Mayor of Neath and Port Talbot



# Magistrate recruitment initiative



With Vishavpreet Bhatia, Dr Derrick Anderson CBE (Lord-Lieutenant), Kate Wright and Gurpreet Bhatia at a Sant Nirankari peace mission event

experience enhanced my understanding of the challenges faced by the judiciary, particularly in the Family Courts of the Black Country. As I interacted with the magistrates it became clear to me that recruitment was a significant issue and one which I felt needed some real focus from myself as High Sheriff.

Recognising this challenge, I looked to address it by developing the 'High Sheriff's Magistrates Recruitment Programme'. After initial discussions with the Bench Chair Magistrates for the West Midlands, I focused on enhancing efforts to recruit a diverse group of magistrates. I firmly believe that a wide range of perspectives and backgrounds among our magistrates will not only enrich our justice system but also ensure that it meets the needs of our diverse community.

I began by hosting an online recruitment information session in June this year supported by experienced magistrates who shared their insights about the role and the application process. The session was designed to clarify the position and encourage individuals from all walks of life to consider this vital voluntary role in public service. I then held an in-person information session at the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton, which provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions and a question and answer panel.

These sessions were not only beneficial for potential magistrates but also served to inform employers about the advantages of their staff becoming a magistrate. There has been an almost 700 per cent uplift across the Black Country in people applying to become magistrates since I launched this initiative. I am now exploring the possibilities of expanding this programme across other courts in the West Midlands particularly in the Birmingham courts.

My office will be delighted to share our work around communications and the magistrate recruitment programme should anyone like to read the detail – I believe it will have significant benefit and applicability if rolled out in other counties or, indeed, nationally.

## Douglas Wright MBE DL

High Sheriff of the West Midlands 2024-2025

In preparing to become the High Sheriff of the West Midlands in April of this year, I quickly realised how enormous the county is, comprising seven boroughs with such geographical spread. As such my first task was to write an electronic brochure about my shrieval year which I could share with people in the West Midlands. I particularly wanted a resource about the history and role of the High Sheriff that I could send to schools, colleges, organisations to educate them about this prestigious role and how my year would work. This has been a very powerful tactic which we have also supplemented with a High Sheriff's monthly electronic report which is now opened by over 6,000 subscribers who read and share my monthly news.

Nothing will ever replace visits but the awareness of the High Sheriff has been greatly increased by having a digital strategy to run in parallel with the activation part of the role. Awareness and advocacy are vital to ensure the longevity and relevance of a High Sheriff. To ensure that my efforts reach a wider audience, I

have embraced social media as a powerful tool for communication. By combining my presence on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram, I am committed to providing regular updates on my journey as High Sheriff. This includes information about events, initiatives, and insights into the important work being done across the West Midlands. Additionally, all engagement bookings and contacts are now managed digitally through our website.

At the beginning of my shrieval year I had the privilege of spending three days at the Birmingham Law Courts. This



With Matt Jones and Gurpinder Bhullar on a visit to the Birmingham Civil and Family Justice Centre to present High Sheriff's Awards to the court staff



# The greatest good fortune

## Charles Moyle JP

High Sheriff of Worcestershire 2024-25

If there is a more fortunate High Sheriff in the country I'd be pleased to meet them! I have had the greatest good fortune with so many 'big ticket' events happening on my watch; put simply, six months of wonderful adventures – it has been the greatest privilege to serve as High Sheriff of Worcestershire and to have experienced what I have.

My very first event post Declaration was to be part of the quite stunning Maundy Service at Worcester Cathedral attended by Her Majesty The Queen. One hundred and fifty recipients from all four corners of our country came together to be recognised and were awarded their tokens of appreciation within a staggering environment of the grandest pageantry I have ever experienced – just a remarkable and extraordinary day, never to be forgotten.

The D-Day memorial services held throughout the county were immensely poignant. Veterans of all denominations, creeds, colour and Commonwealth nations came together to remember the immense sacrifice of their friends, their family and their regiments, their squadrons and ships. They will never be forgotten...

