



WINTER  
2023

# The High Sheriff

Magazine of the High Sheriffs' Association of England and Wales

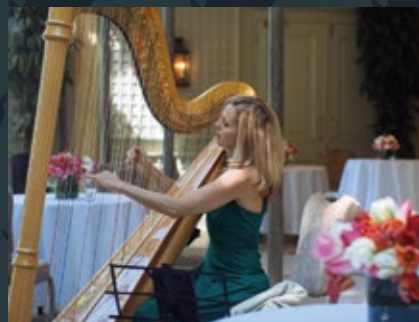


## Chairman's report from the Annual General Meeting 2023

Burghley // Nomination Ceremony // Family Law // Domestic Abuse // News – from and about members



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Front Cover:  
Charles Bishop  
(Essex) with the Rt  
Revd Roger Morris,  
Bishop of Colchester,  
'making a din' as part  
of the annual Blessing  
and Reclaiming of  
the Waters ceremony  
in Brightlingsea

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The Association is not as a body responsible for the opinions expressed in *The High Sheriff* unless it is stated that an article or a letter officially represents the Council's views.

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 I hope that the members will find much of interest. Can I particularly highlight 'Focus on... Family Law' by the Hon Mr Justice Francis who is the Family Presiding Judge for London. This gives an invaluable insight into the challenges faced by judges.



Domestic abuse has sadly grown through the pandemic and there is an article from Hertfordshire helping us understand the nature of domestic abuse in all its forms. The High Sheriffs' Association of England and Wales is offering advice to the High Sheriffs in Northern Ireland on forming their own Association

and an article covers the history of the Shrievalty there. We also cover the Annual General Meeting and other Association events in this issue.

You will see that there is a move to using first names rather than initials across the Association and this is just part of the modernisation that is taking place. Council has a particular focus on the affordability of the role of High Sheriffs and hopes to report back early in the new year. There are helpful papers on a wide range of subjects in the members' area of the website, including affordability. Most importantly I would like

to thank all those current High Sheriffs who have contributed articles for this issue during such a busy period. These insights are particularly valuable to those in nomination revealing how the current High Sheriffs are making such a difference in their own bailiwicks across England and Wales.



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

“Most importantly I would like to thank all those current High Sheriffs who have contributed articles for this issue during such a busy period.”

## From the Editor

I would first like to echo Michael's thanks to all those who have contributed an article for the winter edition of *The High Sheriff*. I know the end of your term in office is a busy one (not least planning a well-earned break!) so to give you a heads-up, the copy due date for the summer



edition will be Friday 19 April 2024. You will receive an invitation to write in due course. I would welcome suggestions for topics for the 'Focus on...' articles (Family Law and Domestic Abuse in this issue). I realise the forthcoming summer edition articles will be too late for your own

term of office but may be of interest and help to future High Sheriffs.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very productive and enjoyable final few months in office – and I look forward to hearing about them in the summer edition of your magazine!

**Jayne Lewis, Editor**



# Diary of Forthcoming Events

## MARCH 2024 HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR 2024

MARCH

The names of the High Sheriffs on the Roll for 2024 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 19 MARCH

The awards ceremony will take place face to face in London. All projects to be entered must be endorsed by a High Sheriff and submitted by 22 January 2024. Finalists will be announced shortly after that.

## APRIL 2024 MEETING OF COORDINATORS OF REGIONAL MEETINGS

TUESDAY 9 APRIL

There will be a meeting of the coordinators (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 10.00 am followed by lunch. Please address any queries to Simon Miesegeas at: [simonm@ccs-group.co.uk](mailto:simonm@ccs-group.co.uk).

## MAY 2024 ZOOM FOR HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR 2025

MONDAY 13 MAY

To discuss matters of interest for High Sheriffs in nomination for 2025 at 5.30 pm for about an hour.

## JULY 2024 SEMINAR FOR HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR THE YEARS 2025 AND 2026

FRIDAY 5 JULY

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

## SEPTEMBER 2024 ZOOM FOR CURRENT HIGH SHERIFFS

MONDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

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

## OCTOBER 2024 THE RED MASS

TUESDAY 1 OCTOBER 2024

The annual Roman Catholic Mass will be held at 9.30 am at Westminster Cathedral to celebrate the start of the legal year. Those current and past High Sheriffs and High Sheriffs in nomination who wish to join the judicial procession are invited to coffee beforehand from 8.30 am, prior to the procession lining up. There will be a ticket-only reception after the Mass; to obtain information about the tickets, please contact the Secretary of the Thomas More Society, at [secretary@thomasmoresociety.org.uk](mailto:secretary@thomasmoresociety.org.uk). A modest charge will be requested to cover the costs to the TMS of organising the Mass.

## THE LADIES' LUNCH

EARLY OCTOBER

The annual ladies' lunch will be held in London. When arranged, full details will be sent in May/June 2024 to those ladies who are in nomination.

## NOVEMBER 2024 53RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER

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

## THE NOMINATION OF FUTURE HIGH SHERIFFS

TUESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2024

The ceremony will take place in Court 4 (the Lady Chief Justice's Court) at 2.00 pm at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL. At the ceremony the names of those nominated for the Office of High Sheriff for the years 2025, 2026 and 2027 will be read out in court.

The Secretary will write in September to all High Sheriffs in nomination for 2025 and 2026 inviting them to attend. It may be possible for a few 2027 nominees to attend as well but space in court is limited. The Association will not know the names of the 2027 nominees so it will be up to such nominees or their proposers to contact the Secretary should they wish to attend. After the ceremony, there will be a Tea Party at St Clements Danes Church in the Strand. This event provides a good opportunity for those in nomination to meet each other.

## DECEMBER 2024 ZOOM FOR HIGH SHERIFFS IN NOMINATION FOR 2025

MONDAY 2 DECEMBER

To discuss matters of interest for High Sheriffs in nomination for 2025 at 5.30 pm for about an hour.

# Chairman's Report 2023

It is a great honour and pleasure to be in the chair today. I pay tribute to Hugh Tollemache, my predecessor, for all that he did to advance the Association during his tenure, especially during the grey days of the pandemic. Under his leadership at that time, our Association put in place the very valuable and popular online briefings for High Sheriffs in office and in nomination. They continue and it is good to see Hugh and Rosie here today – they will be with us for lunch. I am pleased too to see spouses and partners with us at this AGM. You give such vital support and advice to us; thank you.

The year 2023 has been another special one for the Shrievalty as High Sheriffs across England and Wales supported and contributed to the Coronation celebrations of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty Queen Camilla. I hope you enjoyed reading about community celebrations in our new-look magazine so ably edited by Jayne Lewis with Honorary Editor and Council member Michael Gurney. We shall hear more about the Coronation after lunch, as we welcome the Rt Hon the Lord Carington who became the Lord Great Chamberlain on the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in September last year. Lord Carington was High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire 2002.

The Association continues to give support and advice to High Sheriffs in office and to those in nomination. I have mentioned the online briefings we now give, which are in addition to the extremely successful briefing day at Burghley. That briefing day is refined each year, and we are fortunate in being able to attract tremendous speakers.

Every year, on 12 November [unless a Sunday] at the Royal Courts of Justice, with the support of the now new King's Remembrancer, Senior Master David Cook, who will be joining us at lunch, the



**Andrew Tuggey,**  
Chairman,  
Gwent 2015

Association arranges the annual Nomination Ceremony, this year to be led by the new Lady Chief Justice, the Rt Hon Dame Sue Carr, followed by tea in St Clement Danes. I greatly look forward to meeting Dame Sue Carr on 13 November, when on behalf of the Association, I shall pass on the Shrievalty's congratulations on her appointment as the first Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales.

As your Chairman I attend the High Sheriff briefings held throughout the year in each of the Association's nine regions. I was in the Southwest last week, shall be in the West Midlands tomorrow, in the Thames Valley on Sunday and in my own region of Wales in three weeks' time. It is great to meet High Sheriffs and High Sheriffs in nomination face-to-face, and to listen, learn, and answer questions. The regional briefings are

**We marked the retirement of Council members John Lee and Virginia Lloyd**



grass-roots stuff, hugely important and extremely valuable for those in nomination, their spouses and partners. They are very popular and successful but happen only because of the dedication and hard work of the regional coordinators. I am most grateful to them and thank them on your and Council's behalf. I am delighted that our links with the City Sheriffs remain strong and they generously invite the High Sheriffs in office to a reception in the Old Bailey each May.

I also take a moment to thank our President Elizabeth Hunter for her advice and support, and all colleagues on Council who give of their time and work so hard for the Association. You will hear from some of them in a moment and we shall mark the retirement of Council members John Lee and Virginia Lloyd.

Mindful of our good governance, Council now has a Finance Committee supporting our Hon Treasurer, Sarah Le May, a Nominations and Governance Committee, and a Communications group. Council members organise the High Sheriffs' Briefing Day, the ever-popular Ladies' Lunch, the annual meeting of the regional coordinators, and take on other responsibilities. Much is done by our tireless Hon Secretary, James Williams, on whom Council leans heavily for advice and support. Unbelievably, James will retire this time next year and we shall welcome Deborah Hutchinson as his successor. However, much more to follow about that in due course.

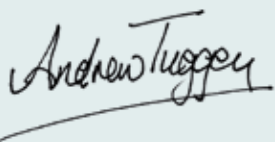
Many High Sheriffs come into office as serving Deputy Lieutenants; some others may be appointed Deputy Lieutenants after their year in office. Currently on Council, we have a former Vice Lord-Lieutenant and two new Vice Lord-Lieutenants. On your behalf I congratulate them both on their appointments. We also have a serving Lord-

Lieutenant on Council. Amanda Parker became Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire in August. She still gives her time to Council and chairs our Association's supported charity, National Crimebeat; congratulations and thank you, Amanda. We shall hear about National Crimebeat later.

Finally, I mention Diversity and Inclusion, which links directly to affordability and the county nomination panel process. Your Council is working hard to encourage and support a more diverse and inclusive Shrievalty. The Shrievalty must reflect the communities it serves. In that regard we are looking even harder at our guidance on affordability and the set-up and process of county nomination panels. From conversations during our online meetings, at the Burghley briefing day and in the regional meetings, the challenge of affordability is always raised.

Although we have a sound guidance paper on affordability, Council is forming a small working group to address the affordability challenge and it will look at all linked issues. Much pressure on High Sheriffs comes from a culture of expectation in their counties and bailiwicks, and perhaps from within the judiciary. That must change. The recommendations of the working group will be discussed with the Privy Council Office, who already have endorsed our guidance on the composition and work of county nomination panels. I look forward to reporting back to you at the AGM next year.

Thank you.




# 52nd Annual General Meeting

31 October 2023

## James Williams MBE

Honorary  
Secretary  
to the High  
Sheriffs'  
Association

The 52nd Annual General Meeting took place at Drapers' Hall in London on Tuesday 31 October.

This year, members' spouses and partners were invited to also attend the meeting although they were not entitled to vote on any matters. Reports were given by the Chairman, Andrew Tuggey, and by the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.

James Williams and Sarah Le May were respectively re-elected Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. A special resolution was passed to adopt new and more up-to-date Articles of Association. Andrew Howell, Heather Phillips and Thomas Sheppard were elected to Council and Sarah Beazley was re-elected.

Top: Daksha Shah, Mary-Clare Rodwell (Somerset 2020), Bav Shah (Beds 2024), Dr Karabi Ray, Prof Jaydip Ray (S Yorks 2023)



Elizabeth Hunter (President, Herford & Worcs 2010), Rachel Bickersteth (E Sussex 2023)



High Tollemach (past Chairman), the Rt Hon Lord Carington (the Lord Great Chamberlain, Bucks 2002, guest of honour)



Richard Cole (Council, Rutland 2020), Gordon Arthur (Leics 2015), Henrietta Chubb (Leics 2023)



Bill Jackson (Hereford 2016), David Holmes, Christine Holmes (Shrops 2016), Louise Bennett (Council, W Mids 2021)

## RECENT EVENTS



Left: Kate Hill-Trevor (Clwyd 2023), Andy White, Prof Jean White (Mid Glam 2023)

Right: Jonathan Douglas-Hughes (past US Essex), Lindsay Douglas-Hughes, Roger Brice (US Essex), Michael Foster (E Sussex 2016)



Left: Robin Barlow (Devon 2012), John Lee (Council, Devon 2013), Darlene Storrar (US Cheshire)

Right: Debbie Brock (Bucks 2022), Gill Drewry (EROY 2017), Prof David Drewry, Annie Brewster (Herts 2024)

Appreciation and thanks were given to retiring Council members Virginia Lloyd and John Lee for all they have done on behalf of the Association. Amanda Parker, now Lord-Lieutenant of Lancashire, reported how well National Crimebeat was doing and again encouraged all to support the Association's youth crime prevention charity, particularly by submitting applications for awards.

After the meeting we had a very good lunch in the spectacular hall. Our guest speaker was the Rt Hon Lord Carrington, the Lord Great Chamberlain, who gave a fascinating speech about his office and the historical elements that developed the office over many years into what it is today. He kindly agreed to take questions from the floor after his speech which had never been done before but which was a nice addition to the event.

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



Michelle Sheppard, Millicent Grant (Gtr London 2024)



Henry Robinson (Glos 2023), Meurig Raymond (Dyfed 2023)



Andrew Tuggey (Chairman, Gwent 2015), Eric Masih (Beds 2021)



Martine Burton, Alex Schaafsma (US Cambs)



Stephen Larard JP (EROY 2013), Virginia Lloyd (Council, W Yorks 2013), James Williams (Hon Sec)



Richard Lewis (Mid Glam 2024), Janey Howell (S Glam 2024), Andrew Howell (Council, S Glam 2020)



# Nomination Ceremony

## James Williams MBE

Honorary Secretary to  
the High Sheriffs' Association

The annual Nomination Ceremony took place at 2.00 pm on Monday 13 November at the Lady Chief Justice's Court within the High Court in London. It is usually fixed for 12 November but where that is a Sunday it takes place on the following day. We were able to squeeze into the court about 170 people including a few nominated for the first time for 2026. The new Lady Chief Justice, Dame Sue Carr, presided – the first lady to take on that office. She sat with Dame Victoria Sharp, President of the King's Bench Division (whom some may remember when she spoke at Burghley) and two senior High Court Judges, Justices Foxton and Jay. The names of the High Sheriffs in nomination were read out by the new King's Remembrancer, Senior Master David Cook.

Afterwards we held a splendid tea party in St Clement Danes Church nearby, known as the RAF Church. We were delighted that all four judges joined us at the tea party including the Lady Chief Justice which has never happened before. David Cook gave an interesting explanation about the position of the King's Remembrancer and Mac McPherson (S Yorks 2022 and a Crimebeat trustee) said a few words about National Crimebeat. He mentioned how easy it was for High Sheriffs to nominate projects for an award and encouraged High Sheriffs to do so when they came into office.



Ruth Smith (N Yorks 2024), Melanie James (W Glam 2024), Nicholas Corlett, Nick James



Jonathan Neame (Kent 2025), Sir Richard FitzHerbert Bt (Derby 2025), Emma Bryan, Jane Bryan, Selina FitzHerbert, Lucy FitzHerbert, Stephen Bryan (Leics 2025)



Tim Fooks (W Sussex 2020), Philippa Gogarty (W Sussex 2024)



Andrew Tuggey (Chairman, Gwent 2015), Leslie Blohm, His Honour Mr Justice Jay

Below: Nabeelah Khan Cheena, Adeeba Malik (W Yorks 2024), Umera Malik



Tranai Todd (National Crimebeat), Revd Richard Pendlebury (Bristol 2024), Laura Pendlebury



Right: James Fish, Dame Sue Carr (Lady Chief Justice), David Wood (Rutland 2021), Susannah Fish (Rutland 2026), Ina De (Gtr London 2023)

Left: Richard Lewis (Mid Glam 2024), Liam Dixon, Sharon Dixon (Mid Glam 2025)



# National Crimebeat Awards

Calling on all High Sheriffs, whether past, present or future to help us find champion youth groups who should be nationally recognised for their commitment to reducing crime or antisocial behaviour in their communities.

The purpose of National Crimebeat is to recognise the most innovative and successful crime prevention 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.

The trustees organise a prestigious annual awards ceremony in London – one of the most exciting events of the shrieval year – where the six best groups or individuals present their projects to the audience, before receiving their awards. Recognition in itself is a big part of these awards but in addition the prize money has been warmly received by previous entrants, with the winners receiving £1500, runners up £1250 and third place £1000; the three other finalists each receive £500. Following the London ceremony there is a buzzy lunch and a tour of the capital on an open-air Big Bus, followed by a trip on the London Eye. High Sheriffs and interested parties are also encouraged to attend the awards, particularly if they have an entry from their county.

