

Annual Report of The Mayor, Councillor Joyce Pritchard 2022-2023

I would like to start by thanking my Mayoress Amanda and Deputy Mayor Councillor Ross Hunter for their help throughout the year. Thank you also to the Officers of the Council for the support they've given me this year. Especially Chris Clifford the Mayor's Beadle, for making sure I got to the right event on the right day at the right time.

I think this has probably been the first time since COVID that the Mayor's year has been a more normal one. I've visited schools, colleges, and universities. There's nothing like a junior school nativity to really make Christmas. Lancaster and District Schools singing festival in Lancaster town hall is spread over 5 nights and a joy to hear. The degree ceremonies at both Lancaster and Cumbria Universities are very dignified ceremonies, steeped in history, seeing all those young people starting out on their chosen careers is such a privilege. I had a tour of Lancaster and Morecambe College and was impressed by the technology and forward thinking they showed, the environment is at the forefront of everything they do.

All the charity events I've been to make me realise just how many brilliant people we have in our district, helping the less fortunate in our area. The Well Community work with recovering addicts, Samaritans, Morecambe Bay Foodbank, all the Mental health charities like the Prop up Project and More Music Morecambe. The Prince's Trust is a brilliant example of help for young people.

I've hosted afternoon teas in our impressive Town Hall in Lancaster. We've also done numerous town hall tours. I'm always surprised how interested young people are in the history of the town hall.

Monopoly launched its Lancaster Monopoly board in January, it will be interesting to see what Lancaster District landmarks will make it onto the board, this will be available in October.

All the work done by volunteers supporting Asylum seekers and refugees in the Lancaster District like City of Sanctuary, is excellent. The Forget Me Not Centre at St John's Hospice opened this year to support Families through Bereavement. Lancashire Make a Difference Awards were held in the Ashton Hall, so many touching stories from ordinary people going above and beyond to help other people.

I attended lots of Carol Services on the run up to Christmas, all raising money for very worthwhile causes.

The High Sheriff Mr Martin Ainscough's shield hanging at Lancaster Castle, then a celebratory meal in Lancaster Town Hall was a very lavish affair.

British cycling held the third men's Lancaster Grand Prix in July, this was made even more special because for the first time it included a women's race.

Other events like Lancaster and Morecambe Pride, Morecambe Bay Trust Health Festival, Rotary Club, RNLI events, Highest Point, lots of tree planting, Totally Local Lancaster, the Black History Event at the Museum, White Ribbon Day, Lancaster Charities, Bollywood, Fairtrade and many more visits to wonderful events.

For the first time since COVID the International Youth Games were held in Almere. This was a great opportunity for young people in our district to go to the Netherlands, and compete against other young people from Almere, Rendsburg, Aalborg and Rathenow. The games were held in sweltering heat, but everyone seemed to enjoy taking part. I very much enjoyed the visit to Almere. The Youth Games will be held in Lancaster this year.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was a wonderful celebration of 70 years on the throne. It was celebrated with lots of events, but the biggest on the 5th May was the 5,000 people who sat down for lunch on the promenade in Morecambe. This was a record-breaking picnic. I met Lord and Lady Shuttleworth for the first of many times over the year. Then in July Prince Charles visited Morecambe, I was honoured to meet him in the Wintergardens. Next on the 7th September the Queen's youngest son The Earl and Countess of Wessex visited Lancaster Castle, again I was honoured to meet them both.

We didn't know that the following day our Queen Elizabeth II would die. I suppose the news shouldn't have been such a surprise given her age, but its suddenness was a huge shock and blow to us all. I laid wreaths at Lancaster and Morecambe, attended a thanksgiving service in Blackburn Cathedral and Lancaster Priory. We opened remembrance books in both Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls.

On Sunday the 11th of September I went to Preston to hear the Proclamation of HM King Charles III, then brought back the Proclamation to read on Lancaster Town Hall steps, followed by Morecambe Town Hall steps. We now have a King. My Mayoress and I have invitations to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace to celebrate King Charles III coronation in May.

We sadly had the funerals of 2 City Councillor's this year. Janice Hanson in May and Merv Evans in August. Both are very much missed.

My year as Mayor has been very eventful, and also great fun. I've enjoyed every minute of being the Right Worshipful, the Mayor of Lancaster. I'm very grateful to have had this opportunity, and to have been able to share it with my family.

I would like to wish the next Mayor all the very best for their year of office.