



Herefordshire

A Service of Thanksgiving

**held in Hereford Cathedral
at the turn of the shrieval year including**

The Declaration of

Mrs Joanna Hilditch

on her Appointment as High Sheriff

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Sheriffs Act 1887

Saturday 20th March 2021 at 5.30 pm

All rise as a fanfare announces the arrival of the High Sheriff's party, entering the nave in this order

His Honour Daniel Pearce-Higgins QC
(Honorary Recorder for the City of Hereford)

Mrs Libhin Bromley JP

Mrs Patricia Claire Hodson Thomas (High Sheriff 2020/21)

The Reverend Andrew Mottram (Chaplain to Mrs Thomas)

Mrs Joanna Hilditch DL (High Sheriff 2021/22)

The Reverend Ben Griffith (Chaplain to Mrs Hilditch)

Jeremy Wilding Esq (Under Sheriff of Herefordshire)

The Reverend Canon Andrew Piper (Acting Dean)

The Right Reverend Richard Jackson (Bishop of Hereford)

When the party has arrived at the tower crossing, all are seated

The Welcome & Opening Prayer

The Acting Dean

The High Sheriff's Review

Mrs Thomas rises and gives an account of her year in office.

The Declaration of Office

Mrs Thomas addresses Mrs Hilditch as follows:

“Joanna Hilditch, you have received a Warrant under the hand of the Clerk of Her Majesty's Privy Council bearing the date the tenth day of March Two Thousand and Twenty-One reciting that at the Court at Buckingham Palace held on that day, Her Majesty the Queen was pleased, by and with the advice of her Privy Council, to nominate you for, and appoint you to be, High Sheriff of the County of Herefordshire during Her Majesty's Pleasure; and requiring you to take Custody and Charge of that County, and duly to perform the duties of High Sheriff thereof during Her Majesty's Pleasure, whereof you are duly to answer according to Law; and it is now timely for you to make before Her Majesty's Judge the Declaration required by statute.”

The outgoing High Sheriff sits.

Mrs Hilditch then rises and reads the Declaration as follows:

“I, Joanna Hilditch of The Whittern, Lyonshall, Kington Herefordshire do solemnly declare that I will well and truly serve the Queen’s Majesty in the Office of High Sheriff of the County of Herefordshire and promote Her Majesty’s profit in all things that belong to my Office, as far as I legally can or may;

I will preserve The Queen’s rights and all that belongs to the Crown and I will process all The Queen’s writs according to the best of my skill and knowledge.

I will do right as well to poor as to rich in all things pertaining to my office;

I will do no wrong to any person for any gift, reward, promise, nor for favour and I will treat all people equally, respecting the differences and diversity of our communities;

I will support and encourage all who give of their time, skills and commitment for the benefit of others;

I will lay aside all private prejudices and political interests;

I will promote the peace, well-being and prosperity of this county and all its people.

I will disturb no person’s right, and will truly and faithfully support the judiciary and all who maintain The Queen’s Peace, who administer justice, and who protect and support their fellow citizens;

I will uphold the ancient office of High Sheriff with selflessness, integrity and leadership.

I will truly and diligently uphold the good laws and statutes of this realm, and in all things well and truly behave myself in my Office for the honour of The Queen and the good of her subjects, and discharge my obligations according to the best of my skill and power.

And I solemnly declare that the contents of this my Declaration are true”.

Mrs Hilditch sits.

Having read her Declaration, Mrs Hilditch signs the same and hands it to His Honour Daniel Pearce-Higgins QC and to Mrs Libhin Bromley JP who subscribe their names to the Declaration as witnesses and hand the Declaration to the Under Sheriff for Herefordshire.

Mrs Thomas rises and says:

“High Sheriff, may I congratulate you upon your assumption of this ancient and honourable office in the service of Her Majesty The Queen.”

The Appointments

Mrs Thomas addresses the High Sheriff for Herefordshire:

“High Sheriff, it is now your duty to appoint a Chaplain and Under Sheriff for the Bailiwick of Hereford.”

