



SHROPSHIRE LIEUTENANCY

SHROPSHIRE TOWN AND COMMUNITY LINKS NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2025 ISSUE 15

Welcome

Summer is fast drawing to an end, and the holiday atmosphere will soon be lost to the fast-approaching Christmas festivities. I gather some supermarkets have Christmas stocking fillers on display already!

I was talking to the Lord-Lieutenant in Cornwall a few weeks ago and he told me their average rainfall is 1200mm, then I spoke to a friend in Cumbria and she said theirs is 1482mm and so I then felt hugely blessed that in Shropshire we are under the rain shadow of the Cambrian Mountains and only get 1000mm.

This is such a positive thing for the summer events that take place around Shropshire.

So much planning, time and hard work goes into arranging them and the weather is one thing that you cannot control but is so important to the events. Summer fayres and festivals bring out a real sense of community spirit. They are also a source of income to Shropshire towns and businesses, charities and organisations who use them as a method of raising much needed funds. I know we are stoic and just carry on with macs and umbrellas pretending we have not noticed but these events are so much more enjoyable, for all involved, in dry weather.

Deputy lieutenants and I have been to such a wide variety of events including, religious, cultural and community events, from the Pride Service at St Andrews church in Shifnal, the new Gurdwara in Priorslee to the Afro Caribbean celebrations in Telford; we have been delighted to be a part of so many celebrations, many of which are covered in this newsletter, which I hope you enjoy.



LIEUTENANCY GARDEN PARTY

During covid, I wanted to express my sincere appreciation to people, across Shropshire, who volunteered many hours to support their local community throughout the pandemic. We settled on a garden party as a way of showing our appreciation. Consequently, we held our first Buckingham Palace-style Garden party in 2022 and this year, Peter and Sarah Holt were kind enough to offer their beautiful home to repeat the event. Over five hundred guests attended, mostly nominated by their Town or Parish Council for their contribution to their community.

Inevitably such events take many months to plan, from raising thousands of pounds from our generous sponsors, representing both local and national businesses, to ensuring sufficient cakes! I am indebted to the team of Deputy Lieutenants, led by Claire Crackett MBE DL, who once again delivered a wonderful event, where we were able to recognise some of the outstanding volunteers, from all walks of life and from right across the county, who had one thing in common their tireless support of Shropshire residents and organisations within their communities. The event, which took place during National Volunteers Week included a wonderful performance by Jackfield Brass Band.

A key part of my role as Lord-Lieutenant is to recognise all those volunteers who do so much to support others throughout Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. It is so important to recognise the work done by individuals and their organisations; come rain or shine they do not seek praise or attention quietly going about their work, so I was absolutely thrilled to have this opportunity to say thank you and recognise everything they do to make this such a wonderful caring county.



ROYAL GARDEN PARTIES

Each year His Majesty The King holds two garden parties at Buckingham Palace where guests are invited in recognition of their contribution in their communities. This year a third party was arranged with a special theme of “Education” giving the opportunity for the King to formally recognise the challenges faced by and commitment of teachers throughout the country. Guests at all three parties this year enjoyed beautiful sunny weather.



KING'S AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE

You may have seen the official announcement back in May, when the KAE awards were announced, that two Shropshire businesses had been recognised by His Majesty The King. This is the most prestigious award given to the UK's top businesses. Our two 2025 winning companies Fabweld Steel Products and Grainger & Worrall were guests of honour at a special event held at Stockton House, by kind permission of Lord Hamilton of Dalzell DL, where other Shropshire businesses were invited to hear about the application process and the benefits of being awarded.

Earlier this month I was pleased to present Fabweld with their award at their Telford Premises and to see the company at work.



Photos: Gavin Dickinson

THE KING'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE

As you may recall this is the highest award given to voluntary organisations, the equivalent of the MBE for the voluntary sector. The awards are hugely coveted as they represent recognition, by His Majesty The King, of the extraordinary work recipient organisations are doing in their local communities. The actual awards are announced each year on the King's birthday in November and presenting the awards is one of the most important and joyful events in my calendar. Although most of the awards are presented between December and April a small number of organisations delay the actual presentation until a key moment in their year.

