Fishermead Celebration Event

You may be wondering what is a High Sheriff? Our late Queen Elizabeth II appointed all current High Sheriffs earlier this year. The High Sheriff is one of two Royal appointments to the county and has a focus on Justice, Law and Order – that is keeping the King’s Peace. It is an independent non-political role held for a single year.

I sometimes wear a Uniform called Court Dress which resonates with the fashion worn at a royal court in the mid-eighteenth century. For men, this featured a black or blue velvet tailcoat with cut steel buttons; shoes with cut steel buckles; breeches, lace jabot, a sword and a hat. Ladies’ fashion was then a long evening dress, with small white feathers worn in the hair and a white veil. In modern times from the 1940s when Lady High Sheriffs were mostly appointed, guidelines for their dress evolved from variants relating to gentlemen’s court dress. Women have a bit more flexibility.

There are 55 High Sheriffs serving the Counties of England and Wales. We are deployed to support the Organs of the Constitution -the Royal family, the Judiciary, to give active support to the Police and any other law enforcement agency, the Emergency services, to Councils, to Church and Faith Groups. We’re there to support probation and prison services and to any other agency involved with crime prevention, particularly among young people.

High Sheriffs play an increasingly active role in promoting a wide range of voluntary work within their communities together with encouraging and participating in projects designed to reduce crime.

Stronger communities are safer, happier ones – better for everyone all round. Civic is all about togetherness, your 50 Anniversary is a great opportunity to work together on a shared project, to make a difference. When I visited recently, I felt a real sense of Community. I know you have been gathering support for a Royal Visit to celebrate Fishermead’s 50th and Tom asked me to tell you more about how you would go about such an invitation.

Right at the beginning I said that the High Sheriff is one of two Royal appointments to the County. The other is His Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant and the Lord Lieutenant is the King’s representative in the County. The Lord Lieutenant is supported by an office, this is called the Lieutenancy Office which is run out of Buckinghamshire Council. Our Lord Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire is The Countess Howe and the Assistant Clerk to the Lieutenancy is a lady called Lou Marron. Because the Lord Lieutenant has a lot to do, she is also supported by a number of Deputy Lieutenants. It is the Lieutenancy Office that liaises with the Royal Households about Royal visits. So, I’m going to give a few pointers to think about and then I would advise contact with the Lieutenancy office and Lou Marron very early on in your planning.

The key to a successful invitation is when it considers the impact a visit will make to the community, and also when you consider the interests of the Royal family member. ‘Why a Royal Visit’ ? You need to think about what you want to showcase in your visit.

The Royal Households work to planning periods, which are not always aligned, but generally they work in 6 monthly cycles so getting a bid in between now and the end of March might mean an invitation would be considered for the latter part of the year. But very much dependent on the household approached.

It is very useful to involve the Lieutenancy when putting a bid together, not only from a contact perspective but in the case where there are households who like to make the best use of time when visiting an area and will often accept 2 or 3 invitations all to occur on one day and the office can suggest what that day might look like.

If there is no clear match for an invitation to a Household, the Lieutenancy can look at all Households for best fit. Also, Households tend to have a theme for the diary period or year and particular areas that they want to focus on.

A few thoughts

The Flag poles that Tom pointed out to me on the visit – brining the Community together in a Community Art Project.

Amersham won Britain in Bloom – a few key people to drive it – the beautiful Park where it could be so nice to sit – its such a focal point.

Trees are beautiful – wild flowers?

Ritchings Park Centenary Exhibition

Inviting His Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire, the Countess Howe for a Centenary visit.