Check the website for previous winners and finalists but, as an example, Support Through Sport from Nottinghamshire were runners up in 2023 and exemplify what a youth-led community group can achieve. At the age of 16, Tranai found himself in a similar situation to many young people in inner-city

communities and began to get involved with the negative influences around him. After starting boxing at a local club, Tranai was able to shift his mindset and applied the attributes gained through sport to his life in general, achieving good grades in his final year at school and encouraging and supporting his less successful peers through sport and mentoring and then setting up Support Through Sport.

Tranai and his team are hands on, and at every opportunity they always do their best to inspire young people and encourage pro-social behaviours and youth development. Alongside sport-based intervention and intensive mentoring, Support Through Sport also delivers workshops, positive trips and experiences, volunteering programmes, leadership projects, motivational talks and outreach in the community.



**Jo Hilditch,**  
Trustee National  
Crimebeat;  
Herefordshire  
2020-21

National Crimebeat is lucky enough to have Tranai join the trustee board that oversees governance and execution of these awards and he is excited to be part of the delivery team. Tranai said: 'Winning a National Crimebeat Award has brought real recognition to my team and profile to our charity. We were honoured to be the recipients of the award last year among a group of other incredible youth-led charities from all over the country. Not only that but the £1250 that we won enabled us to provide new sports and mentoring equipment, benefiting over 800 young people per week, as well as additional training for Support Through Sport's Youth Advisory Board.'



We really look forward to the 2024 nominations and encourage all our readers to find groups and individuals who would be worthy recipients. Submissions opened on 1 November and the application process is easy and supported. If you have any questions about the awards or wonder whether your potential candidate(s) would be eligible then contact us through the website – one of our team will get back to you.

For full and further information about National Crimebeat and our awards please see our website, where you'll find the downloadable form for application: [www.national-crimebeat.com](http://www.national-crimebeat.com).

**Submissions open:**  
Wednesday 1 November 2023  
**Closing date for entries:**  
Monday 22 January 2024  
**Awards Ceremony:**  
Tuesday 19 March 2024

THE 2024 NATIONAL CRIMEBEAT AWARDS ARE NOW OPEN FOR ENTRIES

# Ladies' Lunch

## Virginia Lloyd DL

West Yorkshire 2013-14; Council member

It was a real pleasure organising the Ladies' Lunch this year for my 4th and, sadly, last time!

A record 40 ladies from all over the UK assembled at the Royal Thames Yacht Club for drinks. Antonia Pugh-Thomas kindly brought a wonderful selection of ladies' court dress and also provided very helpful advice and guidance to those in nomination.

We then moved upstairs to the Mountbatten Suite for a delicious and convivial lunch.

We were so grateful to Elizabeth Fothergill CBE, His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire, for being our guest speaker. Elizabeth was High Sheriff of Derbyshire 2016-17 and spoke motivationally about her year in office. Her words really resonated with those of us who have served as High Sheriff of our county and inspired those in nomination.

I quote as follows: 'I have never loved anything so much, the best year of my life and I feel so privileged to have learned something new every day about Derbyshire, my county, its fantastic people and organisations.'

Huge thanks to Elizabeth and our President Elizabeth Hunter as well as fellow Council member Sarah Le May. Thank you also to current High Sheriffs and High Sheriffs in nomination who attended the lunch and helped make it such a success.



There was a good gathering for the Wales regional meeting 2023 in Llangoed Hall on Thursday 23 November

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# Burghley 2023

## Virginia Lloyd DL

West Yorkshire  
2013-2014;  
Council Member

It was wonderful to be back at the iconic Burghley House for our 2023 seminar for High Sheriffs in nomination. We were fortunate that the sun shone relentlessly so we could see the house and beautiful gardens in all their glory.

The morning programme began with Andrew Tuggey, Chairman of the High Sheriffs' Association, warmly welcoming all the attendees and speakers.

The morning programme then opened with Richard Tilbrook CVO, Clerk of the Privy Council. Richard gave an entertaining and edifying talk on the history of the High Sheriff over the past 1000 years. He also brought with him His Majesty's bodkin with which the names of those in nomination have been pricked over the years. This was passed around the attendees for them to have the opportunity to examine this historical and unique artifact.

Below: Rob Nixon QPM (guest speaker), Andrew Howell (Council, S Glam 2020), Margaret Miles (National Crimebeat, Rutland 2019), Pippa Kirkbride (Bucks 2025)

Bottom: Louise Brooke-Smith (W Mids 2025), Cheryl West (guest speaker), Tom Birch Reynardson (Council, Oxon 2015)

Our next speaker was Dr Sarah Furness, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Rutland, talking about the relationship between Lord-Lieutenant and High Sheriff. Sarah spoke inspirationally about her year as High Sheriff – a

year which she felt was one of the most worthwhile of her life – and subsequently about her time as Lord-Lieutenant. The latter is a very different role but one where the aim ultimately remained the same: to engage with everyone she came across, regardless of age and social spectrum, and to make people feel appreciated and recognised for the wonderful work they do in their county.

The Hon Mr Justice Francis then spoke about the Judiciary and the Shrievalty. He emphasised how valued the High Sheriff's hospitality, support and friendship is to judges out and about on circuit and away from home.

The Chief Constable of Leicestershire and Rutland, Rob Nixon QPM, stressed how the interaction and collaboration between High Sheriffs and the police is also much valued and appreciated. He urged every High Sheriff to make contact with their local force and to take the opportunity to look around their local station. He also recommended that they go out on secondments with officers as well as be available, if at all possible, to present Long Service and Good Conduct Awards.

Amanda Parker, Chair of National Crimebeat, introduced Tranai Todd, a finalist at the 2023 awards for his outstanding crime prevention project. Support Through Sport (Nottinghamshire) were overall runners-up and also winners of the Burnette Presentation Award. Tranai spoke movingly about the impact winning the award has had on himself.

Katy Green, CEO of Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation, was next up, and encouraged all those in nomination to engage and to work with their respective Community Foundation.

Katy was followed by Riaz Ravat BEM DL, Deputy Director of St Philip's Centre, who gave his third talk at Burghley – as before, it was an excellent and insightful one



Above from top: Trainai Todd (guest speaker), Amanda Parker (Council, Chair National Crimebeat), Deborah Hutchinson (US Notts, panel speaker)

Joada Allen (S Yorks 2025), Riaz Ravat (guest speaker)

Clare Tuggey, Sarah Furness (Lord-Lieutenant, Rutland 2016, guest speaker)

encouraging interfaith understanding and concluded with a quiz to ascertain our knowledge and understanding of other faiths.

We then enjoyed a drinks reception in the beautiful and fragrant garden, followed by a delicious lunch and the opportunity for attendees to make connections and share their experiences with others in nomination.

After lunch, Tom Birch Reynardson, a fellow Council member and former High Sheriff of Oxfordshire (2015), and Cheryl West, Head of Alternative Provision at the Bicester School, Oxfordshire, talked about 'Getting Court' an excellent project giving young people an insight into the

## RECENT EVENTS



criminal justice system and which organises visits to court. This can act as a necessary or stark reminder of the consequence of making wrong choices for some, and for others it can be reassuring to see at first-hand how the justice system works to support the victims of crime.

This was followed by an excellent Question and Answer session with a panel of recent High Sheriffs, a consort and an Under Sheriff. This covered a diverse range of topics including Under Sheriffs, county nomination panels and parliamentary elections as well as High Sheriff's Awards and fundraising.

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

her congratulations to those in nomination and wishing everyone good luck for their year in office.

The seminar closed at around 3.30 pm, followed by a delicious afternoon tea which could be enjoyed in the sunny gardens, and a tour of Burghley House for those who so desired.

Huge thanks to all our wonderful speakers who so kindly and generously gave their time to impart their wisdom and expertise to all those in nomination.

Thank you also to Council Member Richard Cole for organising the seminar so wonderfully; and finally our grateful thanks go to Miranda Rock and the Burghley House Preservation Trust for allowing our seminar to be held in their majestic house and gardens.

**Above left: Paul Brewster (Herts 2024), Annie Brewster (Herts 2024), Richard Tilbrook (Clerk of the Privy Council, guest speaker)**

**Above: Guest speaker Katy Green**

**Below: Patricia Churchward (Hereford 2024), Ian Smith (Worcs 2025), Chris Holmes (Cumbria 2024), Sue Holmes**

**Above from top: Tim Fooks (W Sussex 2025), Annie Brown (E Sussex 2025)**

**Janet Montgomery (Somerset 2025), John Baddeley (S Yorks 2024)**

**Jagtar Singh Gill, Raji Kaur Gill (Warks 2024)**



**Callum Bremner (Dorset 2025), James Williams (Hon Sec)**



**James Macnamara (Oxon 2024), Alexander Barfield (Berks 2024)**

**Below: Helen Jones (Dyfed 2024), Janey Howell (S Glam 2024), HHJ Helen Mifflin (Gwent 2024), Sally Roberts (Powys 2025), Andrew Howell (Council, S Glam 2020), Brian Jones, Lady Silk (Powys 2024)**



# Family Law

**The Hon Mr Justice Francis**  
 Presiding Family Judge for London

**W**hen I was a barrister, I worked almost exclusively in the world of matrimonial finance. I basically acted for rich divorcing people arguing over their money. I used to say things like, 'I'm so sorry, Mr X, I know you only wanted to give your wife £10 million, but you've now got to give her £14 million; don't worry, you still have £20 million left.' The world which I have occupied as a judge could not be more different. Now I have to say things like, 'I'm afraid I'm going to remove your children from you and you will never see them again,' or even, on occasion, 'I am going to authorise the hospital to turn off your child's life-support machine with the inevitable consequence that he/she will die.' It can be brutal work which can drain the life blood from you.

The overwhelming majority of family law work is done by district judges and by magistrates. They will deal with some money cases but the majority of the work that they will deal with would be 'private law' cases. This is resolving disputes between parents about their children. Private law cases are beginning to overwhelm the family justice system. There is now a long wait in most courts and, as is obvious, delay is the enemy of justice in these cases.

From 2017 until 2023, I was the Family Division judge responsible for all judges working within the family justice system in Wales. During this time I met a wonderful array of High Sheriffs and can honestly say that this was a privilege. I do want to pay tribute to the remarkable and important work that you do and the funds that you raise for people in need in your own jurisdiction. The High Sheriff would often come to court with me and I would encourage you always to contact the judge, via his clerk, to see if you can attend court for a day or two. The only



word of caution is not to turn up in full court dress. We do not wear our legal robes in these types of cases and I do not think that people who are at the lowest ebb of their life will find it appropriate in any way.

So far as High Court Family Division judges are concerned, their work on circuit will mainly be either 'public law' cases or big money cases. Public law means when the local authority takes steps to remove children from their parents. My experience has been that most parents whose children are taken into care are incompetent, inadequate, forlorn or hopeless, but not intrinsically bad. It is incredibly depressing to see people whose lives are destroyed by poverty, lack of support, ill-health and often a tragic upbringing. Putting children in care will always be an order of last resort; statistics show that children in care do not usually flourish and are far more likely themselves to end up with their own children in care. It can be a heartbreaking process for everyone concerned but it is also absolutely essential to protect children. Almost every day of my working life I have to balance risk: the risk of doing or not doing something.

There have been many very public cases about the deaths of children

at the hands of their parents, step-parents or other family members. There were several of these when I was working in Wales and one of my tasks was often to make orders in relation to the siblings of the child who had died. Dealing with families in this type of situation requires exceptional tact and humility. I would also suggest that this is not the type of case which should be attended by a High Sheriff; not, of course, for any concern about whether you would be confidential about the process, more a concern that it might be completely wrong for the families concerned to have strangers in their court.

Very often in these awful care cases it is necessary for the judge to conduct a 'fact find' hearing to discover what happened. Sometimes this can be a bit like a criminal trial except that, instead of leaving the fundamental decision to the jury, the judge has to make the decision. As you will know, in the criminal process the standard of proof is what is referred to as 'beyond reasonable doubt'. In the civil courts, including family courts, the standard of proof is 'the balance of probabilities'. Occasionally I have found myself hearing a case where someone has been acquitted of the murder of a child. I have then had to hear the case in the family court because I am concerned for the siblings of that child. In effect, occasionally, the whole murder trial is rerun, but in front of a single



judge and on the different standard of proof referred to above. This can sometimes result in a finding that the acquitted person had, in fact, killed the child concerned. I would tend to avoid using the word murder in such circumstances in order to separate my judgement from the decision in the Crown Court trial.

The Family Division judge will also deal with what are referred to as 'Hague Convention' cases. These are almost always heard by High Court judges in London. These cases concern the abduction of children from England and Wales to a foreign jurisdiction or from a foreign jurisdiction to England and Wales. I have very publicly said that child abduction is a scourge on society which needs to be addressed in very strong terms. I have dealt with cases where children have been abducted to non-Hague jurisdictions where the 'left behind parent' has never seen their children again.

As a judge of the Family Division, I have also done a large number of Court of Protection cases. The essential aspect of court of protection work is to ascertain whether the 'patient' has capacity to make a decision. If the patient does have capacity then the court of protection will not become involved. If the patient does not have capacity then the judge has to make the decision subject to what is generally referred to as 'the best interests

test'. In the Family Division there is always a judge on call 24 hours a day, every day of the year. I recall that I was on call over Christmas in my first year as a judge and, just as I was contemplating cracking open a bottle of champagne on Christmas Eve, a telephone call came in and I had to make a decision about whether a man should have his gangrenous leg removed or not. The scenario was that if he did not have his leg removed very soon then he would almost certainly die as the gangrene took over his body. This may sound an easy decision. Of course, I wanted to save his life, but the first decision I had to make was whether he lacked capacity for, if he had capacity, then the decision would be his. One also has to take into account an assessment of what this patient would himself have actually wanted. In this case there was considerable evidence to the effect that he would rather die than have his leg removed. In that case the overwhelming evidence from the consultants concerned was that he did not have capacity to make this decision and so I, perhaps unsurprisingly, gave the hospital permission to perform the operation. He lived and it was quite moving when, a few weeks later, I received a handwritten letter from him thanking me for the decision that I had made.

Some or most of the readers of this article will have read the book or seen the film *The Children Act*. I have done a number of these Jehovah's Witness cases where it is necessary to make a decision whether a patient should have a blood transfusion. These are more difficult than they may sound because it is, of course, essential to pay due respect to the faith of the patient. I have done a number of these cases, and when it comes to children the overwhelming instinct is of course going to be to save a life. One has to bear in mind, though, that, within the Jehovah's Witness community, that child might be shunned because they had received a blood transfusion. More often than not, however, I find that if it is the judge who makes the decision then the family may be able to escape the judgement of their faith group.

Most family law judges will at some stage in their professional life have to make heartbreaking decisions about whether a life-support machine should be turned off in respect of a child. Cases involving minors are heard in the Family Division rather than in the Court of Protection, but the principles are broadly the same. The decision about whether to accede to a hospital's application to turn off a life-support machine is usually, from a legal point of view, not that difficult. The reason why the hospital has to make the application is because they do not want to be faced with complaints or, still worse, criminal charges. The law in this respect is well settled but dealing with these cases is sometimes emotionally crippling. I venture to suggest that few of us when we started out as family lawyers thought that we would ever have to look parents in the eye to tell them that we're making a decision which will result in the death of their child.

Family Division judges have an enormous number of cases to deal with today that were not part of the family law system a generation ago. Some examples of these are forced marriage cases, female genital mutilation cases, same-sex adoption, embryo and sperm donation cases, surrogacy cases and many others. In spite of this, there are the same number of judges in the Family Division now as there were a generation ago. One of the consequences of this has been that there are fewer money cases now heard in the High Court – a case usually needs to involve assets in excess of £15 million before it would be considered appropriate to be heard in the High Court. I regard this as a pity because it means that the High Court is not giving judgements about what could be generally regarded as 'normal people'.

The consequence of the mushrooming of work is, I believe, that Family Division judges are under more pressure today than they have ever been. However, it is a privilege, as well as a grave responsibility to be tasked with, and trusted to make, such life-changing decisions.



**Left: Hon Mr Justice Francis KC was a guest speaker at Burghley, here with Bob Gilchrist and Yvonne Gilchrist-Mason (Suffolk 2024)**

# Understanding the nature of domestic abuse in the 21st century

**Christine Roach, Chair**  
**Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline**

**H**erts Domestic Abuse Helpline was established in 2002 and last year celebrated not only its 20th anniversary but also received The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. The charity was set up to bridge a gap – victims were looking for help but didn't want to contact any statutory authorities. For example, they might not want action to be taken against an abusive partner, they just want the abuse to end; they might be concerned about being judged a bad mother and having their children taken away or worried about losing their house.