Being the returning officer for the West Worcestershire constituency at the general election offered a special insight into our democratic election system at its very best. The winner was noble in victory, the losers gracious in defeat. The dozens of staff and volunteers delivering the result were so immensely good-humoured even when they had to re-count the result multiple times – particularly when one considers it was four o'clock in the morning!



With some of the recipients of a High Sheriff's Award: Mikey's Boxing Club in Kidderminster and Avenbury Care Farm near Bishops Cleeve



At Worcester Cathedral for the Maundy Service with Her Majesty The Queen and the Rt Revd Dr John Inge, Bishop of Worcester

The experience of joining the West Mercia Police elite serious and organised crime task force on two drug farm raids will stay with me for a very, very long time. Apart from witnessing their terrific professionalism what stood out was the appalling squalor the 'growers' were made to live in. It was also depressing that, in 2024 Britain, people are hiding in plain sight (in one case the 'farm' was exactly opposite the town's police station), fuelling a trade to feed the streets with substances that only ever cause complete misery. The two raids I attended removed over £1m worth of narcotics from Worcestershire and dealt with three growers – how many more are operating from a disused shop or shed near you?

Above all the greatest privilege has been working with Worcestershire's regional mayors. These local politicians



At a D-Day memorial service with one of many veterans and Dr The Hon Gilbert Greenall CBE DL (Vice Lord-Lieutenant)

of all colours and hue have the very best insight into exactly what is happening in our communities – they have been a fundamental key for me to meet some truly remarkable organisations. I tasked each mayor's office to curate a tour of their town whereby the mayor and I, together with local press, would meet and thank the staff, volunteers, trustees, donors and end users of dozens and dozens of community organisations and charities. The dedicated care and provision of companionship to the scores of lonely and sometimes house-bound people has touched me deeply. It has been an honour to mark their dedicated work by presenting awards and medals wherever I have been lucky enough to have been invited.

What a privilege this role has been and continues to be.





# 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 Gill Fargher
Lancashire	Helen Bingley OBE JP 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 OBE
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

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

## New Members

Name	County	Year of Office
Hon Alderwoman Merlita Bryan-Hilton	Nottinghamshire	2026
Rhys Davies	Gwynedd	2025
Susannah Dutton	Essex	2026
Gulshanbir Kayembe DL	Suffolk	2025
Dhruv Patel OBE	Greater London	2026
Anna Rankin	Hertfordshire	2026
Nicola Ross	Buckinghamshire	2026
Carmen Watson	West Midlands	2026
Edward Ziff OBE DL	West Yorkshire	2025

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.

