

## The Mayor of Lancaster's Annual Report

The privilege to serve in this historic role has been a great honour.

This has been a year of major change and surprises. The first surprise was being asked to be Mayor following the 2023 Election.

The Shield Hanging Ceremony for the new High Sheriff at Lancaster Castle was on a warm day particularly so when wearing full regalia.

Our next change was the retirement of Lord Shuttleworth as Lord Lieutenant and his replacement with a new female Lieutenant incumbent Mrs Amanda Parker JP.

I was also honoured to be invited to a ceremony thanking Lord Shuttleworth for his many years of loyal service to the monarchy and Lancashire.

It was also an honour to be involved with the Armed Forces week events in June culminating in the Morecambe event involving the parade of cadets and veterans when I had the honour of being one of those receiving the salutes.



**Freemen's Court**

School visits have been a joy. I have visited several primary schools in the district including Warton, Morecambe Bay, Skerton St Lukes, Marsh to name a few.

I must express my admiration for all those involved with the Prince's Trust. We have attended a number of events and the work to assist young people in their future careers was inspiring.

A special thanks to the fire brigade and police and other blue light services for their involvement.

In January I visited County Hall for the King's Award for Voluntary Service ceremony when out of 8 awards, 4 were from within our district :

Halton Gardening Group

Morecambe Girl's Football Club

Morecambe Winter Gardens Preservation Trust

Neuro Drop-In Centre in Morecambe

A superb effort! Presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire Mrs Amanda Parker JP.

This year our district hosted the International Youth Games with representatives from our twinned towns of Rendsburg and Aalborg and from our associate town of Almere, competing in sporting events at Salt Ayre Leisure Centre and Lancaster University, which established friendships that will endure.

It was also my pleasure to be involved in two traditional Freeman Courts – the annual Court in the Summer and a further one for the two volunteer organisers of the Youth Games. The Mayor and the City's way of "saying thank you, much appreciated."

Other notable visits included Whinny Hall Farm who rehome former race horses – a remarkable organisation run by committed staff whose work with those with a disability is exemplary.

Visits to both Lancaster and Cumbria Universities for Graduations Ceremonies were also inspiring. Lancaster University has nearly 2000 students from China and visits to the Confucius Institute and given it is the year of the Dragon, a celebration of student performances and in the city itself joining the celebration of Chinese New Year were enjoyable.



**With Officers from HMS Lancaster on Remembrance Sunday.**

On a rather sad note, 2024 was the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Morecambe Bay Cockling Tragedy when 23 individuals sadly lost their lives. A moving ceremony at the Lifeboat Station acknowledged this tragic event and was very well attended.

Visits to Veteran based organisations included :

Morecambe Football Club

The York

Bay Veterans

All showing active support for those who have served their country.

I have missed referring to many enjoyable visits made during our busy Mayoral year I must apologise but brevity requires some limitation including some wonderful musical events.

Finally, can I thank both Jenny Kay and Chris Clifford for their vital help. To Martin Bottoms my Deputy for providing essential back up. (He did have the honour of cutting the first Mayoral ribbon of the year.) Finally to Glenys without whose support none of the above would have been possible.

Thank you.

Cllr Roger Dennison Mayor of Lancaster 2023-24