There is no such thing as a typical caller. When we answer the phone we

so often hear 'I just don't know what to do'. By listening to their stories we can 'triage' their needs and signpost them accordingly. We don't ask for names, addresses or phone numbers. That anonymity encourages victims to speak freely. Providing them with the numbers they need to seek help puts the ball in their court so they can follow up either immediately or when they are ready. The Helpline is a support and signposting service – we do not make referrals. However, our service also supports the work of the police, the county council and every other domestic abuse organisation in Hertfordshire.

In the last 20 years much has changed. Back then the stereotypical poster image for domestic violence, as it was then called, was of a woman with a black

eye. Yet physical violence is only one element of what constitutes domestic abuse these days. While physical violence is still a major issue, our records show that psychological and emotional abuse have overtaken it. On a daily basis we hear of coercive and controlling behaviour, economic and financial abuse, housing and accommodation issues, stalking, forced marriage, honour-based abuse, tech abuse. Sadly, one of the biggest issues is the ex-partner's continued abuse through parental access – going on in some cases for many years. We also hear about cases where drugs, alcohol, mental health and gambling are contributory factors.

Domestic abuse doesn't end when you get older – we hear of abuse of the elderly by their adult children,

**Robert Voss**  
 (Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire) presenting The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service to **Chris Roach**, Chair of the Helpline, together with **Sally Burton** (Hertfordshire 2021-22)





not only physical violence but also, for example, pushing them to sign a power of attorney, preventing them from attending GP or hospital appointments and withholding food. Similarly, we have had cases of abuse of parents by their teenage children where they are trying to find help for the child without realising that they themselves are the victims.

The Captive and Controlled Report by the National Rural Crime Network in 2019 stated that those victims living in rural areas are likely to suffer domestic abuse 25% longer than those in urban areas as there are significant local barriers to being able to leave. This, I believe, is a substantially overlooked issue in many counties.

Those who call or email us rarely present with just one issue. A large number of calls are from women victims of physical violence who may also need help with issues such as legal advice, financial and economic advice and/or counselling. In recent years we have been 'pleased' to receive more calls from male victims of domestic abuse, from those in LGBTQ relationships, from black and minority ethnic communities, the elderly and disabled, employers and concerned friend and family members. We are also there to help professionals who may have the victim with them. We have developed resources for many of these groups to encourage greater engagement.

I believe there has been a change for the better in national understanding of domestic abuse over recent years. What has driven this change? A combination of things – government policies, better training for health and social workers, the police and other professionals; storylines in TV soaps; coverage in national newspapers and social media including YouTube. Social media in particular plays an important part in communication these days. We operate across four platforms, posting not only our news but information from other domestic abuse organisations and highlighting national cases and issues. Keeping pace with technology is key and we now use QR codes as a matter

of course on our promotional resources. I believe all this means there is far less stigma now about reaching out for help.

However, despite the fact that the cost to businesses in the UK of domestic abuse runs at £316 million annually, businesses are, for the most part, slow to develop domestic abuse policies as part of their staff health and safety policy. In 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act instructed employers to consider domestic abuse as part of their legal duty of care towards employees. In any company of a reasonable size the chances are that they will have victims/survivors and even perpetrators among their staff. Many larger companies have signed up to EIDA – the Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse – which can advise on policy development. In Hertfordshire it has been difficult to engage with businesses though we have had some success with local chambers of commerce and also Watford Football Club.

Answering the phone and replying to emails from some 2,400 people a year, principally from Hertfordshire, is only one part of what we do. We need to continually publicise the service so people know we are there for them. For that reason we maintain a high social media profile and an up-to-date website with blogs and information about different types of abuse. We also aim to raise awareness across the whole county. We work in partnership where we can, for example with the University of Hertfordshire Freshers' Fair, Age (UK) Herts, and Clarion Housing to name just a few and, of course, we maintain links with the 180 or so domestic abuse and other support organisations in the county including the county council and the police as well as some national domestic abuse organisations. In terms of our county presence we have been the partner charity for the St Albans Half Marathon; one of the nominated charities for the St Albans firework display (the biggest in the south-east), including speaking to a crowd of 5,000; and have worked as the charity partner along with a business mentor and school sixth form in the Dragons' Apprentice Challenge.

The poster features a purple header with the text 'Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline'. Below this, it states 'Our Vision is for the world to be free of domestic abuse.' and 'Our Mission is to eliminate domestic abuse through awareness and education, and to support those in need through our confidential listening and signposting service across Hertfordshire.' A central image shows a smartphone displaying a QR code with the text 'SCAN ME' above it and 'FOR MORE INFO' below it. To the right of the QR code, a purple banner contains the statistic 'Domestic abuse will affect 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men in their lifetime'. At the bottom left, it says 'Follow Us On Social Media & save our Contact Details below' with icons for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. At the bottom right is a sun-like logo. The footer contains contact information: 'Telephone: 08 088 088 088', 'General E-mail: Admin@hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org', and 'Confidential E-mail: Kim@mailpurple.org'.

In what is now 21 years since we started, we estimate we have helped some 42,000 people in Hertfordshire. The Helpline has not had any statutory funding for many years now and has to fundraise to cover its costs. Attracting grants at a time of economic difficulty is challenging. We continue to keep the telephone line as a free-to-caller service so no one is disadvantaged and our ethos has always been to put the victim at the heart of everything we do. Our 40 well-trained volunteer call-takers work from home on a rota basis. Volunteer and staff welfare is important to us, given that they receive some traumatic calls, so we ensure that counselling is available. We do not have an office or run a call centre, so costs are kept to a minimum. We have two part-time staff and a board of seven trustees. We aim to cover the line for 74 hours a week and are even open on Christmas Day! The volunteers contribute a large number of volunteering hours annually to the Hertfordshire total.

We have always worked closely with the High Sheriffs of Hertfordshire, conscious of the number of voluntary and community groups they visit in the course of a year and their ability to help us spread the word and make useful connections for us with other groups.

[www.hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org](http://www.hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org)

# The Role of the Shrievalty in Northern Ireland

**Peter T W Mackie DL**

Sheriff of Co Antrim

It is important to understand the Shrievalty in Ireland in a historical context as it explains why the role of Sheriff in Northern Ireland has developed in a different way to England and Wales.

The Shrievalty in Ireland has the same origins as the Shrievalty in England and Wales with the first recorded Sheriff in Dublin in 1258 and the first recorded Sheriff in County Antrim in 1343. By the 17th century, the Sheriffs presided over a form of local government called the 'Grand Jury' of which there were forty in Ireland, initially concerned with the administration of justice. By the 19th century, the Grand Juries had been assigned a range of other local functions and would have been the only form of local government. The Grand Jury (Ireland) Act 1836 further extended their powers until the Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898 created County Councils, which took over all but the legal powers of the Grand Jury and its control over elections. These remaining powers were subsequently transferred to legally qualified Sub-Sheriffs leaving the 'High Sheriff' with a mainly ceremonial role.

After the creation of the Irish Republic and subsequently the Republic of Ireland, the Office of Sheriff in the Republic of Ireland was abolished by the Court Offices Act 1926.

In Northern Ireland, the Grand Juries continued to hold their assizes which was an antecedent to the High Court and the wording of the Warrant and Declaration of the Sheriff was governed by the Sheriffs (Ireland) Act 1920 with the role of Under-Sheriff being abolished in 1982. However, the Northern Ireland Office continued to use the term 'High Sheriff' when the names of the Sheriffs for the following year were published in

the *Belfast Gazette* until 1989 when it was brought into line with England and Wales.

In 1969, the Grand Jury was abolished with the role of Sheriff being appointed by the Secretary of State on behalf of The Queen and subsequently, The King. The incoming Sheriff is officially notified by letter and is sent a warrant of appointment, signed by the Secretary of State and a 'declaration of Sheriff', which is sworn before a Commissioner of Oaths and this process remains the same today with our term being the calendar year. There are currently eight Sheriffs in Northern Ireland: one for each county, and one for each county borough being the cities of Londonderry and Belfast. Each outgoing Sheriff nominates a successor except in Belfast where councillors put forward a nominee, who is always a serving member.

The duties today may well resonate with our counterparts in England and Wales with the three official functions being to attend High Court judges when they preside over a case in the county, to attend the first arrival of members of the Royal Family in the

county on an official visit and lastly, the Proclamation of an Accession following the death of the monarch.

However, the environment that we live in was and remains very different to that of England and Wales with the Shrievalty being vastly diminished during the 'Troubles' (late 1960s to 1998). The last time the ceremonial uniform of court dress was worn in County Antrim was in 1964 by Sir William Moore Bt and it was subsequently decided that the wearing of such a distinctive uniform as the Crown Representative of the Judiciary could pose a threat to the holder of the office. In some counties, a badge of office was acquired to wear with business attire.

When my father was Sheriff of County Antrim in 1979, he would have officiated at one and at the most two events in the calendar year. It is only in the last ten years where we have had a strong revival of interest in this ancient role from the civic society and the judiciary. This year, as Sheriff of County Antrim, I will have attended close to sixty events ranging from dinners and services in support and remembrance of the sacrifices

made by the Ulster Defence Regiment CGC, the Royal Ulster Constabulary GC, welcoming His Majesty King Charles III at the Coronation Garden at Hazelbank Park, The Princess Royal in Ballycastle, the Duke of Gloucester at a factory visit, through to meetings with the Lady Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, the Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service and Remembrance Day Services and wreath-laying.

The role of the Sheriff in Ireland is founded on the same basis as England and Wales but has by necessity evolved in a slightly different way, becoming a meritocratic position which is being increasingly valued for the support it can provide to the judiciary and the local community.



Seven of the eight Sheriffs of Northern Ireland at a Hillsborough Castle Garden Party. Front: Peter Mackie (Co Antrim), Noelle McAlinden (Co Fermanagh), Angela Thompson (Londonderry), Helen Anderson (Co Tyrone); Back: Prof Mike Mawhinney (Co Down), Peter Wilson (Co Londonderry) and Gary Dickson (Co Armagh); absent: Cllr John Kyle (Belfast)

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# Celebrating the rich diversity

## Russell Beard

High Sheriff of Bedfordshire 2023-24

- Final fitting of robes with Mr Golding ✓
- Transfer of High Sheriff email address ✓
- Pricked by His Majesty King Charles III ✓
- Installed as High Sheriff ✓

What an honour it is to be appointed High Sheriff – I am eagerly awaiting my first engagement. Tea at the Palace? A function at Windsor? My first appointment request has arrived – surely it must be from the Lord Chamberlain’s Office? No – it’s Mandy from the Mile Road Allotments Association who wants me to open their new composting toilet at 11.00 am on 1 April. Apart from the obvious fear of a wind-up given the date, any ideas of grandeur were erased very early on!

Bedfordshire is a small county in which I have lived the entirety of my life, but I soon came to realise that we have some fantastic volunteers, communities and charities – they all do so much to help make life better. We enjoy a great multi-cultural, diverse life across the county, especially in Bedford and Luton, and it has been a huge privilege to be invited to so many events that embrace ethnicity.

I joined 1,500 Muslims in Bedford Corn Exchange for Iftar, the fast-breaking evening meal during Ramadan, which was an amazing experience. I have enjoyed meeting the high-energy Kenyan communities and the Curry Kitchen project in Luton, and attending Eid festivals and Windrush commemorations – such a rich diversity which adds so much to life in the country.

The coronation celebrations which took place across the county engendered a

lovely sense of pride in both the monarchy and the nation.

The range of appointments that I have attended has raised so many emotions/feelings:

**Privilege** – lunch with judges at the Old Bailey

**Tears** – discovering Azalea, a Bedfordshire charity serving Herts/Beds/Bucks which supports girls and women who are being trafficked

**Laughter** – the eccentric Flitton potato race

**Fun** – charity auction of Lord-Lieutenants’ hats

**Nerves** – reading the results of the Mid Bedfordshire by-election

**Amazement** – watching Indian classical dance

**Fulfilment** – raising charitable funds through golf and tennis events

**Hope** – visiting schools and colleges

**Realisation** – community benefits from Luton in Bloom competitions

**Honour** – royal visit to Bedfordshire by HRH The Princess Royal

Clearly the role requires close contact with those overseeing law and order in the county. I enjoyed a tour of Bedfordshire Police headquarters that included an inspection of the Cyber Crime Unit which was simply incredible. The duty officer in the custody suite did ask my host to make sure that future guests arrived without a sword or any other form of armoury!

The advancement of technology in locating persons in distress was another eye-opening experience. ‘What three words’, alongside external access to individual mobile devices and GPS technology, is at the forefront of air



With the winners of the mixed doubles and Ken Borneo, President of Riverside Tennis Club; funds raised went to support disability tennis

ambulance, police and fire rescue operations, giving vital information before and during the missions – fascinating to witness in real time.

As I reach the halfway point of my term, it has been the most incredible experience and something which you cannot fully prepare for. I am lucky to have excellent support from a first-class Under Sheriff, the local Bedfordshire Shrievalty Group and East of England Region High Sheriffs.

Below left: Flitton potato race  
Below right: At the High Sheriff’s garden party



# Historic Quaker 'Justice Service'

## Dame Ann Limb DBE DL

High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire 2023-24

As the 798th High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire and the first ever Quaker, I organised a unique 'Justice Service' recently at the 17th-century Jordans Meeting House in Buckinghamshire, described by Simon Jenkins in his book *England's Thousand Best Churches* as the Westminster Abbey of Quaker meeting houses.

As for all High Sheriffs this served as the annual 'service' to mark the ceremonial opening of the court services at the start of the judicial year in autumn – the tradition dating from the 12th century, when the proceedings of the assizes began with a church service. My Quaker Meeting for Worship was attended by the Lord-Lieutenant, judges, bishops, clergy, the chair of the magistrates' bench, town and city mayors and my colleague High Sheriffs from adjacent counties, all of them resplendent in their court dress and official robes. As at my Declaration of Office at the start of my year in March, I also invited a wide range of people from across the community in Buckinghamshire, giving prominence to the work of the police, the probation and prison services, the emergency services and the crime prevention and reduction agencies.

My theme for the Quaker Meeting for Worship was 'When Mercy seasons Justice'. High Sheriffs' services normally take place in traditional churches, but I was determined to use my own Quaker heritage for this important occasion in the shrieval year and chose Jordans, the historic Buckinghamshire meeting house which is also the burial place of William Penn. With the support of Friends from both Area Meetings involved (Chilterns AM and Luton & Leighton AM) a programmed Meeting for Worship was devised. For most of the 100 or so people present this was their first introduction to a Quaker Meeting and, indeed, to significant periods of silence – many subsequently expressed appreciation of the 'unusual' experience and said they had been 'moved' by it. The venue was described as 'exceptional', 'a beautiful, peaceful and dignified place', and the periods of silence as 'unique and moving' and 'a revelation'.

Two Quakers acted as elders for the Meeting which began with representatives



Above: With the Countess Howe (Lord-Lieutenant), members of the judiciary and representatives from many fields and faith traditions  
Right: Inside Jordans Meeting House for the 'Justice Service'  
Below: With Simon Muir (Berkshire), Sally Scott (Oxfordshire) and Liz Green (Hertfordshire)



from eight different faith traditions, including a representative of 'No Belief', offering brief reflections on the theme of mercy and justice from their own tradition. The programmed Meeting also included hymns, readings and periods of silence and closed with an unaccompanied voice singing 'How Can I Keep From Singing?'. The programme and a gallery of pictures can be found on the High Sheriff's website ([www.highsheriffofbuckinghamshire.com](http://www.highsheriffofbuckinghamshire.com)).

The main speaker was the Right Reverend James Jones, former Bishop of Liverpool, who has recently published a book *Justice for Christ's Sake*. The Right Reverend Dr Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham, acknowledged the history of Jordans by prefacing his

opening remarks with gratitude for 'this extraordinary and holy place'.

Quakers present did wonder what some 17th- and 18th-century Friends might have thought of this occasion and hoped they would grasp the healing intention behind it.

In my year in office, I have prioritised two main areas of activity: the climate crisis and sustainability; and the reduction of domestic abuse and the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls (VAWG).



# 'Any Road'

**Dennis Dunn MBE JP DL**

High Sheriff of Cheshire 2023-24

*If you don't know where  
you're going  
Any road will lead you there*  
**'Any Road', George Harrison**

This line from the Beatle and philosopher seemed to me to encapsulate my intended journey as High Sheriff. Like most, I received lots of good advice from former travellers, including one whose advice was, 'don't take any notice of all the advice' – including his! Those that know me well knew that I would be predisposed to this sentiment. I value spontaneity and want the year to largely chart its own course, not engage the sat-nav. Of course milestones would need to be included but I'm focused on the journey – the destination will arrive soon enough.