SHREWSBURY & OSWESTRY CRUCIAL CREW

Established in 1994, this wonderful group run an annual event over a two-week period at The Flaxmill in Shrewsbury. This is attended by up to 1560 children from 40 to 60 primary schools in the Shrewsbury and Oswestry area of Shropshire. The children receive social awareness and safety training as a means of teaching them essential life skills. Since they started over 36,700 children have attended.

Many of their volunteers attended the presentation of their crystal and certificate.



SHROPSHIRE BEEKEEPERS

On a beautiful, hot sunny day in June, I visited the Shropshire Beekeepers Association to present them with their crystal King's Award for Voluntary Service and to plant a tree to commemorate the occasion. These volunteers work to promote the craft of beekeeping, supporting beekeepers and training new beekeepers to care for and enjoy our honeybees. We are blessed having such organisations based right here in Shropshire.



CRUCKTON PLOUGHING AND HEDGING SOCIETY

Established in 1927 this organisation encourages and promotes demonstrations, competitions and social events relating to ploughing, hedging and farm management. Although their award was announced last November, the group, understandably, requested their award be presented at their annual ploughing match, so all their volunteers could be present. It was obvious that this event is a big day in the Shropshire Farming Community, and despite some challenging weather conditions, a wonderful time was had by all.



THE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Twice a year I eagerly look forward to the publication of the national honours list to see which of our many deserving residents have been recognised for their service to their organisation or community. Many congratulations to the following residents, announced in the June Birthday Honours List.

Officers of the Order of the British Empire (OBE's)

Mr. Richard Howells, Telford – Founder, Bronze Software Labs - For services to Business and Technology.

Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE's)

Mr. Simon Lusty, Ludlow – Publications Manager, Driving Standards Agency - For services to Road Safety.

Mrs. Christine Still, Newport – For services to Gymnastics.

Medallists of the Order of the British Empire (BEM's)

Mr. Donald Bannister, Bridgnorth – Chair of the Volunteer Committee, Severn Valley Country Park. For services to the Environment in Shropshire

Mr. James Colin Diggory, Nesscliffe – For services to the community in Nesscliffe, in particular litter collection.

Mr. John Robert McGlasson, Newport – Training Support Officer, No 1 Radio School, RAF Cosford. For services to Defence and charitable fund raising.

Many congratulations to you all.



PRESENTATION OF BEM

This week British Empire medallists, their families and civic guests enjoyed a wonderful afternoon tea at Lilleshall Hall, kindly organised by Telford & Wrekin Council, where I presented their medals and heard about the amazing work they do within their communities and in one case abroad, I am in awe of the outstanding work undertaken by Shropshire citizens.



ROYAL VISITS TO THE COUNTY

On a glorious July day, we were honoured to welcome Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal back to Shropshire. She undertook two visits, firstly, in her capacity as Patron of The Field Studies Council, she visited their headquarters at Montford Bridge, touring the extensive site, where she received briefings on what the centre offers in terms of courses and experiences for young people, including opportunities for pupils at risk of exclusion. She saw new plantings, new habitats, biodiversity and carbon initiatives.

The Princess then travelled to Stoke Heath Prison, where in her capacity as Patron of the Butler Trust, she toured parts of the prison dedicated to training and supporting inmates into employment; this included the Kitchen Garden, the woodwork and engineering workshops and the “High Street” which she officially opened.





FREEDOM OF THE TOWN OF SHIFNAL

Occasionally I, or a member of the Lieutenancy Team, will be invited to help with a very different form of recognition, and in June, Jenny Wynn OBE DL, Vice Lord-Lieutenant was delighted to present the first ever Freedom of the Town to a true Shifnal Legend Gordon Tonkinson.

It was a truly momentous day for Gordon as his family, friends, former and current councillors, and town council staff met to witness this honour bestowed on the former Councillor. He was presented with an official scroll and the key to the town. A very emotional Gordon thanked family, friends and colleagues for their support and encouragement during his decades of service to the town.