Mrs Thomas then takes her seat.

The High Sheriff rises and says:

Reverend Benedict Griffith, I understand that you will accept office as my Chaplain during my term of office and I therefore invite you to accept the appointment.”

The High Sheriff remaining standing, the Reverend Benedict Griffith (hereinafter referred to as “the High Sheriff’s Chaplain”) rises and replies:

“High Sheriff, I am privileged and pleased to accept your invitation to be the High Sheriff’s Chaplain for Herefordshire during your term as High Sheriff of that Bailiwick and will carry out my duties to the best of my ability.”

The High Sheriff’s Chaplain for Herefordshire then sits.

The High Sheriff then says:

“Mr Wilding, I understand that you are willing to accept office as my Under Sheriff for the Bailiwick of Hereford, and I therefore invite you to accept that appointment.”

Mr Wilding then rises and says:

“High Sheriff, I am privileged and pleased to accept your invitation to the office of Under Sheriff for the Bailiwick of Hereford during your Shrieval year.”

The High Sheriff of Herefordshire sits.

The Under Sheriff of Herefordshire sits.

His Honour Daniel Pearce-Higgins QC addresses appropriate remarks to the High Sheriff, former High Sheriff, Chaplains, Under Sheriff and the assembled company

All rise

The Prayers

led by the Chaplains

All remain standing

The Blessing

Bishop: Our help is in the name of the Lord:

All: who has made heaven and earth.

Bishop: Blessed be the name of the Lord:

All: now and for ever. Amen.

The Bishop continues

Go forth into the world in peace:

be of good courage;

hold fast that which is good;

render to no one evil for evil;

strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;

help the afflicted; honour all people;

love and serve the Lord,

rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit:

and the blessing of God almighty,

the ✠ Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The service concludes with a fanfare on the cathedral organ.

Mrs Joanna Hilditch DL

Born in Lyonshall, one of four children of Richard and Julia Green, I spent my primary school years in Eardisland and Kington and secondary at boarding school. I never expected to come back to the family home as my younger brother Johnny was destined to succeed my father on the farm. Sadly our fates were changed as he died in a car accident in South Africa in 1993, so just married, we returned to Lyonshall where I took over the farming business.

Prior to returning to the farm, I worked in London for 10 years as a dressmaker, entrepreneur and then in PR and Marketing. I was lucky enough to travel the world working on boats in the Caribbean, live and work in Australia and see far flung places from Machu Picchu to the Buddhist temple at Borubudor and the outskirts of the Great Barrier Reef. Oh to travel again!

Ian (aka Gio) has played the non-traditional role of farmer's husband, meanwhile setting up ETL Systems who design and manufacture RF (Radio Frequency) distribution equipment. We have three children (Willa, Hannah and Johnny) who are now in their early 20s and have fled the nest to bigger cities following university.

Since returning to Herefordshire I have thrown myself into growing and diversifying our farming business as well as turning historic buildings into upmarket holiday lets, and making a delicious blackcurrant liqueur now the national go-to British Cassis! I am also passionate about Herefordshire as a tourist destination and am currently chairing the Visit Herefordshire post-covid tourism initiative as well as the Herefordshire Agricultural Club.

Other interests in Herefordshire have been around business, tourism, education and agriculture and my Shrieval year will give me a platform to further promote the county and listen to its people. Following the year of the virus I think there will be mental health shrapnel where I hope to contribute something to our overall recovery, specifically supporting mental health in agriculture and young people.

As a fourth generation Green family High Sheriff of Herefordshire (1889 – Richard; 1925 – Lionel; 1981 – Richard), I am particularly honoured by the appointment and to spend a year in the service of Her Majesty The Queen. I feel for Patricia, who despite a very difficult year, has risen to the challenge, been in the vanguard of pandemic resourcefulness and leaves a great legacy to the youth of the county. I very much hope that as spring turns to summer we will reclaim our lives, my year will be more 'normal' and I can build on some of these initiatives.