The journey began with my Declaration ceremony which was held at the University of Chester, the very first time in over one hundred and sixty years of its history that the High Sheriff of Cheshire had been installed within its highest seat of learning. Given my own professional lifetime in academe and being the holder of an honorary award from the university, I was delighted to have the opportunity to make a small piece of history for us both. At the time of writing, three months have passed in a blur with a blizzard of invitations to meetings, openings, events and speaking engagements.

Sitting at the Crown Court with His Honour Judge Steven Everett, Honorary Recorder of Chester, brought back memories of my own service as a magistrate sitting with judges on appeals. In a remarkable moment, I was shown the corridor where the names of all former High Sheriffs of the county are splendidly embossed on to wall plaques and I think it was at that moment that I realised that I had also taken a place in the history of this great county. It was a very humbling moment and I privately reflected on the expectations of my distinguished predecessors to make good the commitment during my Declaration to use my year productively in the service of others.

An early detour has of course been the wonderful Coronation of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla. We celebrated in grand style in Chester's



**With Clive Knowles, Chairman of the British Ironwork Centre and creator of the *Knife Angel*, receiving (another!) High Sheriff's Award**

great cathedral and in a thousand and one different ways in towns and villages the length and breadth of the county. A feeling of joy was exemplified in Holmes Chapel which had life-size hand-knitted figures of the royal couple in the village centre, receiving national attention. Other pit stops so far have been largely joyous and provided opportunity to recognise the work of marvellous people and organisations contributing so very much to the lives of others.

Cheshire Police and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service are prominent in my

detours, attending graduations and passing out parades; and I am resurrecting the practice of a High Sheriff's Police Cadet which has lapsed in recent years. We welcomed the *Knife Angel* sculpture in Crewe and reflected on the twenty-five years of endeavour by Crimebeat to keep our young people safer.

So, my consort and I are at cruise speed and well on our way to... we are not sure where. I see a service station ahead so perhaps it's time to top up the petrol tank/batteries. Expect further report on progress later.

# Charities in isolated communities

## Samantha Scott

High Sheriff of Cumbria 2023-2024

The lead-up to my Declaration as High Sheriff was spent planning an eight-day walk of the Cumbria Way. Cumbria is one of the largest counties in UK but has a small population of less than 500,000. Divided by a range of mountains, communities within this mostly rural environment face a diverse number of challenges; my aim in doing the walk was to raise awareness of the charities which support the needs of the most vulnerable within those communities. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet and thank the staff and volunteers of the 22 charities I visited along the 73-mile route and highlight the great work they do via social media reports at the end of each day.

Generous sponsorship enabled me to raise £15,000 for the High Sheriff's Community Fund, which is managed by Cumbria Community Foundation. This fund is the source of the awards at the end of my year which will involve some difficult decisions – I have met so many deserving and often unrecognised groups. The CCF has been a tremendous support to me, organising a series of visits all over the county.

In June I hosted an 'Adventures in Philanthropy' dinner to facilitate an introduction between the Community



'Adventures in Philanthropy' with Dave Fishwick

Foundation and a group of individuals who may not have considered philanthropy previously, enabling them to set up further conversations to explore the joys and challenges of large-scale giving. We were so fortunate to book Dave Fishwick (of 'Bank of Dave' fame) to be our keynote speaker just ahead of the release of the hugely successful Netflix film. Dave arrived by helicopter in between TV interviews at different ends of the country. He was inspirational, candid and very amusing – we were lucky to have him.

Soon after my Declaration at the end of March in Kendal Town Hall the new Lord-Lieutenant of Cumbria was announced: my husband Alex. It is unusual for a couple to hold both roles at the same time and we are certainly the first in Cumbria! He took office in July on the retirement of Claire Hensman who had been in the role for more than 10 years and is a previous High Sheriff. I made sure that for the first three months of my year Alex was three steps behind as, of course, he now takes precedence! Our first formal engagement together was a choral evensong at Carlisle Cathedral on the retirement of the Right Reverend James Newcome, Bishop of



In Ulverston at start of the Cumbria Way with Alex and in better weather with the Mayor and Mayoress of Carlisle at the end of the walk



Carlisle. Attending services at this beautiful historic cathedral is one of many privileges of being High Sheriff. There are many advantages to undertaking the two roles at the same time and my experiences this year will help us both greatly in the years to come. The disadvantage is that our diaries rarely coincide and we are often going in different directions.

My main focus in the first six months has been on the charitable sector but I have also had great fun presenting Constabulary Awards, taking part in mayoral civic parades led by cadet bands and a memorable evening with the Sea Cadets, presenting their burgee and taking the salute after their last armed guard before all cadet weapons were handed in. I have been welcomed into Carlisle County Court and the Barrow Magistrates' Court. It is truly a privilege to be an observer and the judges are very generous with their time.



Above: With 1st Wetheral Brownies and their Coronation Crown at Wetheral Station  
Left: The High Sheriff and Lord-Lieutenant of Cumbria

# Breaking down barriers



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



## Theresa Peltier

High Sheriff of Derbyshire 2023-2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



With Lady Burlington at a Windrush celebration dinner, Chatsworth House



# Individuals who work selflessly for others

## The Rt Revd Nicholas McKinnel

High Sheriff of Devon 2023-24

Amid the visits, civic engagements, church services and enjoyable social events of the last months, what remains first and foremost with me are the meetings and conversations with numerous individuals.

I think of the police sergeant driving me round a busy city centre on a Friday night relishing his job, pointing out known troublemakers and expressing his passion that clubbers should feel safe enjoying their night out.

Or there's the ex-offender proudly showing me around the vegetable patch he is tending as part of a well-established project enabling him and others to grow in personal confidence, learn new skills and find employment – often for the first time in their lives.

A prison governor introduced a 'Celebrating Success' day by thanking the thirty or so prisoners receiving awards for their help in ensuring the smooth running of the prison, offering congratulations for achievements as varied as reducing a methadone dosage, bricklaying qualifications and caring for a terminally ill inmate.

A magistrate spoke frankly of the dilemmas she faces in the Family Court when deciding the future of a small child from a troubled home, weighing up family ties against the child's safety, sometimes in the face of conflicting advice and emotions.

A civic leader told me of the strains of trying to do a decent job in the midst of social media abuse, ill-informed reporting and hard budgetary choices – tough decisions echoed by a senior police officer in his own field of work.

As we chatted under canvas in pouring rain at a Coronation event, a local community organiser in an old people's village expressed the satisfaction he felt at drawing together those who could otherwise be isolated and lonely. And the executive of a dementia charity who invited me to open a new facility spoke of imaginative ways to awaken memories and bring joy to those living with dementia.

An elderly lady from a Methodist church, delighted to be receiving a BEM from the Lord-Lieutenant, recounted how she had delivered food around her seaside town during COVID, resulting in a lunch club that now thrived with dozens of people



In Plymouth with Tim Kingsbury, Regional Director UK Border Force South, and Rear Admiral Christopher Snow CBE DL

every week. Another recipient had spent a lifetime working with young people through the boxing club he ran, and yet another gives hours each week to propagating and planting trees indigenous to the area.

Then there was the Windrush descendant whose father had won respect through his cricketing skills but who described the loneliness, isolation and prejudice that the family faced in their early years on these shores. Or the visit to a Dartmoor farm hosting youngsters from an inner city London borough whose first encounter this was with rural life, the children talking of how, over the course of a week, their initial fear of livestock and the dark had been transformed into a love of sheep, chickens and mud.

A prisoner's wife described to my wife how their judgemental middle-class attitudes and prejudices had been turned upside down through their experience of prison, while another prisoner on licensed recall complained to me of the injustice he felt at being returned to prison without a judicial process and waiting a year already for a parole hearing.

Then there were the cheerful young men on a Community Payback scheme keen to tell me how drugs were much less harmful than alcohol, and the probation officer who had clearly heard it all before and quietly looked skywards;



With Community Payback and the probation service in Paignton

the police dog handler proudly displaying the skills of his Alsatian; the serious discussions at the Local Criminal Justice Board on reducing offending... and the judge overburdened with demands.

All in their own way wrestle with the complexities of the criminal justice system, balancing the rights of individual and society, victim and offender, retribution and rehabilitation, justice and mercy.

At the Coronation, HRH King Charles was given the sceptre, the 'ensign of kingly power and justice', with the words, 'So execute justice that you forget not mercy'. It is a great privilege to see this being worked out through the endeavours of so many impressive people.

# Combine, collaborate, convene

## Charles Bishop

High Sheriff of Essex 2023-24

I am writing this just after the Justice Service. In my speech, I explained that it was my last big organisational effort, and I could now concentrate on doing what High Sheriffs do. Of course, that begs the question, doesn't it? Well, in my case, I have chosen to 'Celebrate Essex!' as one of my themes.

Celebrating Essex is a great cause, but it involves a lot of travelling. I am trying to get to every corner of the county. It has been a rich pleasure to discover parts I have never been to before, despite living here for most of my life. My wife comes with me on nearly every visit as it helps in preparation, photography, after-meeting discussion and making sure we can 'work the room' when there are a lot of people. It also gives a greater sense of what we can do, what we have done and what we need to do.

I have a large map in my office showing the full area of Essex; it is a big county measuring nearly 1,500 square miles with reputedly 10,000 charities. Controversially, I have heard it claimed that we have the longest coastline... at low tide – I can't fathom that one. We have the longest pier in the country, the oldest recorded town (now a city), and we boast of John Constable and the oldest wooden church in the world. There's much to see and I haven't even mentioned some of great commercial companies whose roots are here (Tiptree Jam, Musto clothing, and a growing number of wineries). As part of our travels, we are walking the Essex Way, an 82-mile romp from Epping to Harwich.



Above: With the Right Reverend Roger Morris, Bishop of Colchester, 'making a din' as part of the annual Blessing and Reclaiming of the Waters ceremony in Brightlingsea

Below: My wife and I have embarked on the Essex Way from Epping to Harwich and will be delighted if others choose to join us. Details of each section attempt will appear on Instagram @essexhighsheriff



'Combine, collaborate, convene': it's not a theme per se, but there have been many occasions when I have had the opportunity to introduce (by email or in person) one charity leader to another or, say, probation services to a charity needing unpaid labour, or the prison governor to a Crown Court judge. As I travel the county meeting people, I find I have a near unparalleled opportunity to see where connections can be made; possibly the Lord-Lieutenant and Chairman of Essex County Council would claim the same but not many others.

What would I advise an incoming High Sheriff in nomination now that I have experienced half a year in the role? First: it is immensely good fun and even more interesting than I had imagined. Second: you can pace yourself. Yes, the invitations build throughout the year as you get known, but you really do have the ability to say no. Third: you do need to seek out new places to visit, so do your research. Many charities and organisations have become used to the publicity, possible funding, and general sense of 'magic dust' that a visit from a High Sheriff brings. I have quite often found previous High Sheriffs' certificates plastering the walls. It is much more fun to really engage with new charities and community groups who perhaps have never heard of a High Sheriff before I ask to visit; invariably they say yes. Last: keep fit. It is a marathon not a sprint and you only have one year to do it. Make sure you give it your best shot by remaining energetic and well. Oh, and good luck!

Below: In July, we entertained nearly every former High Sheriff of Essex and their consort since 2002 to celebrate the retirement of His Honour Judge Gratwicke (centre)



# 'He who opens a school closes a prison'

**Ina De**

High Sheriff of Greater London 2023-24

It has been an exciting first six months as High Sheriff of Greater London (HSGL), covering a population of nine million people in 32 boroughs across 600 square miles. We have numerous courts, eight prisons, the largest police force in the UK and, a surprise to me, the busiest RNLI station in the country. All in all, a daunting prospect, had it not been for the support of past HSGLs, particularly Lynn Cooper, HM Lord-Lieutenant Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE, and the informative day at Burghley.

My Declaration was at the Royal Courts of Justice in front of Baron Burnett of Maldon, then Lord Chief Justice, the King's Remembrancer Barbara Fontaine, and other senior judges. My old friend Lady Justice Whipple kindly agreed to be my supporting judge. Declaring in the High Court that I would 'behave myself' caused more than a few smiles among family and friends. My predecessor, Heather Phillips, literally passed on the mantle of HSGL. She had the excellent idea of commissioning a cape designed by London College of Fashion students. Fine Cell Work and Making for Change stitchers embroidered and assembled what has proved to be an invaluable ice-breaker.

Court visits have of course been a key focus. Eight Crown Courts have warmly welcomed me and my Under Sheriff, as have Magistrates' and Family Courts, and – a first for the HSGL – a tribunal. Thanking hidden heroes working hard to keep justice functioning, despite cuts and staff shortages, is nothing short of humbling.



Her Honour Judge Karu kindly hosted my first Justice Awards at Inner London Crown Court where we recognised those going beyond the call of duty. We included Special Recognition Awards for young people going the extra mile serving their communities in London, all of whom are similarly inspiring.

Westminster Abbey services have been another highlight. The one held for the 75th anniversary of the NHS was particularly poignant and memorable. An Abbey service also marks the start of the legal year and included an impressive procession of judges. Dame Sue Carr had been officially appointed only hours earlier in a packed court at the Royal Courts of Justice. It was indeed an honour to

**Below left: At my Declaration at the Royal Courts of Justice April with Lady Justice Whipple, Baron Burnett of Maldon and Lady Justice Thirlwall Below: Visiting the Marine Police Unit with my Chaplain, the Revd Raymond Baudon**



**Westminster Abbey service with London mayors**

witness the very first Lady Chief Justice of England and Wales being sworn in.

I've been struck by the commitment of so many people working across our criminal justice system, be it in courts, prisons, the police or supporting charities. The London Prisons Group invited me to present an award at their inaugural awards ceremony, recognising a truly inspiring group of people. Wormwood Scrubs, my first prison visit, was organised by PACT, who provide advice to prisoners and help maintain family connections. It was a delight to present their long-standing chairman Phil Taylor with a High Sheriff's Award at their AGM.

Literacy and numeracy are key themes for my year, considering that half of the prison population have the reading level of an 11-year-old. Shannon Trust organises peer-to-peer learning, training those who can read to coach those who can't. The National Literacy Trust runs programmes for more advanced readers. Both are doing great things by improving confidence and raising aspirations in prisons.

Victor Hugo said, 'He who opens a school door closes a prison,' and addressing literacy and numeracy early in life is a priority. It's been a pleasure to work with charities focusing on improving outcomes for children, including Coram Beanstalk, who organise hundreds of reading helpers in primary schools. Presenting long service High Sheriff's Awards at their 50th anniversary felt very special.

It has been wonderful to realise the number of doors that open for a High Sheriff and how thanking, convening and connecting can be a powerful force for good.

# Sharing values through multicultural, multifaith events

**Mary-Liz Walker JP DL**

High Sheriff of Greater Manchester 2023-24

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

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



# Thanking the extraordinary volunteers holding the criminal justice system together



## Amelia Riviere JP DL

High Sheriff of Hampshire 2023-2024

Becoming High Sheriff is a bit like a brick on a piece of elastic... you know that all being well you will be High Sheriff, but your year always feels quite a long way off... until it isn't.

This is also true for the assumed elements of your year. You know that you'll be hosting a church service to celebrate the law and suddenly it's on you and – like a wedding day – all too quickly in the rear-view mirror, with snatched conversations and photographs all that is left of it.

In preparation you've sat on the Shrieval Committee and listened to the experience of others; the Lord-Lieutenant has told you how marvellous you'll be; the Under Sheriff has read the riot act and wondered if you'll be troublesome – you've pretended you won't be. You've ordered far too much stationery. You think you know how the year will pan out and then you're off.

Being High Sheriff is a great privilege and offers so many unexpected opportunities. It has been a tremendous honour to be involved in royal visits and award ceremonies. I have enjoyed the pomp and circumstance hugely. The 21-gun salute at Portsmouth Naval Base on Coronation Day was wonderful and a tale for any future grandchildren.

But the greatest honour has been meeting extraordinary people contributing to the running and community of the county without any thought to themselves

Hampshire Law Sunday at Winchester Cathedral with the Rt Revd Nicholas McKinnel (Devon), Henry Robinson (Glos), Nigel Atkinson (Lord-Lieutenant), Mrs Christine Atkinson, Sharon Foster (Bristol), Dawn Haig-Thomas (Isle of Wight), Simon Muir (Berks), Colin Weston (Dorset), my Chaplain Alastair Barron, Robert Drewett (Somerset), Mr Justice Saini and clerk, Mrs Justice May, Toby Ashworth (Cornwall) and Pradeep Bhardwaj (Wilts)

and with limited understanding or acknowledgment from the public.

Half the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary are civilians fulfilling all the back-office roles that frontline officers couldn't function without. Ten per cent of the force are volunteers, from the Special Constabulary who are police officers in all but name but bring with them the knowledge and experience of their day jobs, to the retiree who maintains the Marine Unit's boats and the young man with learning difficulties who helps clean the vehicles.