TELFORD GURDWARA

I was so pleased to be invited to attend a service at the new Siri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Gurdwara in Priorslee, Telford, It was an incredibly busy day at the Gurdwara, with filled classrooms, gym, a wonderful community food hall and so much more, all supported by their amazing volunteers. I was accompanied by Rabinder Singh Dharmi BEM and participated in the Sikh custom of giving food to everyone; I enjoyed taking part in Karah Parshad, the sacred offering, and enjoyed meeting so many of the people who attend the gurdwara regularly.



SHROPSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE AWARDS

Recently, Vice Lord-Lieutenant Jenny Wynn OBE DL was honoured to attend and present awards for Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. The annual event was to recognise Long Service and Good Conduct of service members and to present them with medals. In all there were sixteen 20-year medals presented to both operational and support staff; three 30-year clasps; and one 40-year clasp. Jenny said "I was honoured to attend and have the privilege of meeting so many long serving fire officers who had given up to four decades of their working life to protecting our communities. It was a wonderful occasion, involving partners and families, and an honour to present so many Long Service and Good Conduct medals."

NEURODIVERSITY AWARENESS EVENT

In June the Shropshire Lieutenancy held a neurodiversity training day, run by award winning Dyslexia specialist, Elizabeth Wilkinson MBE, attended by both Shropshire and West Midlands Lieutenancies we gained real insight, not only to the meaning of the conditions, but also how they affect the everyday life of people affected by them and the struggles they face.



ARMED FORCES DAY

Deputy Lieutenant Nichola Peers DL and Helen Morgan MP attended the Armed Forces Day celebration with representatives from the Armed Forces. The service was organised by Wem Town Council and the Mayor of Wem, Cllr David Parry. It was taken by Rev. John Jukes on the Church Green, St Peter, and St Paul Parish Church, Wem.

Shifnal Town Council also joined with St Andrew's church to celebrate Armed Forces Day at an outdoor service attended by Shifnal primary school to mark this special day in our history.



VICTORY IN JAPAN (VJ) DAY

Communities across Shropshire came together to mark the 80th anniversary of Victory over Japan Day and pay tribute to the thousands of service personnel who served in the Far East. Commemorations took place in Shrewsbury, Telford, Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Madeley, Ludlow and Ellesmere, with a focus on remembering a chapter of history often referred to as the "forgotten war."

SHROPSHIRE FOSTER CARERS CELEBRATION

I am very aware of the fantastic work undertaken by Foster Carers throughout the county, so I was pleased to be able to attend this annual Foster Carer Celebration.

I loved meeting the carers and hearing their stories; they are some of the most selfless and kindest people I have ever met. Shropshire is most fortunate to have such individuals so totally committed to offering loving care and stability to children and young people in need.



Photo - Courtesy of Shropshire Council

THE MONARCH'S MINI KINGDOM JACKFIELD

As a result of the King's Coronation, a celebration fund was launched to honour His Majesty King Charles's lifelong passion for the environment. At the Maws centre at Jackfield, this inspired the vision to transform an overgrown, underused corner of the courtyard into something truly lasting and meaningful. Previously a featureless space filled with non-beneficial plants and shrubs, the area has been reimagined as a wildlife-friendly garden—a peaceful sanctuary designed to encourage biodiversity and support local ecosystems. Given the role undertaken by Garrison Sergeant Major Andrew John (Vern) Stokes OBE MVO DL in the King's Coronation, he was delighted to attend the official opening and said "On Coronation day, The King urged us to do two things:

Volunteer and build kinder, closer communities and to create a lasting legacy to help and enrich others' lives. Look around us and experience the garden. This Monarch's Mini Kingdom does both. "Congratulations to all of those that have been involved in making this garden happen".



Photo credit – Tim Royall & Rod Willis

DIOCESE OF HEREFORDSHIRE VISIT SOUTH SHROPSHIRE CHURCHES

It was my great pleasure to welcome the Dean of Hereford, the Very Rev'd Sarah Brown to the county. Together we visited several churches in the Shropshire region of the Diocese of Hereford to witness firsthand the remarkable work being carried out by local congregations and clergy. We were joined by the Archdeacon of Ludlow, the Venerable Dr Fiona Gibson, who holds responsibility for churches and clergy in South Shropshire and Deputy Lieutenant Mrs Katherine Garnier who is a Trustee of the Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust.