## Deaths

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

**Roger Angell-James**  
Date of death: 19-Mar-24  
Age: 92  
County: Shropshire  
Year of office: 1988

**William Furber LVO**  
Date of death: 21-Aug-24  
Age: 69  
County: Greater London  
Year of office: 2017

**David Bulmer**  
Date of death: 28-Jun-24  
Age: 87  
County: Herefordshire & Worcestershire  
Year of office: 1991

**David Gardiner DL**  
Date of death: 5-May-24  
Age: 89  
County: Berkshire  
Year of office: 1988

**Andrew Buxton**  
Date of death: 27-Jul-24  
Age: 89  
County: Norfolk  
Year of office: 1998

**Major Timothy Hercock**  
Date of death: 30-Jul-24  
Age: 61  
County: Leicestershire  
Year of office: 2019

**Richard Carden**  
Date of death: 10-Jul-24  
Age: 86  
County: East Sussex  
Year of office: 2001

**George Kendall JP**  
Date of death: 19-Dec-23  
Age: 96  
County: Buckinghamshire  
Year of office: 1986

**Miles Clarke**  
Date of death: 7-Jul-24  
Age: 87  
County: Cheshire  
Year of office: 1999

**John Spilman JP DL**  
Date of death: 19-Jul-24  
Age: 84  
County: Humberside  
Year of office: 1989

**Dame Elizabeth Fradd DBE DL**  
Date of death: 12-May-24  
Age: 75  
County: Nottinghamshire  
Year of office: 2020



## Nomination of High Sheriffs of England

County	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
Bedfordshire	Camilla King	Ismail Anilmis DL	Lucinda Copeman
Berkshire	Sean Taylor DL	Renu Kapur MBE	Elizabeth Storey
Buckinghamshire	Philippa Kirkbride	Nicola Ross	Dr Julie Mills OBE
Cambridgeshire	The Hon Frances Stanley DL	Francis Burkitt	Dr Jaspal Singh DL
Cheshire	Joëlle Warren MBE DL	Lynn Pegler	His Honour Judge Steven Everett
City of Bristol	Kalpna Woolf	Anne Nisbet DL	Mohammed Elsharif
Cumbria	Dr Geoffrey Jolliffe	Shirley Fawcett	Ian Brown
Derbyshire	Sir Richard FitzHerbert Bt	Syed Iftikhar	Gillian Sewell
Devon	Caroline Harlow	Mark Ansell	Richard Stevens MBE
Dorset	Callum Bremner JP	Helena Conibear DL	Cleeves Palmer
Durham	Mike Poole JP DL	Dr Arnab Basu MBE	Andrew Hayday
East Riding of Yorkshire	Mike Rice	Neil Sanderson	Patricia Dalby
East Sussex	Annie Brown	Michael Bedingfield DL	Dr David Walker
Essex	Julie Fosh Rogers DL	Susannah Dutton	Amrik Sandhu
Gloucestershire	Julie Kent MBE	Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE	Rupert Walters
Greater London	John Garbutt JP	Dhruv Patel OBE	Alexia Fetherstonhaugh JP
Hampshire	Susan Elton	William Maltby	Stephanie Illsley
Herefordshire	Helen Bowden	Tamsin Clive DL	Peter Clay
Hertfordshire	Nicholas Buxton	Anna Rankin	Meenal Sachdev
Isle of Wight	Jacqueline Gazzard	Nigel Hartley MBE	Katie Davies
Kent	Jonathan Neame DL	Martin Lukehurst	Lars Lemonius
Leicestershire	Stephen Bryan JP	Meldin Thomas QPM	Sandra Barnett-Pollock OBE
Lincolnshire	David Chambers DL	Sue Liburd MBE DL	Camilla Carlbom Flinn
Norfolk	Patrick Lines	Jonathan Pearson	Samantha Mackintosh
Northamptonshire	Jeremy Sharman	Miranda Wixon DL	Roger Butler
Northumberland	George Farr	Dr Anna Charlton	Charles Renwick
North Yorkshire	Sir Andrew Lawson-Tancred Bt	Nigel Corner DL	James Grierson
Nottinghamshire	Edward Attenborough DL	Hon Alderwoman Merlita Bryan-Hilton	Craig Chettle MBE
Oxfordshire	John May OBE DL	Jawaid Malik JP	Moira Darlington
Rutland	Colonel Richard Chesterfield	Susannah Fish OBE QPM	Susan Ball
Shropshire	Jane Trowbridge	Katherine Tanner DL	Hugh Strickland
Somerset	Janet Montgomery	Peter Dixon	Nina Coad
South Yorkshire	Giuseppe Di'lasio	TBC	Jane Marshall
Staffordshire	Timothy Gillow	Pritpal Nagi MBE DL	Sally Newstead
Suffolk	Gulshanbir Kayembe DL	Oliver Paul DL	Susan Hughes
Surrey	Peter Cluff	Neelam Dharni-Devesher DL	Johanna Hamilton
Tyne and Wear	Joanne Curry MBE DL	Ammar Mirza CBE	Jeffrey Brown
Warwickshire	Karen Lynch MBE	Susan Rasmussen	Susan Rawbone
West Midlands	Mark Smith	Carmen Watson	TBC
West Sussex	Dr Timothy Fooks	Gary Shipton DL	Julia Aisbitt
West Yorkshire	Edward Ziff OBE DL	Dr Ruby Bhatti OBE	Nicola Chance-Thompson MBE DL
Wiltshire	Martin Nye	Dr Alex Goodwin	Lady Ila Campbell Fuller
Worcestershire	Ian Smith	Maynard Burton	Fiona Charny