In the courts, prisons, and police stations the NHS funded Liaison and Diversion Service provides on-site mental health assessment to ensure detainees are safe and judges have the fullest possible information when they decide on sentencing. Prison officers trained to run towards danger unseen behind high walls rarely receive the respect they are due for the care they provide to the most dangerous and the most vulnerable in society on our behalf.

Then there is the glue that helps to hold the criminal justice system together: the

voluntary sector. There is the magistracy, nearly as old as the Shrievalty, dealing with over 90 per cent of all criminal cases. There are also the volunteers of the Independent Custody Visitors, the eyes and ears of the public, in police stations, and of the Independent Monitoring Board fulfilling the same role in prisons. Witness and Victim Support who help people through the arduous process of a court case. Street pastors working in the night-time economy supporting the police to take care of the vulnerable who are out and about at night whether they are street sleepers, the young who have over-enjoyed happy hour or indeed anyone needing pastoral or practical help. The huge group of professionally trained search and rescue volunteers who the police rely on to help find missing persons, any time of the night or day.

I have hardly scratched the surface. There is a myriad of charities working in crime prevention, education and youth projects in either rehabilitation or diversion from the courts.

Being High Sheriff of Hampshire has made me even prouder of my county and of the criminal justice system than I ever thought I could be.



Above: Out on the Solent with the officers of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary Marine Unit

Below: Training with the volunteers of Hampshire Search and Rescue (HANTSAR)



# Reading, writing and rehabilitation

## Liz Green

High Sheriff of Hertfordshire 2023-24

As other High Sheriffs I have much enjoyed talking to members of the judiciary and the emergency services, and visiting schools and charities across the county. Thanking individuals and groups is a great privilege, and depending on the occasion my dress code varies from smart day dress to court dress, although when in court dress (aka 'full bling') I have, on more than one occasion, been asked whether I'm a member of the royal family!

From September 2018–2019 I was fortunate to spend a year living in the Old Bailey while Sheriff of the City of London. During the year I had the opportunity to learn from the judges about young people being lured into crime, and the problems that those leaving prison face, often with only £46 (now £78) and a sleeping bag. Since June 2020 I have volunteered as an area coordinator for Shannon Trust ([www.shannontrust.org.uk](http://www.shannontrust.org.uk)), a charity which helps those in prison to teach others in prison to learn to read or improve their reading. This one-to-one model has recently been extended into teaching numeracy, as well as into the community. 'Reading, writing and rehabilitation' is my chosen theme as this reflects the reality that a lack of literacy has on day-to-day living. For those in prison, what should be simple tasks – such as completing a lunch order or using an app to ask to see a doctor or lawyer – are impossible without asking for help, as is accessing workshops and education, and many will not admit they cannot read or write.

With over 1.3 million residents in Hertfordshire, research carried out for me by Herts County Council revealed that the average number of people in the county with poor literacy is 23 per



cent. This is frankly staggering, yet it's not uncommon, with similar statistics across most of the UK. For those in that community understanding bail conditions or benefit forms, reading a road sign or bus timetable, or applying for work cannot happen. In partnership with the University of Hertfordshire I am hosting a one-day symposium in November to raise awareness of poor literacy to explore what can be done to improve literacy, and to help those leaving prison and/or probation to find work. Shannon Trust recently held an online training session for three Hertfordshire charities, which should help some of their clients improve their literacy, and their wellbeing as a result.

Visits to County, Family and Magistrates' Courts, the youth panel and tribunal services have been sobering as the reality of life

**Below: Old Bailey visit for Herts police cadets and their leaders**



**Clockwise from top left: At Windrush 75 celebrations in Hemel Hempstead with the mayors of Bishops Stortford and Dacorum Being taught to play bocce Italian style on a visit to Broxbourne borough with Cllr Paul Seeby, Mayor of Broxbourne At the Long Service Awards ceremony with Chief Constable Charlie Hall QPM At Hand on Heart in Watford, a charity which provides (among other things) stationery-filled backpacks for disadvantaged children**

for many of those having their case heard is stark. Presenting long-service awards and recruitment awards to the police was very special, not least after the ongoing negative press which the police continue to receive – it was the ideal opportunity to say thank you. I've enjoyed sitting in the police control room, visiting their firearms unit and going out with the road traffic team.

It is always inspiring to see community police officers and cadets supporting local events and engaging with the public, and I was delighted to attend St Albans community fire station to see Year 6 children spend the morning with the police, fire service, students from Oaklands College and members of Herts County Council in order to learn about safety in the home, in parks and near rivers as well as personal safety – the 'hands on' activities were extremely powerful.

My focus will remain on the work within the criminal justice system. Our Chief Constable Charlie Hall's mantra of 'prevention first' is something I'm sure everyone will endorse – how we achieve that, and what difference we can make is another matter.

# Intervention to improve childhood literacy

**Dawn Haig-Thomas**

High Sheriff of the Isle of Wight 2023-24

This time last year, rather depressing primary school results for the Isle of Wight were published. One-third of all Island children moving up to secondary school were not at their chronological reading age, compared to one-quarter nationally. At the same time, I was reminded of the recent Ministry of Justice report which cited 57 per cent of prisoners today had the reading age of an 11-year-old or under. Keen to have a theme for my shrieval year that was law and order related, I realised literacy in primary schools had to be my focus.

One of many wonderful things about the Isle of Wight is the strong sense of community and readiness to volunteer when asked. Within months of taking office and in partnership with the nationwide charity Schoolreaders, I have over fifty volunteers now supporting reading in half of the island schools. Post-pandemic this is now more important than ever; 100 days at school were lost to lockdown, which equates to half a school year. Research shows that just ten minutes' focused reading support twice a week makes a measurable difference after six weeks.

Beyond schools, I have been fortunate enough to walk the streets of Ryde and Cowes with uniformed police to see first-hand how wise and compassionate our local force is today. On one visit, they took me to the Veterans Hub which offers invaluable emotional support to our ex-forces residents. Almost 10 per cent of Islanders have a military background which made for a well-



At the County Show to award prizes



Promoting my chosen charity Schoolreaders at The Big Give

We must do more as society to tackle addiction, for without doubt this is at the heart of most of the crime in our county.

The Coronation weekend was a joy and I was thrilled to join tea parties, open celebratory gates and attend concerts. Singing 'God Save The King' felt awkward at first, but quickly we have all adjusted to the new chapter and reign. A highlight was a tea party for Sight for Wight, the island's oldest charity at 128 years

attended and lively Armed Forces Day, where I chatted with D-Day soldiers beneath the dazzling Spitfire display.

Court visits have been of great interest to me as well. Both the Magistrates' and Crown Courts are working hard to clear the backlog and the professionalism of those who work and volunteer in the courts is impressive. I am struck by the regret and remorse of those in the dock, so often in the grip of an alcohol or drug addiction.



Reading with children in the Literacy Tent at the County Show

old where I met some truly inspirational people living very active and rich lives despite their loss of sight.

The Big Help Out on the Coronation weekend, a volunteer recruitment drive led by HRH King Charles III, proved fruitful and I secured several new reading volunteers via my stand at East Cowes Town Hall. The hat attracted the required attention!

Citizenship ceremonies with individuals who have successfully applied to become British citizens have been heart-warming occasions. I was honoured to welcome several families, bringing world-class expertise to our island in their respective fields of alternative energy and composting. It is on these occasions that I am reminded of the importance of ritual to human beings.

As my shrieval year ticks on, I am keen to support the community in every which way I can while establishing a lasting intervention to improve childhood literacy. As I sit and read with seven-year-olds in one of the most deprived UK postcodes, I ask myself: how can my words of encouragement and guidance today set each child on a brighter path for their future?

# Supporting courts and the police in Kent

## Nadra Ahmed CBE DL

High Sheriff of Kent 2023-24

The privilege of being selected to undertake the role and responsibilities of a centuries-old office is daunting in itself, but the Declaration ceremony gives you the sense of the enormity of it. The tradition and the splendour will be unique in each county, but the sense of responsibility is the same, I'm sure.

I'm not really sure that all the conversations you have with predecessors and others truly prepare you for it but the best advice I had was to do it 'your way'! Having chosen my priorities and, taking those into account, I have had a great six months already. It has been great to work so closely with our Lord-Lieutenant too, the Lady Colgrain, who has been an incredible support along with her husband Lord Colgrain, one of my very distinguished predecessors.

My very first event was to attend the Vaisakhi Festival in Gravesend with an attendance of several thousand and a two-mile procession which started at the Gurdwara. It was fantastic to see all the lovely people in their colourful national dress making the most of the day which included a fairground next to the site. The people lining the streets looked astonished at the sight of a High Sheriff who also happened to be Asian.

Within the first few weeks I was able to meet with the members of the judiciary and the Chief of Police, who were incredibly supportive. We worked out some plans as to how we were going to enable my role to support the court system and the police force. I attended the swearing in of new magistrates with the Lord-Lieutenant



and awards ceremonies with the police force. It is incredible to see and hear the amazing work that goes on which you cannot really appreciate in everyday life.

I have also used every opportunity to get to know the less well-known smaller charities in the county with the help and support of Josephine and her team at Kent Community Foundation. Visits to some of the charities have already taken place and we have a great many others booked in through the rest of the year. The volunteers who support the charities are exceptional and it is good to speak to them about their motivation.

There have been so many highlights already that it is difficult to choose specific events to focus on. The garden parties

**Below left: With Chief Constable Tim Smith at Kent Police Passing Out awards ceremony**  
**Below right: With two of the residents at an open day at Rockdale Housing Association, an assisted living residence in Sevenoaks**

**At a Remembrance Day service with the Very Revd Dr Philip Hesketh (Dean of Rochester), Kelly Tolhurst MP, the Lady Colgrain (Lord-Lieutenant), Cadet Sergeant Owen Gehrke de Rose (Kent Police Cadet), Cdre Rob Bellfield CBE ADC RN and Cllr Nina Gurung (Mayor of Medway)**

are always a must to thank the people who contribute so much to the county. The one held at our historic dockyard was especially lovely as the sun shone and we heard about the filming of *Call the Midwife*. Another was held in the foremost lavender fields in the country where I learnt quite how many varieties of lavender there are and how essential oils are made.

The excitement created by royal visits to our county cannot be underestimated – we have had a few and are looking forward to others. These are essential for the organisations visited as they highlight all that is good in our county and also underline the importance of the role we fulfil on behalf of our monarch.





# Thank, encourage and recognise

## Henrietta Chubb JP

High Sheriff of Leicestershire 2023-24

On 29 March 2023 I made my Declaration in a simple ceremony, part of which was a solemn promise to work hard for all citizens who maintain The King's peace, administer justice and protect and support their fellow citizens.

I started with an empty diary apart from a Justice Service to organise in October, a part to play on Remembrance Day and perhaps attending carol services in the future. I began a campaign to get to know as much of the city and county as possible, especially where the role of the High Sheriff is not known.

I purposely did not set a theme for my year in order to be open to everyone, but to still carry out the principles of the Office of the High Sheriff of supporting the judiciary, emergency services, crime reduction, volunteers and charities. I chose three charities to support: Warning Zone, Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation and Charity Link, who together support a broad range of the community.

It has been my aim to connect with the less visible smaller charities, organisations and volunteers who rarely get recognition to ensure they feel seen and valued. It is here where I believe the impact of the High Sheriff can make the biggest difference.

Although it has taken some time to build contacts, I have learnt that a 'thank you' from the High Sheriff can mean so very much. Giving awards to members of the community who would not normally receive awards and perhaps never dreamed of being thanked has been humbling.

Early in my year I attended police ceremonies for Long Service, Bravery and Chief Constable Awards where I heard of achievements, dedication and acts of selfless bravery demonstrating the amazing police we are lucky to have serving and protecting our county. The press may generally choose to report when things go wrong and perhaps not to celebrate when police do exceptional work. They do great work and can certainly shift through country lanes when called in an emergency – luckily I thought to take travel pills that day! Thanks to our Chief Constable the connection between the police and Shrievalty in Leicestershire is strong.

In the first half of my year as High Sheriff I have had the privilege of meeting people



On a visit to Golden Gloves Boxing Club, Braunstone



With recipients of BBC Leicester's Make a Difference Bravery Award, PCSOs Phillip Grimwood and Matt Jones

who serve in our police, ambulance and fire services, cleaners, therapeutic counsellors, royalty, armed service personnel, Lord-Lieutenants, religious leaders, community leaders, addicts, homeless, Deputy Lieutenants, sexual abuse survivors, prisoners, families of and people with living with sickness and disability, scouts, judges, award-winners and fellow High Sheriffs, to name just a few.

I've heard stories of immense bravery and also of horrific experiences and have met people facing such unbelievable adversity in its many guises. I have also had the privilege of hearing stories of faith, hope and many successes stories. I have learnt there are numerous people here in Leicestershire who just believe in getting on with protecting us and helping those in need and improving and enhancing the life of their community. I am looking forward to thanking, encouraging and recognising more of these outstanding people during the rest of my year.

Having spent the first part of my year gaining a deeper understanding of my county and its challenges I find I am in a unique position to connect people and



On a visit to Countryside Enterprises CIC (a community enterprise run by adults with learning disabilities)



Completing the 3 Peaks of Leicestershire Challenge for Charity Link

organisations. I have raised funds for my chosen charities and from being unused to self-promotion on social media I have now learnt its power for the organisations I visit.

In the second part of my year I wish to continue to increase and strengthen those connections, to raise the profile and understanding of the role of the High Sheriff in the city and county, and to ensure that the office is handed on in good shape. It has been a wonderful, fascinating, life-changing, fun and exhausting six months, for which I am so grateful. I wonder what I will report in the next issue!

# Challenging health inequalities

## Dr Ruth Hussey CB OBE DL

High Sheriff of Merseyside 2023-24

My shrieval year got off to a flying start with the installation of the Right Reverend Dr John Perumbalath as new Bishop of Liverpool. This took place an hour after my own Declaration which was held at The Spine, the new Royal College of Physicians building in Liverpool. It is modern with magnificent views across Merseyside, providing a sharp contrast to the ancient Declaration ceremony.

Four days later Their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla visited the set for the Eurovision Song Contest. They, along with Olena Zelenska, the First Lady of Ukraine (who joined virtually), formally declared the Central Library twinned with Odesa Regional Scientific Library.

Two more royal visits followed in quick succession. His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Edward, opened the Shakespeare North Playhouse in Prescot and Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal attended the *Battle of the Atlantic* 80th anniversary in late May, opening a commemorative garden in Liverpool Parish Church and noting the key role that Merseyside played during the war. It was a marvellous weekend with a number of ships in the docks and a substantial presence of Armed Forces and equipment on display for the public. It was a particular pleasure to meet the veterans.

I held a mayoral reception for the five mayors of Merseyside at The Mansion House, Calderstones Park, Liverpool, in June. It is the headquarters of The Reader Charity (I am a trustee). Staff

talked about their impressive work in delivering 'shared reading' across the UK and especially in prison and probations settings where it has been shown to have great positive impact on wellbeing.

My theme for the year is 'Health Inequalities', the roots of which lie in disadvantaged social circumstances. I have visited organisations that are making a difference to children and young people; those supporting adults who are vulnerable through domestic abuse, addiction, mental health issues, etc.; and others helping people cope with the cost-of-living crisis. The need is great but the generosity and humanity I have seen is immense. Efforts to support young people such as through the Prince's Trust Programme delivered by Merseyside Fire & Rescue, the Merseyside Police and the Merseyside Scouts adventure weekend are commendable. The importance of volunteers is evident in all these activities.

There have been so many highlights already. A trip on the River Mersey with the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, accompanied by my Police Cadets, revealed how much they do to save lives on water as well as on land. I have also presented awards at an HM Coastguards event for the work they do along with the RNLI.

Long service awards are an important way to acknowledge dedication. I have presented them to staff at Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, and 50-years' service awards to Girl Guide leaders – showing them my 50-year-old+ 'camp blanket' complete with badges, kept from my guiding days.



HRH The Princess Royal with the Revd Dr Crispin Pailing, Rector of Liverpool at the 80th anniversary of the *Battle of the Atlantic*

Finally, I presented my first High Sheriff's Award to a very impressive young man. When he was 14 years old he decided to do something about the fly tipping near his house. In two short years he has transformed the derelict space into a community garden, formed a Community Interest Company to run it and organises volunteers to look after it.

The diary is filling up and the challenge is to fit in all the things I hope to achieve before the year passes by all too quickly.