EMPATHY

I was delighted to be asked to open the new permanent base for Empathy for Special Children, a registered charity working across Shropshire to improve the lives and reduce social isolation of those young people growing up and living with neurodiversity and hidden disabilities. <https://www.facebook.com/EmpathyForSpecialChildren>

Together with Deputy Lieutenants Nicky Kershaw and Fiona Rogers-Coltman plus the many donors and supporters and an army of volunteers for the charity who had rolled up their sleeves and set about transforming the old Barclays Bank into a permanent base for the charity, the ribbon was cut and the transformed building was declared open. It is wonderful to see the charity have a permanent base in the county providing a safe place for children across the county.



WHITCHURCH CANAL FESTIVAL

Deputy Lieutenant Nichola Peers was pleased to join Mayor Rose Hall at the Whitchurch Canal Festival, where they were taken on a tour of the boats and stalls by the chair of the Whitchurch Waterways Trust Mark Lacey; they had the difficult task of judging the best presented boat and stall, Nichola described it as a fascinating and fun afternoon with a great turn out.



NEW DEPUTY LIEUTENANT APPOINTMENT

I recently appointed Jo Baugh to my team of Deputy Lieutenants and used the garden party as an opportunity to present her, with her commission.

Jo quickly got to work, opening the annual garden party and afternoon tea at the Melville Club, in Albrighton. The club has been running for more than fifty years, offering lunches, companionship and support to the elderly from the village and surrounding area.



THE LYNEAL TRUST

I spent a very enjoyable sunny afternoon as guest of the Lyneal Trust, at an event celebrating 40 years of helping people with disabilities or mobility issues to enjoy time on the Llangollen canal. It was interesting to see the facilities there and to enjoy the spectacular Shropshire scenery; the afternoon was rounded off by a wonderful afternoon tea provided by the WI.

Photo Credit – Shropshire Magazine/National





AFRO CULTURE HERITAGE DAY

Deputy Lieutenant Colonel Sam Brettell DL enjoyed a warm welcome to the Afro Culture Heritage Day organised by the Telford African and Afro Caribbean Resource Centre.



CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES

I am sure that many of you will be aware that most months of the year both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin councils organise Citizenship Ceremonies, which for most people represents the end of a long journey, requiring a great deal of studying and indeed cost. It is a momentous occasion and the Lieutenancy enjoy welcoming our new citizens, enriching the culture of our area.



WESTON PARK GREEN WORLD OF BROWN EXHIBITION

I was thrilled to be asked to open a new exhibition in the Rose Paterson Art Gallery at Weston Park called the Green World of Brown.

The exhibition, which focuses on the genius of the eighteenth century landscape gardener Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, has been organised with support of the Landscape Institute, by a team comprising curator: Allan Pollok-Morris MSc, FRSA, photographer and publisher who has been supported by advisors: Steffie Shields MBE (Brown historian, photographer and writer), Hal Moggridge OBE (consultant to Colvin & Moggridge), Susie Staikos (writer, photographer and event organiser) and Lady Henrietta Spencer Churchill (interior designer and author).



Credit for photo– Weston Park Foundation

ALBRIGHTON TRUST

Earlier this year I presented the Albrighton Trust with their King's Award for Voluntary Service, we were then invited back in June to present the awards to all their attendees, who gain so much from attending their wonderful facilities.



SHROPSHIRE ARMY CADET FORCE ANNUAL CAMP – VISITORS DAY

What an exciting day I had at the Visitors Day at the Shropshire Army Cadet Force annual camp, which this year was based in Altcar. The day was an opportunity to meet with cadets, including one of my current Lord-Lieutenant cadets Willow-Chattington Lowe, along with adult volunteers, it was a great opportunity to hear about the activities that had been taking place at camp, hear what being part of the cadets means to the youngsters and to present their awards.



ANNUAL SCOUT TAKEOVER DAY AT WOMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire, Mrs Jenny Wynn OBE DL, thoroughly enjoyed meeting with Head Teacher Eileen Solomon, staff and her volunteers who each year host the Scouts, Cubs, Beavers and their leaders/helpers from 2nd Wombridge Scout Group at Wombridge Primary School.

The Scouts had arranged a whole school fun day for nearly three hundred children!

