

Uplifting, inspiring and very worthwhile

Professor John Mohin OBE DL

High Sheriff of Merseyside 2024-25

I was extremely fortunate to be installed as High Sheriff in the year in which the County of Merseyside celebrated its 50th anniversary. The county embraces the Liverpool City Region and the City of Liverpool, where I was born and brought up.

Of perhaps greatest significance to me as High Sheriff, Merseyside Police also celebrated its 50th anniversary and this provided a platform upon which to celebrate the contribution they have made in 'Putting our Community First' as they have proved so often.

The tragic events that took place in Southport last year were horrific; what was a major tragedy for everyone ultimately served to exemplify the role of Merseyside Police working closely with all of the emergency services, the judiciary, solicitors, barristers, magistrates and the prison service – all coming together to administer justice with exemplary skill and professional discipline.

As a corollary to all this, I have presided at police commendation ceremonies to recognise the outstanding work of detectives, the courage of police officers and the achievements of police colleagues. Bringing all these strands together, I work alongside Merseyside Police Heritage and Archives Board and we have ambitious plans to create two new museum initiatives which capture the history of policing and celebrate all of our blue light services. This is work in progress.

A key mission for my year was to stimulate and encourage enterprise. As a direct result, the Centre for Enterprise was established under the auspices of the University of Liverpool to incubate business ideas, inventions, designs, pharmaceutical innovation and, at the same time, accommodate local entrepreneurs.

During my shrieval year, we welcomed HMS *Prince of Wales*, the aircraft carrier and flagship of the Royal Navy which was granted the Freedom of Liverpool by the Lord Mayor and invited to stage a march past in front of Liverpool Town Hall. On board ship, certain thoroughfares and gangways now carry Liverpool street names, including 'Penny Lane'.

It's so incredibly gratifying that the region has proved such an exciting place



With George Tickle and Alicia Ludgate, Merseyside Police Cadets, Crispin Pailing DL and Garth Dallas (Chair of Liverpool Commonwealth Association) on Remembrance Sunday at St George's Hall Cenotaph, Liverpool

to serve as His Majesty's High Sheriff. Addressing schools and, in particular, sixth-form students on the issue of substance abuse and the misuse of drugs has been enlightening.

The High Sheriff's Fund and Merseyside Police Charitable Fund have long worked closely with the Community Foundation for Merseyside, ensuring that valuable financial assistance is directed toward projects that prevent crime, improve community safety and create diversionary activities for young people. On behalf of the fund, we have made site visits, met with social groups and families and found a means to contribute sensitively.

In attending the passing out ceremonies of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, I have been continually impressed by the professionalism of the Training and Development Academy which helps shape first-class operational firefighters. The firefighter recruit course is demanding in that it prepares the new recruits for the varied and challenging role of a firefighter – a set of skills that far and away exceed the task of putting out fires.

Visiting the Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital proved inspirational and I was pleased to lend my support for their fundraising campaign. LHCH has developed the only purpose-built medical simulation centre in the United Kingdom dedicated to the training of medical staff and students;

their aim is nothing less than treating and caring for people living with complex heart and lung conditions, a very worthy cause.

When the 80th anniversary of D-Day took place in June 2024, I was honoured and delighted to meet D-Day veterans and their families; this was a poignant occasion and one that gave me the chance as High Sheriff to express my thanks for their service to our country.

Liverpool is considered the spiritual home of Cunard, founded in 1859, and so it was with some historical significance that the naming ceremony of their latest ship, *Queen Anne*, took place on our world-famous waterfront.

During the course of the past year, we have been pleased to welcome His Majesty The King, Their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales, and Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, a regular and most welcome visitor to Merseyside. Her Royal Highness spoke at the Racing Welfare charity lunch held at Aintree at the beginning of the Grand National Festival to address her concern about mental health within the racing fraternity.

I have touched upon only a fraction of the many events that I have attended during what has proved a year of such edifying significance – uplifting, inspiring and very worthwhile.