Below: With their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla, Cllr Roy Gladden (Lord Mayor of Liverpool), Mrs Gladden and Mark Blundell (Lord-Lieutenant)



With High Sheriff's Police Cadets Ben Shoebridge and Sophia Dennett



Presenting Khan Odita with a High Sheriff's Award at his community garden in Toxteth



# Mental health and wellbeing

## Professor Jean White CBE

High Sheriff of Mid Glamorgan 2023-24

I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to serve the people of the County of Mid Glamorgan. The impact of the high cost of living and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to take its toll of the health and wellbeing of the population. I decided, therefore, to adopt the theme of mental health and wellbeing for my year in office and have Cwm Taf Morgannwg MIND mental health charity as my nominated charity. Having this focus has proven very helpful because I have been able to prioritise visits to charities, voluntary organisations and support groups which help people with mental health problems and conditions like dementia. It has also meant that when visiting homelessness shelters, HMP Parc Prison, police, probation, and court services, I have used the theme as a focus in discussions, because people who have contact with these services frequently have mental health or addiction issues.

Within the first month of being in post I had the privilege of attending two royal visits to the county. The first was by Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, who visited the maternity services at Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil, and the second visit was by Their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales who visited Aberfan. The latter visit was very moving as it reinforced the relationship between the royal family and this small ex-mining community. Their visit reflected on that disastrous day in 1966 when 144 people died including 116 children from Pantglas Primary School due to the massive slip of coal waste which covered the school and surrounding houses. The royal couple were escorted by two child survivors (both past High Sheriffs), and met Mair Morgan, one of the teachers, and remaining members of the Wives of Aberfan group. They were visibly affected by the harrowing stories of that day's event, as is everyone who visits the cemetery and memorial garden. Much has

The Probation Service marked 50 years of unpaid community work placements by 'touring' their golden shovel



With members of the Merthyr Valley Veterans group



With Cllr Heather Griffiths, Bridgend Deputy Mayor, opening the refurbished Dementia Hub, a community facility in the heart of Bridgend Town looked after by Mental Health Matters Wales

been done to support this community, but the events of the past are still felt today.

I have had many opportunities to recognise the service and sacrifice of our armed forces. I enjoyed meeting veterans' groups in Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Porthcawl where members explained the importance of being with others who had served and having opportunities to engage in activities. It was fun acting as backing singer for the Guitars for Veterans group organised by Mental Health Matters Wales. The needs of veterans were much in evidence when I visited HMP Parc Prison, which has a dedicated wing for veterans in custody. There were insignia and other military artifacts decorating the walls and I got a sense of a community when I spoke to some of the prisoners.

I attended two important memorial events in June. Aberdare celebrated 100 years of their cenotaph. It was very poignant

hearing the names of those men from this parish who had died read out by students and cadets. I was honoured to place a wreath at the Falklands War Memorial in Pontypridd, marking 41 years since the war and the loss of lives and serious injuries of those present on the ship, *Sir Galahad* – many of whom were Welsh Guards. Armed Forces week involved flag raising ceremonies and parades, and, importantly the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant by public services and businesses, hosted by Bridgend County Borough Council.

The first six months have flown by, and I have many treasured memories of the people I've met. I am looking forward to my fundraising concert in October for my nominated charity in my hometown of Pencoed, which will feature a male voice choir – well, it is Wales after all!



At the first ever Armed Forces Day parade in Bridgend Town with Peter Vaughan QPM (Lord-Lieutenant) taking the salute



Attending a South Wales Police PCSO passing out event

# Infinite and wonderful variety

## Diana Barkes

High Sheriff of Northumberland 2023-24

When I took on the role of High Sheriff in April, I knew that I would spend much of my year meeting people in the voluntary and charitable sectors, as well as connecting with those employed in the judicial system and our blue light services. This has indeed come to pass, and I have – no doubt like High Sheriffs countrywide – met numerous people who go above and beyond in keeping us safe and giving of their time to support vital charitable organisations. However, I have been constantly surprised

by the wide range of events at which these meetings have taken place, and the infinite and wonderful variety of the people and communities of Northumberland.

I started off my shrieval year attending a Dialogue Society iftar and diversity dinner in Blyth during Ramadan where I was given not only the warmest of welcomes, but the most delicious feast. Wonderful and varied meals have continued, including a sumptuous fundraising Coronation tea, a picnic in a park, a barbecue in a barn, and lunch in HMP Northumberland cooked by the prisoners themselves as part of a rehabilitation project.

Of course, Northumberland itself is a county of topographical variety, with its long coastline, many former mining towns and villages, extensive farmland as well as beautiful and remote uplands. My trusty satnav has taken me to many new places: I spent one gloriously sunny day in June on the northeast coast for the opening of a sculpture trail by HRH the Duke of Gloucester at Amble, and the same evening was meeting the team at Allendale Fire Station in the extreme southwest of the county.

Commemorative events have ranged from the Flodden Day celebrations, in which a cavalcade of horses and riders left Coldstream in the Scottish Borders and arrived at Branxton Hill in Northumberland for a service marking the anniversary of the eponymous battle, to a very different service of commemoration held in Woodhorn Museum, a mining museum in Ashington, remembering all those who had lost their lives in the mines. I was back in Ashington a few weeks later at the invitation of the charity Northumberland County of Sanctuary, where I met refugees and heard how they had been supported by its volunteers.

Among many new faces, there have been those that have become familiar. The Right Reverend Dr Helen-Ann Hartley also embarked on her new role in April, when she was installed as Bishop of Newcastle at a superb service. We have since met at events as diverse as the service for the Coronation in Hexham Abbey to the Northumberland County Show, where we both took part in the opening ceremony along with Lord-Lieutenant the Duchess of Northumberland. Another 'new girl in town' back in April was Vanessa Jardine, who took on the role of Chief Constable a few days before my Declaration. She was kind enough to make time in her busy schedule to arrange a meeting between us where we discussed the challenges facing the police in the region. I have spent time out both with the rural police and on the water with the marine police, and I am looking forward to attending the Pride in Policing awards ceremony in a few weeks.

Having spent a fascinating six months meeting so many remarkable people serving their communities, I am looking forward to the next six months which I hope will be as interesting and rewarding as the first.



Above: With station manager Kevin Knox at Berwick upon Tweed Lifeboat Station  
Above right: With Julian Thomson, Alison Orgill and Fred Wyrley-Birch, directors of Anderson & Garland Auctioneers, at the private view of their July sale which raised money for the Northumberland High Sheriff's Fund

Below: The formal wreath-laying at the Ashington Miners' Memorial was followed by a quick outfit change for the annual Northumberland Miners' Picnic

Below right: The cavalcade arriving at Branxton Hill before the *Battle of Flodden* commemorative service



# Celebrating young people and communities

## Professor Veronica Pickering DL

High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire 2023-24

My year as High Sheriff so far has been wonderful, exciting and at times extreme!

The Coronation service at Southwell Minster was an amazing day for us all where we were able to bring together many of our diverse communities from across the county. It was a really uplifting and joyful celebration enjoyed by all on a sunny day.

My Declaration ceremony was held in the YMCA Community Activity Village in Newark.

Young people and communities are at the heart of my year as High Sheriff so this was a perfect place to start as I intended to carry on, showcasing not only the work of this amazing charity but also the skills of many young people through their performances and the cultural traditions. The whole service was live streamed to many countries including my country of birth, Kenya. I was honoured to not only be accompanied by the Lord-Lieutenant Sir John Peace but also by the Kenyan High Commissioner, His Excellency Manoah Esipisu.

In June I was able to bring together nearly 300 young people and their organisations in Sherwood Forest to celebrate their work and their achievements. It turned out to be an amazing party with live music, and an RAF fly past. It was lovely also to be supported by some of our regional High Sheriffs from Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Derbyshire, Rutland and South Yorkshire, all in full court dress in the sweltering heat on what turned out to be the hottest day of the year.

Supporting my county and city became a major focus in June as thousands gathered to pay respects to those who were attacked and killed in Nottingham. It was my very sad duty to accompany the Lord-Lieutenant and civic leaders at the vigil in the city square following the deaths two young students and a much loved school caretaker. The response from the people of Nottingham was amazing and very touching, as we all stood together in solidarity with the University of Nottingham and the police to offer support and condolences to the parents and families during this very challenging time.

I have had the pleasure of being able to attend several major events and



At the start of the Tour of Britain cycle race

celebrations during my first six months as High Sheriff. One of the highlights was the visit of HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh to the Flintham agricultural show. Another being several events marking the 75th anniversary of Windrush, celebrating the contributions of African Caribbean communities. I attended the main event at the council house hosted by the Nottingham City Council.

I've had a number of very interesting and revealing days out with our front-line services, including attending the police long service awards, swimming in the Trent in full gear with the fire service, and lots more planned. I'm committed to supporting the great work that they all do in serving our communities and helping to keep us all safe.

It was great fun and a privilege to be asked to launch the Nottinghamshire leg of the Tour of Britain cycle race starting at the RSPB site in Sherwood Forest and finishing in Newark; and following that to be invited to open the new youth and family cycle track with the YMCA.

It's been a very busy and rewarding first half of my year, and the next six months promise to be just as busy and intriguing. I am of course getting to know our amazing judges and have planned a reception and dinner in their honour!

Right: At a Windrush 75 reception with pupils from Welbeck Primary School



With Alex and Danni from Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue



# Uncovering the issues

## Sally Scott

High Sheriff of Oxfordshire 2023-24

During my Declaration in April, Marjorie Glasgow BEM, Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, said, 'I think the role of Lord-Lieutenant is like a marathon and that of High Sheriff is like a sprint.' She was totally right.

Twelve months is a very short time in which to achieve any impact; however, I do believe that it is possible to achieve small outcomes in this period. I hope to make a small contribution to address some of the needs in Oxfordshire.

The theme of my year is the criminal justice system: the police, the prison service, the courts, emergency services and the many charities which work in this space.

The reality of life in Oxfordshire is not necessarily that which one might expect. The leafy lanes and dreaming spires tend to obscure the reality. The levels of addiction, homelessness, domestic abuse, etc. in Oxfordshire are remarkably consistent with the rest of England. Furthermore, these issues have a direct impact on all agencies within the criminal justice system, hence my interest.

I am spending a lot of time helping to prepare and sponsoring a report 'Oxfordshire Uncovered 2023' highlighting the needs of the county as well as identifying the wonderful work that the numerous charities perform addressing these needs.

The report is being written jointly by The Oxfordshire Community Foundation, researchers, and academics. The objective of the report is to raise awareness of the issues and hopefully also raise money. It will be launched on Giving Tuesday (28 November) and all money raised will be distributed to various charities which have the greatest impact in the county.

I have attended many award ceremonies, such as Thames Valley Police Awards, High Sheriff's Witness Awards with judges at Oxford Combined Court Centre, charity, and fundraiser awards, which I've found humbling, fascinating and truly worthy in equal measure.

The saying, you can tell you're getting older when police officers look younger was brought home to me on a fascinating experience: a ride along with my local police in Banbury. What an eye-opening experience. I began my 'shift' attending the daily briefing for all the officers and then was allocated two young and wonderfully capable PCs. Their youth in no way diminished their skill and compassion or the respect that they achieved on the shift. I came away proud to be involved with such a decent and committed service and with individuals whose role is not recognised or celebrated enough. Furthermore, the experience has equipped me with a far greater understanding of the day-to-day issues facing our police, probation, the prison service, and other emergency services.



A ride along with my local force

I see part of my role as convening meetings to link people up. An example of this is that I have introduced a charity which distributes used books (run by a retired judge) to the two prisons in Oxfordshire, HMP Huntercombe and HMP Bullingdon. Both prisons have welcomed the introduction and meetings have taken place to ensure that the prison libraries and learning workshops are well stocked with a varied and changing range of books

During the second half of my year, I will continue to focus upon the criminal justice system. I am organising a seminar on Family, Drug and Alcohol Courts which Oxfordshire does not currently have, as well as working with the judges in Oxford on a public open day for Oxfordshire, Combined Courts, as well as attending the varied and fascinating events to which I am invited.

In conclusion the Lord-Lieutenant was right, and I hope to achieve some small thing before the end of my sprint.



Left: With His Honour Judge Patrick Eccles KC, and the Rt Hon Victoria Prentis KC MP (Member of Parliament for North Oxfordshire and Attorney General for England and Wales); HHJ Eccles delivered the High Sheriff's Law Lecture at the University of Oxford Examination Schools

# Engaging with people is a privilege

## Mandy Thorn MBE DL

High Sheriff of Shropshire 2023-24

Having been one of the last High Sheriffs to make their Declaration in mid April it has been an absolute joy to be able to travel around the incredible County of Shropshire meeting so many kind, generous and committed people who make our communities such better places. My focus has been to continue to celebrate our volunteers who are so essential, and in particular those who work with disadvantaged groups.

With the Coronation so close to the beginning of the shrieval year I visited some schools and had the privilege of distributing Coronation medals to their pupils and of explaining the role of the High Sheriff – speaking to children and explaining how the role of High Sheriff has evolved through time is great fun.

I have observed the work of the magistracy – such committed volunteers – and had the privilege of sitting alongside a family court judge for the day which was eye-opening to say the least. I look forward to more opportunities to spend time with the judiciary, and especially to continue to learn how the Family Drug and Alcohol Court system could potentially offer a new solution in our rural communities.

It is, however, the ability as High Sheriff to engage with such a wide range of people that makes the role so special and such a privilege: from attending a marvellous police station open day



In the Cold War Hangar at RAF Museum Midlands, Cosford

and seeing the engagement from the community at the event – including a long queue of youngsters and their parents determined to be locked into a police custody cell for a short while – to opening revitalised village halls and community centres. As High Sheriff it is being able to talk to people from all over my county and hear their views and what they do which is so incredible. I met a wonderful 11-year-old who single-handedly raised the funds for a defibrillator for her town which is at least 50 minutes from a district general hospital; then there is the army veteran who, in struggling with his own PTSD, decided to train as a therapist and now provides support



The Revd Richard Hayes and Mrs Hayes at the 'Celebration of Shropshire Heroes'

**Below: Presenting a High Sheriff's Award to 11-year-old Jess for her fundraising in the town of Clun with Katherine Garnier DL, Cllr Ryan Davies (Mayor of Clun), and Robert Andrews (Chair of the Clun Memorial Hall and Playing Fields Charity)**



through sports coaching to other veterans struggling with their mental health.

The launch of the Shropshire Community Foundation this year has enabled the formalisation of a High Sheriff's Fund within that organisation which will enable us to provide grant support to organisations working with young people to co-produce initiatives seeking to reduce the attractiveness of crime. We have a serious problem across our predominantly rural county with County Lines and organised crime, including growing exploitation of young and vulnerable people. We are encouraging some of our charities and community groups to look at projects that could go forward to the National Crimebeat Awards.

Lastly, I was honoured to be able to invite over 280 wonderful people who give so much to our Shropshire community to join me for afternoon tea at the iconic RAF Museum Midlands in Cosford where all attendees had the opportunity not only to view the incredible Cold War display but also to be entertained by a magician, have their portrait drawn by a great caricaturist and enjoy entertainment provided by morris dancers and a 10-piece brass band.

# Palaces to prisons and courts to cathedrals

## Professor Jaydip Ray DL

High Sheriff of South Yorkshire 2023-24

The advice to have an evenly paced diary of engagements proved really useful in planning the year. The striking feature is the variety of engagements leading from palaces to prisons and courts to cathedrals. Events linked to the judiciary, police, fire and ambulance services, armed forces, cadets, veterans, volunteers, charities and faith across a large county provide a broad array of opportunities to thank individuals and organisations for their selfless contributions to wider society.

My theme is to support youth and promote translational research and innovation with a focus on job creation. Reducing health inequalities was another area and this is in line with my job as a full-time NHS academic consultant surgeon. The University of Sheffield was therefore a fitting venue for the summer reception with the theme of 'Building a better future together'. The Lord-Lieutenant, Sheriff of London, neighbouring High Sheriffs, mayors, judges, and representatives from the emergency services mingled with cadets, trainee doctors, academics, volunteers and charity workers. Several individuals and organisations were recognised with a High Sheriff's Award. The Royal Yorkshire Regimental Band and the South Yorkshire Police Band raised the roof of the historic Firth Hall with their fabulous music.

Memorable events have included 'mayor making' ceremonies; university graduations; the traditional Cutler's Feast at the 400-year-old Cutlers' Hall; 250 years of the Sheffield



**Celebrating Yorkshire Day at Wentworth Woodhouse and in Rotherham**

Assay Office; the Yorkshire Day celebrations in Rotherham attended by over 30 regional mayors; Doncaster City declarations with the Coldstream Guards parade on Armed Forces Day; the Great Yorkshire Show; and the North East Legal Service in York Minster.

I am privileged to have an excellent band of civic mayors in Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham, Barnsley and elected mayors in South Yorkshire whom I regularly meet in circuit. My wife and I enjoy meeting so many wonderful people and making new friends.