Activities included axe throwing, making paracord bracelets, archery, navigation skills, disability challenges, bush tucker trials - (baked beans with chocolate, gherkins with custard and pickled onions in rice pudding, dry protein insects, crickets, and locusts) toasting marshmallows, junk modelling using recycled materials. The day concluded with a whole school campfire and sing along, where three teachers were chosen to be slimed by the pupils!



OAKENGATES CARNIVAL

The last few months have seen summer carnivals/festivals galore and what great weather we have had for them. Deputy Lieutenant Samantha Brettell was pleased to represent the Lieutenancy at Oakengates Carnival.



Beautiful weather brought the crowds to the streets to celebrate all that is great about this town and the wider community.

Photo credits: Oakengates Town Council and Shropshire Festivals @BrightG

CLUN GARDENS OPEN WEEKEND

Deputy Lieutenant Katherine Garnier was happy to join Deputy Mayor Monika Jones and her family at this year's Clun Gardens Open Weekend. A highlight of the town's summer calendar, the event was as joyful as ever and drew crowds from near and far. The church had been so beautifully decorated I thought you might enjoy some of the photos.



Photos of the Flowers in St George's Church courtesy of Helen Brown

ST MILBURGA AWARD IN MUCH WENLOCK

Claire Brentnall DL, who is the Lieutenancy link for Much Wenlock was very pleased to attend the presentation of the long service, St Milburga Award, to Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Malcolm Goddard, who was retiring after 19 years serving the Much Wenlock and Broseley areas.



SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY – RE-OPENING

Deputy Lieutenant Robert Bland, who has a long association with the Severn Valley Railway, was pleased to attend the re-opening of the line, following months of closure due to a landslide at Mor Brook near Bridgnorth earlier this year. The 16.5-mile heritage line between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth is now fully operational once again and what better way to mark the occasion than with the most famous steam locomotive as its VIP guest, The A3 Pacific No 60103 'Flying Scotsman'.



THE JOY PAVILLION

Back in August Jenny Wynn, OBE DL joined our High Sheriff Jane Trowbridge JP in a trip up the Wrekin, well at least halfway. They were asked to open the Yellow Ribbon Community Chaplaincy's "Joy Pavilion" at Halfway House on the Wrekin. For the past decade, the Yellow Ribbon Community Chaplaincy has continuously evolved, now providing homes, mentoring, guidance, practical help, life skills training, and wider courses, but most importantly it has provided the opportunity for individuals to flourish with the support of trustees' staff and volunteers. We recognise the work and support provided has been life changing for so many individuals and families, and this latest development will continue that support to families and young people, as they progress to provide alternatives for young people to flourish and make a positive contribution to their communities.



The Joy Pavilion is a community funded cafe, event venue and community pavilion hub situated halfway up the Wrekin and has for centuries provided an opportunity for individuals, families, groups, and many charities to see nature at its best. The opening of this facility will enable many more people to come and enjoy its natural beauty, reconnecting with nature and improve wellbeing.

RECOGNITION FROM THE KING FOR SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

I wonder how many people know that His Majesty The King, sends cards to celebrate special birthdays and Diamond and subsequent special wedding anniversaries? If you would like to organise a card for a member of your family, please take a look at our website. We may also, with sufficient notice, arrange for a Deputy Lieutenant to present the card.

www.lordlieutenantofshropshire.org.uk/helping-you/request-a-message-from-hm-the-king/

Colin and Janet Allworth receiving their card from the King and Queen, to celebrate their Diamond wedding anniversary.



So, how can you help?

If you or your organisation has something special to celebrate over the next year please do get in touch, I would be delighted to hear from you and if we can help by supporting any of your initiatives we would love to do so. We have Deputy Lieutenants right across the county who can attend if I cannot personally attend. We would also like photos of your events, which may then be shared in my reports to the palace.

We are looking to link with as many schools, churches, different faiths, voluntary organisations and businesses throughout the county as possible, so that we can see all the fantastic work that is taking place and, where appropriate, share your news through our own platform.

To find out more about the Shropshire Lieutenancy visit our website: www.lordlieutenantofshropshire.org.uk

Follow us on social media:



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