## Nomination of High Sheriffs of Wales

County	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
Clwyd	Julie Gillbanks	David Jones OBE	Rachel Clacher CBE
Dyfed	Ann Jones DL	Andrew Phillips	Susan Picouto
Gwent	Lt Colonel Ralph Griffin	Shereen Williams MBE	Mark Langshaw MBE
Gwynedd	Rhys Davies	Llinos Owen	Sean Taylor
Mid Glamorgan	Sharon Dixon	John Charles TD DL	Dr Dale Cartwright
Powys	Sally Roberts	William Watkins	Ann Mathias
South Glamorgan	Janet Davies	Jane John	Spiro Borg
West Glamorgan	Diana Stroia	Emrys Elias OBE	Lara Capel

\*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.





### The High Sheriff's Badge

Available in two designs:  
Style 1 for wearing around  
the neck **£185.00**  
41mm x 74mm



### Chaplain's or Cadet's Badge

Single **£27.00**,  
2+ **£20.00** each  
(2 for preaching scarf/tippet)



### Miniature Badge for High Sheriff and Spouse

Gilt for serving and  
retired High Sheriffs,  
silver for High Sheriffs'  
spouses/escorts  
**£14.50 each**  
15mm x 25mm



### The High Sheriff's Badge

Available in two designs:  
Style 2 on bow to wear  
on left shoulder  
**£185.00**  
45mm x 74mm

Association blue and  
white ribbon (as above)  
for badges and hats  
**£10.00** per metre

### Enamel and gilt cufflinks

available with a chain or T-Bar fitting.

Each pair comes in its own presentation box **£40.50**



### Ladies' Pure Silk Scarf

Navy blue. 14oz dye  
printed – pure silk twill  
with multiple copies  
of the Association's  
badge overprinted in  
gold. Size 140cm x  
30cm (56" x 113/4")  
**£35.00**



**Tie** Navy blue, green or  
maroon in pure silk (only  
to be worn by members of  
the Association) **£32.00**



### Umbrella

Blue and white  
umbrella **£39.50**

The Association reserves the right to vary prices at any time.

All prices are inclusive of postage and packing.  
Payment details can be found on the Regalia Order Form or call/email to confirm.  
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**Heritage House, PO Box 21 Baldock, Herts SG7 5SH**

**Tel:** 01462-896688 **Fax:** 01462-896677 **E-mail:** shrievalty@hall-mccartney.co.uk



### 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.

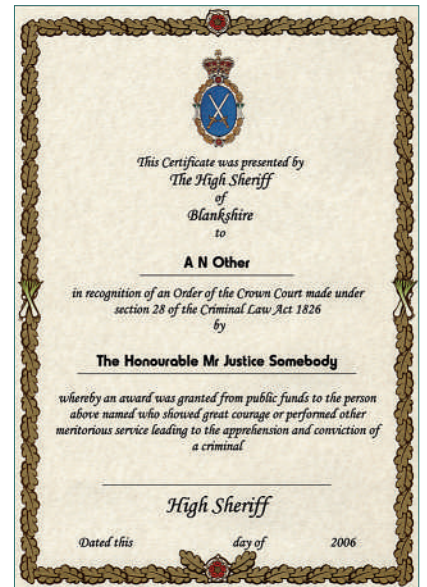
**CCA 2** is a blank certificate. This can be overprinted using the recommended text, again found on the Association's website in the members' section under Resource Library for Information and Advice.