The local judges and magistrates are wonderful hosts at the courts. Hosting the visiting High Court judges at home creates special occasions to socialise over good food and wine. A reciprocal invitation to the Old Bailey and lunch with the judges was very interesting. Sheffield Town Hall and the Old Bailey were designed by the same architect, Edward Mountford, and share many external characteristics. Sitting in with the judges

**Below left: With Cllr Duncan Anderson (Civic Mayor) with the Declaration for Doncaster City status  
Below: Attending the Cutlers' Feast  
Below right: Attending graduation day at the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue**



and magistrates on a variety of cases highlighted complex societal issues and the challenges faced by the judiciary and the law enforcement agencies. Prison visits to HMP Lindholme, Hatfield and Marshgate (Doncaster) also demonstrated the logistical challenges for the prison services.

Visits to museums, theatres, faith services and sporting events create an interesting mix of experiences. The Under Sheriff and I found ourselves attending a noisy national cage fighting competition; attending the International Snooker Championship in Sheffield was much quieter!

Royal visits to the county are great for recognising organisations. It is most fulfilling to join the Lord-Lieutenant in welcoming a member of the royal family to the county as this demonstrates the royal links to this ancient office. One recent visit by The Princess Royal to the Ethel Trust Community Barge Project (providing day and residential canal and river experiences for the most disadvantaged groups in South Yorkshire) was wonderful.

As I mark the halfway point in my shrieval year, it is proving to be an unparalleled and phenomenal experience that is most humbling and impossible to describe fully. Future nominees still in full-time employment can be reassured that the role of High Sheriff fits well with a regular job. I even managed to address an international congress as an invited speaker.

The support provided by the Lord-Lieutenant, Under Sheriff, PA, consort and the wider circle of friends and family is crucial in doing the job well and simultaneously having a 'jolly good time'.





# Mental health is a common concern

## Tim Wates DL

High Sheriff of Surrey 2023-24

I have had a varied and enjoyable first six months as High Sheriff of Surrey and I am pleased to pick out some highlights:

Guildford Cathedral – modernist from the outside but wonderful height and light when you are inside. I have enjoyed numerous services there including the Joint Services Matins, the farewell to the Dean and of course my own Declaration. And more to come as Remembrance Day and Christmas approach.

Engagement with judiciary – very special and insightful, from sitting in the various courts to presenting prizes for bravery. The service for the judiciary was wonderfully warm and wholesome. We all found it rather amusing that the cheekier children, bussed in from local primary schools to attend the service and watch the procession afterwards, bowed extravagantly as we paraded past them up Guildford High Street. The Surrey judges are most stimulating company – I am much looking forward to entertaining them at my forthcoming dinner for the judiciary.

Engagement with the police and fire services – I have admired the team



With HH Mrs Justice Hill and members of the judiciary for the Judiciary Service in Guildford

approach and commitment to public service shown by the police and fire services. They have excellent kit and it has been fun seeing it all demonstrated: very large fire engines at Gatwick Airport and extremely well-equipped firearms cars for the police. Not to forget the police sniffer dogs – well trained and keen on tennis balls.

Volunteer Police Cadets – I had not heard of the Volunteer Police Cadets before I became High Sheriff and, therefore, their patron. I have been impressed with the organisation and the young people I have met – as well as with the adult volunteers who make it possible. The cadets engage positively with the community and have a lot of fun in the process. Their favourite activity? Throwing things at police doing riot training! Abigail is my cadet for the year; she has been excellent and a real support.

General engagement with civic society and charities – in Surrey we are lucky that we have warm engagement between the Lieutenancy and the Shrievalty and the county and the boroughs. It has been good to see the mayors and civic leaders at many events and to understand their priorities and concerns. Charity visits have been an absolute highlight. With my theme of mental health I have concentrated in this area and there is such great work being done in the county seeking to alleviate this ever-increasing affliction that is so miserable for those suffering. I have visited many specialist mental health charities but have found that mental health is a theme in conversation in nearly all of my visits.



Recognising local heroes at South East Coast Ambulance Service, Banstead

This brings me to my specific theme which is focused on police and emergency services' response to people who are suffering an acute mental health crisis – putting themselves and others at risk. I have commissioned a report on this written by Police Care UK and the University of Cambridge with the full cooperation of Surrey Police. The draft report showed how the present situation is dysfunctional for all concerned with immense strain placed on the police and those suffering not receiving the right care. As a result, the Chief Constable of Surrey Tim De Meyer has committed to prioritise this issue and I will be discussing progress with him in early December and then again in February. I am grateful to the Chief Constable for being so open with Surrey data and for his positive response.

In conclusion, a wonderful and illuminating first six months giving back to the great County of Surrey where I am so lucky to live.



At my tea party with Mr Saj Hussain (Chair of Surrey County Council) and Faarai Sahi (consort and daughter) and Cadet Abigail (Head Cadet at Surrey Heath Cadets)



Visiting Dapdune Wharf as part of Surrey Day 2023

# An unforgettable evening

## Alan Brayley DL

High Sheriff of West Glamorgan 2023-24

It was a warm and clear evening when I attended one of my events as High Sheriff that would leave a lasting impression on me. The occasion was orchestrated with precision, thanks to the meticulous organisational efforts of Under Sheriff Andrew Meech. The highlight of the evening was the presence of High Court judge, the Honourable Mr Justice Mostyn, a distinguished figure in the legal world.

The plan was simple yet elegant: Sir Nicholas Mostyn, accompanied by his two clerks Safia and Tony, would be picked up from his lodgings at 18:30. The destination? The Beach House, a renowned restaurant perched on the edge of the lapping waters of Oxwich Bay on the idyllic Gower Peninsula.

The Beach House, under the culinary guidance of Head Chef Hywel Griffith, had risen to prominence since its inception in 2016. It has garnered numerous accolades, including 3 AA Rosettes and a coveted Michelin Star. The setting was nothing short of spectacular, with the rhythmic sound of waves providing a soothing backdrop as we enjoyed our dinner.

The evening was marked by laughter and camaraderie around the table. Sir Nicholas, who had recently turned 66 and is bravely facing a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease, regaled us with stories from his illustrious career. One particular highlight was his involvement in the 'Movers and Shakers' podcast, where he, along with five others living with Parkinson's, including Jeremy Paxman, aimed to raise awareness about the condition. The podcast's success in highlighting Parkinson's is truly commendable.

Sir Nicholas bade farewell to the bench in July 2023, but his legacy in family law will endure for years to come. It was evident that he is not just a legal luminary but also a man of culture. During our dinner conversation, he revealed his admiration for the works of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas.

Inspired by this revelation, I arranged a visit to Dylan Thomas's family home at number 5 Cwmdonkin Drive, Swansea, so my guest could fulfil a lifetime ambition. With the help of a friendly guide, we explored the house and gained



Waiting to greet Sir Nicholas Mostyn and his dog Bilbo

to Sir Nicholas's farewell soiree at the judge's lodgings. It turned out we were both celebrating birthdays that very same day. The event was a delightful and relaxed affair. I had the honour of meeting the Honourable Mrs Justice Morgan DBE, who would be taking over from Sir Nicholas as the Family Liaison Judge for Wales.

This High Sheriff's meeting was undeniably one of the most memorable events I have had the privilege to attend. It was a night that celebrated not only the legal legacy of Sir Nicholas Mostyn but also the important

invaluable insights into the life of the great writer. It was a poetic journey through time, connecting us with one of Wales's most cherished literary figures.

A few days later, I received an invitation

element of the role of being a High Sheriff and the long tradition of entertaining visiting judges. It was a night that left an indelible mark on my memory, reminding me of the power of human connection.



Scene from a bygone era inside the birthplace and heritage home of Dylan Thomas

# Celebrating a rich and diverse culture

## Wade Lyn CBE

High Sheriff of the West Midlands 2023-24

Becoming the first African Caribbean High Sheriff in the West Midlands has been an honour. My shrieval year has coincided with the 75th anniversary of Windrush and has allowed me to participate in events and shine a light on a subject that is particularly close to my heart.

The Mayor of Sandwell hosted a Windrush event where local people were invited to come in and talk about their Windrush stories. A young lady brought her grandma and once behind the lectern the most amazing lady called Eunice recounted her life story. Eunice had come over with her husband in the 60s and ended up working in a city centre hotel in Birmingham. She told us how the manager couldn't bear to look at her when she spoke to her; this manager would keep her eyes closed and bark orders at her. Eunice eventually left and became a stay-at-home mum. After her talk I found out that one of those children she stayed home to raise ended up crowning Her Majesty Queen Camilla. Eunice's daughter was none other than the Bishop of Dover, the Right Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin.

This story, for me, represents how the Windrush generation contributed and shaped British society into what we have today, a rich and diverse culture. As I write, I am soon to embark on a schools' tour throughout October, Black History Month, to deliver assemblies on the role of the High Sheriff as well as the history of Windrush and the impact the generation had on the modern world.

Another highlight of my year has been working with the West Midlands Police Cadets. They started off at my inauguration, providing help, assistance, and directions as well as a guard of honour. After I facilitated a media workshop, the cadets interviewed me, and I was very impressed with the high calibre of questions they were asking! The cadets have accompanied me on numerous visits throughout the West Midlands. At my Excellence Awards the cadets played an integral role in the ceremony. The drum division drummed everyone in, which the audience were delighted by. Following on again from the media workshop

**Below left: With Ninder Johal DL, Cllr Bill Gavan (Mayor of Sandwell) and Eunice**  
**Below right: With Liz Calder, cadet leader at West Midlands Police**

the cadets read out the nomination for everyone receiving an award on the night and they were fantastic. Special thanks to Liz Calder, who does such a fantastic job of coordinating the cadets all year long. St John Ambulance also appointed a High Sheriff's cadet this year and they too have attended many events with me – their professionalism and dedication to their office is very impressive.

I've been able to attend our local courts on several occasions to see the great work that everyone is doing there. The judges, lawyers, and clerks all work hard to uphold and dispense justice in this country. I've also been to prisons and have seen for myself all the work going into reforming and helping prisoners get a new start once they have served their sentence. I've met some genuinely amazing people who have dedicated their lives to helping others. Across the whole of the West Midlands there are some fantastic schemes running from community food stores to youth clubs to training programmes; it has made me immensely proud to represent the county and I hope that in my role, in some way, I've helped shine a light on the dedicated and talented people that live and work here.



# The importance of bringing people together

## Andy Bliss QPM

High Sheriff West Sussex 2023-24

Shortly before I retired as a Chief Constable in 2016 I wrote a short article for the High Sheriffs' Association's magazine about the importance of the support that High Sheriffs offer to policing. It's a great pleasure, as I now 'round the halfway marker', to offer a different perspective – on my year so far as High Sheriff of West Sussex.

Based on my previous experience in policing of working with High Sheriffs, I deliberately set my focus wide – to support organisations which protect and care for the public. I didn't want to arrive in office and then, as I really got to know my county, realise that I had set my focus too narrowly. So, as well as the courts, the police, the fire service and many other statutory organisations, I have also met with a really wide range of charities and voluntary sector organisations – Scouts, Guides, the RNLI and many others – particularly those working alongside the criminal justice sector and also those helping to tackle homelessness and food poverty.

Reflecting my lifelong interest in history as well as the antiquity of the High Sheriff's role, I have also focused on the charities that promote the history of the county, including archives, historic houses and archaeological sites across the county. Many of them rely heavily on volunteers; all have been welcoming and they clearly see value in the holder of an ancient office supporting and promoting the valuable work that they do.

At the end of the summer I held an outdoor reception in the Roman gardens at the impressive Fishbourne Roman Palace with representatives of the charities and public services which deal with some of the most challenging issues in society present as well as some from the heritage sector – a great mix of people who would not ordinarily meet. Learning that the High Sheriff would be attending in court dress, the brilliant staff from Sussex Archaeological Society even dressed in Roman costumes to create an enjoyable atmosphere in this unique and historically important place.

One big difference from my previous job is that the role of High Sheriff has little direct power but it has been striking how



At the High Sheriff's reception at Fishbourne Roman Palace with Leanne O'Boyle (Chief Executive), Abbey Hawkins, Sam Pettifor, Penny Horsfield, and Jess Keeley of Sussex Archaeological Society, and Alex Nikolov, Sussex Police Cadet



Richard Bickersteth (East Sussex), Andy Bliss (West Sussex) and Timothy Wates (Surrey) (all foreground centre) with Chief Fire Officer Simon Petts of Gatwick Airport Fire and Rescue Service and his team on joint visit to Gatwick Airport Fire Station, West Sussex

much the support to an organisation of a visit or thanks to a group of volunteers can mean. As I connect with organisations across the county I am frequently able to make connections and put people in contact with other – examples have included charities which might benefit by collaborating together and two parts of the justice system that might have an opportunity to share space. Over the next few months I am planning two networking events: one for charities working with the homeless and another for the heritage sector, to enable busy CEOs to meet colleagues and make connections.

Some aspects of my previous policing experience have been invaluable. Resilience is vital, as on each engagement as High Sheriff one is very much 'on parade'. So, I programmed in a few short

breaks during the year to recharge my batteries and to catch up with admin. This decision has proved to be invaluable. So too has another habit from my operational policing days of having a 'go bag' in the car containing spare cufflinks, safety pins, water, sun cream etc. – I have had recourse to it frequently.

I am fortunate in West Sussex to collaborate frequently on engagements with my East Sussex counterpart, Richard Bickersteth, and have greatly enjoyed his company and benefitted from his experience and advice. A great support team is essential and Kevin Smyth (Under Sheriff), the Revd David Murdoch (Chaplain), Julia Mansergh (PA) and Alex Nikolov (Police Cadet) all continue to help me make the year as successful as possible for those whom we serve.

# Some very inspiring individuals

## Zulfiqar Ali Karim DL

High Sheriff of West Yorkshire 2023-24

I have been humbled and overwhelmed by everyone's kind and generous reception and attitude towards me as High Sheriff. There are so many wonderful people in the county and my wife Saira and I feel extremely fortunate to have met some of them on the shrieval journey so far.

The courts in Leeds and Bradford are extremely busy and I have enjoyed the opportunity to visit on a number of occasions starting, of course, with my Declaration ceremony at Leeds in April. The holy month of Ramadan started shortly before I took office; however, c.50 friends and family were able to join me to celebrate, as well as three of His Majesty's High Court judges (one of whom grew up in my hometown of Bradford).

When I was approached to be High Sheriff and accepted the position back in 2019, the word 'COVID' did not feature in everyday vocabulary. At the beginning of the pandemic, I became seriously ill and was hospitalised with the virus. Thankfully I recovered but have been left with what is now known as Long COVID. With this in mind, I have been very mindful of the need to pace myself; however, I have still been able to attend the majority of the events planned during the first half of my shrieval year.

**Right: At the University of Bradford graduation ceremony**  
**Below: At the inauguration of the Rt Revd Smitha Prasad as new Bishop of Huddersfield at Halifax Minster**

Some of the highlights:

Five royal visits so far: HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh, HRH the Duke of Kent, HRH The Princess Royal (twice) and, finally, HRH The Princess of Wales.

Lunch at the Great Yorkshire Show with my fellow North Eastern Circuit High Sheriffs and spouses followed by an evening reception at judges' lodgings as guests of the Rt Hon Lord Justice Edis and four of His Majesty's High Court judges.

A day at the Immigration Courts in Bradford which was most interesting and an open day at the Bradford Combined Court Centre.

Graduation ceremonies at the universities of Huddersfield and Bradford and also speech day at Bradford Grammar School.

On the 26 October we shall be hosting a gala dinner at Bradford Grammar School as an alternative to an outdoor summer reception. We are very much looking forward to hosting our guests in such a wonderful setting and will be fortunate enough to have some of the High Court judges in attendance.

Visits to both West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and West Yorkshire Police – both organisations doing incredible work within our county to keep everyone safe.



**With President Lubna Shuja at Leeds Civic Hall for the first ever admissions ceremony for Leeds Law Society**

The admissions ceremony for Leeds Law Society at the Civic Hall was a very special occasion, not least as it was the first ever outside London.

We have been delighted and humbled to visit some of our region's charitable organisations and enjoyed hearing about the difference they make to the people they help and support. So many volunteers going quietly about their work and some very inspiring individuals.

Visits to some of our local hospices have been truly remarkable and the excellent care they provide for both patients and their families really is heart-warming. We are very fortunate to have such wonderful facilities available and it never ceases to amaze me how calming yet uplifting they are.

Most recently the Letters Patent Ceremony at Leeds Combined Court Centre where we were joined by the Hon Mrs Justice Lambert DBE, Presiding Judge of the NE Circuit. Thankfully the weather stayed fine as we lined up outside to welcome her to a fanfare by the WY Police band trumpeters.

