

## REPORT OF THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF LANCASTER FOR 2015/2016 COUNCILLOR JON BARRY

My intention as mayor was rock the boat a little, but not so much as the waves got in. Whether I've been successful is for others to judge. I've tried to respect the position but also to treat it with some humour and to not get too self-important (nice though that is at times).

I've been ably supported by my partner Gill as mayoress and by Caroline Jackson as deputy mayor. I think I persuaded her by saying that she'd hardly have to do anything but, once she'd signed up, I asked her to do rather more than that. I've tried to do virtually every local event I could. I've generally said NO to other mayors' nosh-ups and tours (or else I sent Caroline). Partly because these take up a lot of time (which I haven't had much of as I work 3 days a week) and partly because I've wanted to prioritise local and community events.

My favourite cultural events have been the musicals and the singing events. The standard in this district really is very high. I've also been rather partial to judging mince pie competitions and bake-offs ("I'm still not sure, let me just try one more piece of that chocolate gateau").

I did come a cropper eating-wise on one Saturday, though. I'd double booked and only realised two days before. The only way round it was to consume a full vegetarian thali at the Sultan at 6 o'clock, regrettably with extra naan bread. And then to go onto a 3 courser at 8 o'clock at my next venue. You try cycling home with that lot inside you.

For a non-religious person, I've spent a very large amount of time in church during the last year. I've also enjoyed several visits to the university, the Boy's Grammar and various schools. Kids really do enjoy taking selfies with mayors. And a top-tip for the next mayor – kids seem to prefer high-fives to proper handshakes. Probably not a good idea if you meet the queen though, as I did at my first 'gig' in May.

I've only broken my pledge on one occasion to not use the mayoral limousine. I thought I might as well try it out once - and Carlisle is a long way to cycle with a cold. I did on one occasion, forget to take my trousers (see below) though none of the good citizens of Abbeystead seemed to mind unduly.



By the way, the Beadle has probably had a slightly impoverished year due to my limousine stance. But, to his credit, he has never let this change his professional attitude to his job. He has, however, kept himself busy by creating an inventory of all the mayoral treasures. I'm hoping that the Council can use these in some more regular and income-generating mayoral tours this summer.

Storm Desmond hit in December. As bad luck would have it, I had three mayoral visits that day. Every time I crossed the Millennium Bridge, the water was higher. By the time my evening event in the Priory took place, my morning venue of St John's Church was flooded. The mayor left a trail of destruction in his wake. Let's hope that the city and the next mayor have better luck weather-wise next year.

I may have been the last mayor to attend the Youth Games. Surprisingly, on my train trip to Aalborg, all the British, Belgium and Danish trains were on time – but my clear round was spoiled by one missed connection in Germany. I got the distinct impression that some of the other mayors were more interested in the nosh-ups than seeing the sport. However, officer Lodge managed to combine both by dancing to "Bring me Sunshine" as I presented the mayor of Aalborg with his Eric statue.

I did two fund-raising events in the year. The first was for St John's Hospice, cycling the 81mile Bay cycle route towing my mayor-mobile. This, with the help of another 30 or so cyclists, raised around £5,000. My second event was a mayor's bash in December at the Town Hall. This was for St John's but also to raise money to take local primary kids to Leighton Moss on wildlife days in the summer. This raised around £1,500.



Every mayor needs a mayor-manager. I was lucky enough to have officer Kay. Apart from dealing with me, officer Kay has not had an easy year in her own life. However, she coped superbly and never let her support for me and the mayor-job falter.

I finish my year as mayor with a better view of humanity than I started with. There are an awful lot of people giving an awful lot of time to keeping our district ticking. Whether it is running events and programmes for kids and young people, organising a club for people with learning difficulties, a food bank, or a rescue centre for homeless chickens. Without them, our district would be a lot poorer.