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

**CCA 1: 50 for £25**

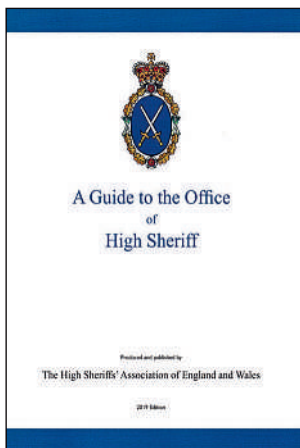
**CCA 2: 50 for £20**

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

## Association's new Honorary Secretary

At the AGM in November, Deborah Hutchinson was elected as Honorary Secretary to High Sheriffs' Association in place of James Williams who retired after 15 years in the post.

After qualifying as a solicitor in 1979, her professional life remained in Nottinghamshire, and Deborah retired from her firm in 2019. In 2012 Deborah was appointed Under Sheriff of Nottinghamshire and has served the dozen High Sheriffs since. She was elected President of the Under Sheriffs' Association in 2019.

On becoming Honorary Secretary Elect she stepped down as President of the USA and retires as Under Sheriff in March. She is looking forward to her new role with the HSA confident in the knowledge that James will be on speed dial to help her on her steep learning curve.



Under Sheriff of Nottinghamshire Deborah Hutchinson (left) leading the procession to Southwell Minster for a service of thanksgiving (see page 38 for more details)

## High Sheriff's role in a general election gets airtime!

On the morning of the general election, John Chatfeild-Roberts (Leicestershire) emailed Petroc Trelawny on Radio 3 in response to a 'shout out' he made for polling officers and returning officers. To John's surprise Petroc used what John had written to spend a minute telling the nation about how it works (returning officer vs acting returning officer) on his Radio 3 Breakfast programme at 9.14 am! The recording of the particular item – only a minute long – was to be found on BBC Sounds, but sadly the link has now fallen foul of the expiration after 30 days limit set.

Please email [editor@highsheriffs.com](mailto:editor@highsheriffs.com) with any other 'marketing tips'!

### CONSORTS' CORNER

#### TAKE NOTE WHERE THE HIGH SHERIFF IS ASKED TO STAND!

We went to the Cotswold Canals Trust (Stroud) volunteer evening where Mark was asked to give a short speech thanking the volunteers for all their efforts in getting the next stage of the canal open. The event took place in a field alongside the Stroudwater Navigation canal. In the afternoon we received an email saying the event would go ahead but owing to the very wet weather to wear suitable footwear and clothing. It had poured with rain for the previous 24 hours and was still raining hard during the event. So no formal outfit but sensible shoes and an anorak were the best option.

There were a couple of speeches before the section of the canal was opened. Mark was passed the microphone and stood under the awning in the dry. He was just starting to speak when I saw one of the volunteers shove him hard to one side. As he was pushed, the join in the awning roof split open and the vast volume of water which had accumulated cascaded down, narrowly missing him!

Well done to the volunteer as the rest of the evening would not have been much fun if he was soaking wet.

Julia Hurrell, Gloucestershire





# A gift to remember



Shrievally Association diamond set badge-brooch in hallmarked yellow and white gold and enamel. Approximate size as shown. Price: £2,250.00



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### Next issue

The Editor welcomes articles and news stories from High Sheriffs concerning their year in office. Additionally, the Editor would welcome contributions to 'Consorts' corner', any 'Hints & Tips' and details of High Sheriffs' county gatherings/celebrations. The next edition of *The High Sheriff* will be published in June 2024 and High Sheriffs 2024-25 will be sent an invitation to write at the beginning of March. Closing date for receipt of editorial items will be Friday 5 April 2024. Items for inclusion should be sent to: Email: [editor@highsheriffs.com](mailto:editor@highsheriffs.com); Post: The Editor, The High Sheriff magazine c/o Hall-McCartney Ltd, PO Box 21 Baldock, Herts SG7 5SH. To advertise in *The High Sheriff* please contact Grant Hosie Tel: 01462 896688 Email: [grant@hall-mccartney.co.uk](mailto:grant@hall-mccartney.co.uk) [www.hall-mccartney.co.uk](http://www.hall-mccartney.co.uk).



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## 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.

Geoffrey Golding  
01727 857746 or 07903 001773  
geoffreygolding@gmail.com

*Geoffrey Golding*