On Sunday 8 October the North Eastern Circuit Legal Service at York Minster took place followed by lunch at the Assembly Rooms – a wonderful occasion to be part of and quite the spectacle with so many attending in all their finery! It's hard to believe that we have crammed so much into only half the year and already the diary is full of exciting events to be part of in the coming months. Here's to the next six!



## High Sheriffs of England and Wales for 2023-24

### England

Bedfordshire	Russell Beard
Berkshire	Simon Muir
Buckinghamshire	Dame Geraldine Limb DBE DL
Cambridgeshire	Dr Bharat Khetani
Cheshire	Dennis Dunn MBE JP DL
City of Bristol	Sharon Foster
Cornwall	Toby Ashworth
Cumbria	Samantha Scott
Derbyshire	Theresa Peltier
Devon	The Rt Revd Nick McKinnel
Dorset	Colin Weston MBE JP
Durham	Anne Elliott
East Riding of Yorkshire	Tina Cerutti
East Sussex	Richard Bickersteth
Essex	Charles Bishop
Gloucestershire	Henry Robinson DL
Greater London	Ina De
Greater Manchester	Mary-Liz Walker JP DL
Hampshire	Amelia Riviere JP DL
Herefordshire	Robert Robinson
Hertfordshire	Liz Green
Isle of Wight	Dawn Haig-Thomas
Kent	Nadra Ahmed CBE DL
Lancashire	David Taylor CBE DL
Leicestershire	Henrietta Chubb JP
Lincolnshire	Richard Lake OBE
Merseyside	Dr Ruth Hussey CB OBE DL
Norfolk	Professor Krishna Sethia
Northamptonshire	Milan Shah
Northumberland	Diana Bakes
North Yorkshire	Clare Granger
Nottinghamshire	Professor Veronica Pickering DL
Oxfordshire	Sally Scott
Rutland	Geraldine Feehally
Shropshire	Amanda Thorn MBE DL
Somerset	Robert Drewett DL
South Yorkshire	Professor Jaydip Ray DL
Staffordshire	Victoria Hawley
Suffolk	Mark Pendlington DL
Surrey	Tim Wates DL
Tyne and Wear	Dame Irene Lucas-Hays DBE DL
Warwickshire	Sophie Hilleary
West Midlands	Wade Lyn CBE
West Sussex	Andy Bliss QPM
West Yorkshire	Zulfiqar Karim DL
Wiltshire	Pradeep Bhardwaj
Worcestershire	Louise Hewett DL

### Wales

Clwyd	Hon Mrs Kate Hill-Trevor
Dyfed	Meurig Raymond CBE DL
Gwent	Professor Simon Gibson
Gwynedd	Janet Phillips
Mid Glamorgan	Professor Jean White CBE
Powys	Reginald Cawthorne
South Glamorgan	Rhys James
West Glamorgan	Alan Brayley DL

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

## New Members

Name	County	Year of Office
John Baddeley	South Yorkshire	2024
Callum Bremner JP	Dorset	2025
Stephen Bryan JP	Leicestershire	2025
Nicola Chance-Thompson MBE DL	West Yorkshire	2025
Susan Elton	Hampshire	2025
Julie Gillbanks	Clwyd	2025
Colonel Christopher Henson QGM	East Riding of Yorkshire	2024
Sir Andrew Lawson -Tancred Bt	North Yorkshire	2025
Karen Lynch MBE	Warwickshire	2025
Professor Adeeba Malik CBE DL	West Yorkshire	2024
John May OBE DL	Oxfordshire	2025
Diana Stroia	West Glamorgan	2025
Joelle Warren MBE DL	Cheshire	2025
Kalpna Woolf	City of Bristol	2025

## Deaths

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

### Michael Allen

Date of death: 30-Mar-23  
Age: 88  
County: Rutland  
Year of office: 2001

### David Bavaird JP

Date of death: 15-Aug-23  
Age: 61  
County: Tyne and Wear  
Year of office: 2022

### Timothy Corbett

Date of death: 5-June-23  
Age: 87  
County: Shropshire  
Year of office: 1996

### Major Patrick Darling DL

Date of death: 10-Oct-22  
Age: 64  
County: Herefordshire  
Year of office: 2014

### Hon Richard Godber MBE DL

Date of death: 18-Nov-23  
Age: 85  
County: Buckinghamshire  
Year of office: 2003

### Anthony Grant OBE

Date of death: 28-Aug-23  
Age: 83  
County: West Yorkshire  
Year of office: 2011

### Gerald Hine-Haycock

Date of death: 29-Jun-23  
Age: 72  
County: Devon  
Year of office: 2020

### Christopher Khoo

Date of death: 01-Nov-22  
Age: 75  
County: Berkshire  
Year of office: 2014

### Nigel Lee OBE

Date of death: 21-May-23  
Age: 86  
County: South Yorkshire  
Year of office: 1978

### Clive Lewis OBE DL

Date of death: 22-May-23  
Age: 54  
County: Gloucestershire  
Year of office: 2024

### James Mackaness DL

Date of death: 26-Jun-23  
Age: 78  
County: Northamptonshire  
Year of office: 1995

### Michael Mallett

Date of death: 20-Jun-23  
Age: 91  
County: South Yorkshire  
Year of office: 1997

### Geoffrey Marr CBE

Date of death: 23-Jun-23  
Age: 90  
County: Humberside  
Year of office: 1990

### Diana McConnell CBE DL

Date of death: 19-Aug-23  
Age: 79  
County: Cheshire  
Year of office: 2003

### Lady McLintock DL

Date of death: 20-Aug-23  
Age: 94  
County: Oxfordshire  
Year of office: 2001

### Noel Page-Turner DL

Date of death: 08-Aug-22  
Age: 88  
County: Devon  
Year of office: 1997

### Michael Potts DL

Date of death: 19-Oct-23  
Age: 85  
County: Merseyside  
Year of office: 2006

### Henry Steane

Date of death: 14-Aug-23  
Age: 93  
County: West Glamorgan  
Year of office: 1999

## Nomination of High Sheriffs of England

County	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Bedfordshire	Bhavesh Shah	Camilla King	Ismail Anilmis DL
Berkshire	Alexander Barfield	Sean Taylor DL	Renu Kapur MBE
Buckinghamshire	Kurshida Mirza BEM	Philippa Kirkbride	Nicola Ross
Cambridgeshire	David Way	The Hon Frances Stanley DL	Francis Burkitt
Cheshire	Clare Hayward MBE DL	Joëlle Warren MBE DL	William Timpson OBE
City of Bristol	The Revd Richard Pendlebury MBE DL	Kalpna Woolf	Anne Nisbet
Cumbria	Christopher Holmes DL	Dr Geoffrey Jolliffe	Shirley Fawcett
Derbyshire	Richard Morgan OBE	Sir Richard FitzHerbert Bt	Syed Iftikhar
Devon	Commodore Jake Moores OBE DL RN	Caroline Harlow	Mark Ansell
Dorset	Anthony Woodhouse	Callum Bremner JP	Helena Conibear
Durham	Harry Swan	Mike Poole JP DL	Dr Arnab Basu MBE
East Riding of Yorkshire	Colonel Christopher Henson QGM	Mike Rice	Neil Sanderson
East Sussex	Lucinda Fraser DL	Annie Brown	Michael Bedingfield
Essex	David Hurst DL	Julie Fosh Rogers DL	Susannah Dutton
Gloucestershire	Mark Hurrell DL	Julie Kent MBE	Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE
Greater London	Millicent Grant KC	Alderman John Garbutt JP	Dame Martina Milburn DCVO CBE
Hampshire	Jonathan Whitaker JP DL	Susan Elton	William Maltby
Herefordshire	Patricia Churchward	Helen Bowden	Tamsin Clive
Hertfordshire	Annie Brewster JP	Nicholas Buxton	Meenal Sachdev
Isle of Wight	Graham Biss BEM DL	Anthony Wake	Jacqueline Gazzard
Kent	Dr Gillian Fargher	Jonathan Neame DL	Martin Lukehurst
Leicestershire	John Chatfeild-Roberts	Stephen Bryan JP	Meldin Thomas QPM
Lincolnshire	Philip Dymoke	David Chambers DL	Susan Liburd
Norfolk	David Flux	Patrick Lines	Jonathan Pearson
Northamptonshire	Amy Crawford JP	Jeremy Sharman	Miranda Wixton
Northumberland	Lucia Bridgeman	George Farr	Dr Anna Charlton
North Yorkshire	Dr Ruth Smith	Sir Andrew Lawson-Tancred Bt	Nigel Corner
Nottinghamshire	Nick Rubins	Edward Attenborough DL	Merlita Bryan-Hilton
Oxfordshire	James Macnamara JP DL	John May OBE DL	Muhammad Malik
Rutland	Richard Cole TD	Colonel Richard Chesterfield	Susannah Fish OBE QPM
Shropshire	Brian Welti JP	Jane Trowbridge	Katherine Tanner
Somerset	Robert Beckley QPM	Janet Montgomery	Peter Dixon
South Yorkshire	John Baddeley	Joada Allen	Giuseppe Di'lasio
Staffordshire	Julia Mitchell	Timothy Gillow	Pritpal Nagi MBE
Suffolk	Yvonne Gilchrist-Mason OBE	Gulshanbir Kayembe DL	Oliver Paul
Surrey	Shahid Azeem DL	Peter Cluff	Neelam Devesher
Tyne and Wear	Dr Lindsey Whiterod CBE	Joanne Curry MBE	Ammar Mirza CBE
Warwickshire	Raji Gill JP	Karen Lynch MBE	Susan Rasmussen
West Midlands	Douglas Wright MBE DL	Mark Smith	TBC
West Sussex	Philippa Gogarty	Dr Timothy Fooks	Gary Shipton
West Yorkshire	Professor Adeeba Malik CBE DL	Nicola Chance-Thompson MBE DL	Dr Ruby Bhatti OBE
Wiltshire	Dr Susan Chapple	Martin Nye	Dr Alexander Goodwin
Worcestershire	Charles Moyle JP	Ian Smith	Maynard Burton

## Nomination of High Sheriffs of Wales

County	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027
Clwyd	Karen Farrell-Thornley	Julie Gillbanks	David Jones OBE
Dyfed	Helen Jones	Ann Jones DL	Andrew Phillips
Gwent	Her Honour Judge Helen Mifflin DL	Lt Colonel Ralph Griffin	Shereen Williams MBE
Gwynedd	Sarah Foskett JP	Rhys Davies	Linos Owen
Mid Glamorgan	Dr Richard Lewis MBE DL	Sharon Dixon	John Charles TD
Powys	Lady Kathryn Silk JP	Sally Roberts	William Watkins
South Glamorgan	Janey Howell	Janet Davies	Jane John
West Glamorgan	Melanie James JP	Diana Stroia	Emrys Elias

\*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**

(for wearing round 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 Lady High Sheriff's Badge**

(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.

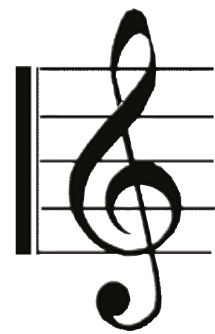
Each pair comes in its own presentation box **£40.50**



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

**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**



**High Sheriff's March**

A CD of the March (playing time approximately 8½ minutes) **£7.00**

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.  
Enquiries and orders to:

**The Secretary, The High Sheriffs' Association**  
**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.

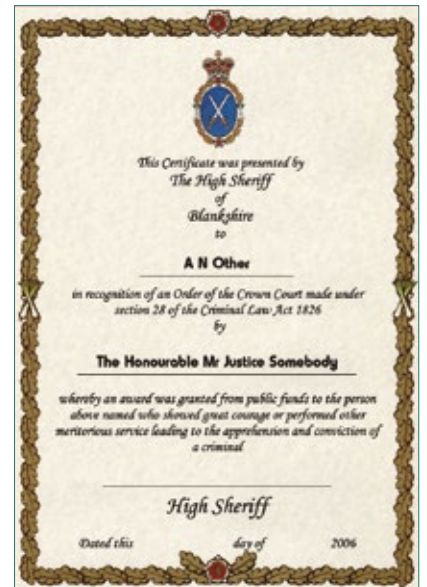
**CCA 2** is a blank certificate. This can be overprinted using the recommended text, again found on the Association's website in the members' section under Resource Library for Information and Advice.

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

**CCA 1: 50 for £25**

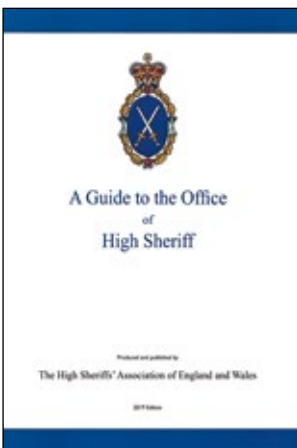
**CCA 2: 50 for £20**

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

Congratulations to Council members Louise Bennett and Michael Gurney, who have both been recently appointed to the role of Vice Lord-Lieutenant in the West Midlands and Norfolk respectively.

## Brian Rees OBE: an initiative to make a difference

Renowned for his achievements as a former hooker for the Wales rugby team, eminent surgeon, and High Sheriff of South Glamorgan (2008), Brian Rees OBE left an indelible mark on both the sporting and medical landscapes. Now, through a collaborative effort with Community Foundation Wales, his family aims to celebrate his life by supporting the aspirations of a young person, who without funding might not be able to follow their academic dreams.

The Brian Rees Fund, a testament to Mr Rees' commitment to education and community service, was crafted in partnership with Community Foundation Wales to ensure maximum impact and a lasting legacy. The fund is not just a memorial but a dynamic force for change, a means to support a student who, like Mr Rees, exhibits exceptional potential and a determination to overcome challenges.

Willows School, in Cardiff, holds a special place in the heart of this initiative, as it

was here that Brian Rees had the privilege of presenting awards in his capacity as High Sheriff. Many of the students at Willows School are from diverse and underprivileged backgrounds and, despite these potential barriers, are determined to succeed. In fact, it was this very resilience and achievement against the odds that deeply impressed Mr Rees. The fund, therefore, has a specific focus: to support a student from Willows School in their journey towards a medically associated degree at the university of their choosing.

The selected student, who has aspirations to study medicine at the University of Oxford, represents the embodiment of Brian Rees' belief in the transformative power of education.

If you're passionate about supporting initiatives that make a difference in Welsh communities and want to learn more about how you could get involved in the incredible work of Community Foundation Wales, we encourage you to reach out to Katy Hales, Director of Philanthropy (Katy@communityfoundationwales.org.uk).



## Staffordshire Shrievalty

A lunch was held in June 2023 for the High Sheriffs of Staffordshire together with spouses, consorts and widows/widowers of former High Sheriffs. Also invited were those in nomination, the Under Sheriff and her clerk, Chair of the Nomination Panel and several judges. The lunch had originally been planned for 2020 but sadly cancelled due to the pandemic. We were grateful to Ashley Brough (2019) and his wife Alison who hosted. Out of a potential 32 past High Sheriffs, 21 attended, including Sir James Hawley (1976) – the current High Sheriff is his daughter-in-law Victoria Hawley. **Pippa Gee (2018)**

# HINTS & TIPS

## Compulsory Diaries!

When I was Under Sheriff, we instituted a system of 'compulsory diaries' which simply meant that High Sheriffs had to complete an online diary. The format was simple and the spreadsheet headings fairly obvious:

Date	Event or Person/Group visited	Contact details	What to wear	Comment (3/4 lines)
xxxx	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx

The advantages were twofold. First, High Sheriffs in nomination would be sent them so that they could see what activities High Sheriffs had been up to and many would ask for more information about those activities. Those in nomination could repeat or discard any activities as they wished when they came into office. High Sheriffs about to take office would be given a nine-month section at Christmas with the rest to follow later. Second was that, a person approached to be a High Sheriff in nomination would very often ask for explanations about what was involved and giving copies of past diaries was a very good way of giving such explanations.

Such formatted diaries are quite different from anything a High Sheriff wished to put out on social media. Also, although in a sense the diaries created a database, some counties had their own separate additional database of connections. I know many counties have their own form of diaries but I have also come across others who do not have such a diary system in place which I do strongly recommend.

**James Williams, Hon Secretary**

## Next issue

The Editor welcomes articles and news stories from High Sheriffs concerning their year in office. The next edition of *The High Sheriff* will be published in June 2024. Closing date for receipt of editorial items will be Friday 19 April 2024. Items for inclusion should be sent to: The Editor, The High Sheriff magazine c/o Hall-McCartney Ltd, PO Box 21 Baldock, Herts SG7 5SH Email: editor@highsheriffs.com To advertise in *The High Sheriff* please contact Grant Hosie Tel: 01462 896688 Email: grant@hall-mccartney.co.uk www.hall-mccartney.co.uk



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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  
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*Geoffrey Golding*