Mrs Patricia Thomas

I was born in Cambridge, second daughter of Michael and Shirley Behagg and was brought up on a farm close to the edge of the Fens, at Fenstanton in Huntingdonshire. I went to school in Cambridge and Peterborough, where I loved English, all sports and hated maths. With a passion for farming (especially pigs) and being outdoors, two years at agricultural college followed school. My main ambition at that time was never to work in an office.

My first employment was at Pencombe in 1980 as head pig 'man' for Neston Capper Esq at Lower Hope. I met my husband Richie shortly after arriving in Herefordshire and we married in 1982. Meg and George were born in 1984 and 1986 respectively and we are now proud grandparents to two gorgeous granddaughters. Richie and I share many interests apart from farming, such as horseracing, cars and France. I am a passionate gardener, enjoy staying fit and have discovered the joy of walking during lockdown.

While Richie and I both anticipated nothing other than a life of farming, in 1989 we took on a small diversification project on Richard's family farm. From tiny beginnings grew the business which is now Thomas Panels and Profiles, based at Leominster. I have until this time last year, had daily involvement with all aspects of the business including finance, operations, HR and recruitment. My theme for my Shrieval year has been 'Preparing Young People for Work' as I see this preparedness is lacking when we are recruiting.

It was a complete shock when Bill Jackson Esq nominated me to be High Sheriff, so the three years of preparation were much needed! It has been a complete honour to be appointed High Sheriff for Herefordshire and to spend a year in the service of Her Majesty The Queen and to our beautiful county. I have sought to use my skills and experience even though the circumstances during the Coronavirus pandemic have, at times, been limiting and challenging.

The Reverend Ben Griffith - Chaplain to Mrs Joanna Hilditch

I am a 60's child, having been born in 1964 into an Anglo-Welsh family. My father was North Walian while my mother is one of that very select band who may or may not be Cockneys depending on wind direction at their birth. My father used to describe my 6 siblings and myself as "thoroughbred-mongrels" although he never clarified which he thought was which!!

As well as being a mixture in terms of nationality we're also something of a smorgasbord in religious terms to my grandparents had been Anglican, Calvinistic Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian and we were brought up as Roman Catholics. I like to claim, therefore, that I'm Ecumenism on legs.

Having felt a call to ordination at a very young age, having left University I ran away into the comparatively safe harbour of teaching which I did for 18 years mostly in North London and latterly in a school where the gender and ethnic minority was me!

I was ordained in 2006 in St. Albans and have served parishes in Bedfordshire and Powys before coming to the Kington Parishes in 2016. This feels very much like a home coming as although these parishes are many miles away from anywhere my family has settled, three of these parishes are in England while two are in Wales, surely the ideal location for a thoroughbred mongrel like me!

Having served as Chaplain to the High Sheriff of Powys three years ago, I became very aware of how this historic and largely ceremonial role can be a real fulcrum for highlighting and celebrating otherwise neglected or overlooked sectors of our community and environment. It's an enormous privilege to be Jo's chaplain during her Shrieval year and I look forward eagerly to being able to support her during it.

The Reverend Andrew Mottram - Chaplain to Mrs Patricia Thomas

I was ordained back in 1978 and spent my earlier ministry in the South East of England. As a family, we moved to Hereford in 1991 when I was appointed Priest in Charge of All Saints in the city centre. Having helped the PCC raise and spend over one million pounds repairing the church building, we raised and spent a similar sum of money to re-order the interior and open Cafe @ All Saints in 1997 as a Church run enterprise in a building that was open to all and working with people whose lifestyles may be considered alternative and beyond the mainstream. Subsequently, the cafe was franchised to our cafe consultant and it is great to see both congregation and cafe still continuing to flourish.

In 2006 I left the stipendiary ministry to work full time as a consultant helping Church communities across England and Wales to find better ways for their buildings to serve people, for the buildings to be better looked after and to generate some revenue to help sustain them into the future. It was at this time that we moved from a vicarage to our own house in Pencombe.

More recently, I worked in the Diocese of Worcester doing the same kind of consultancy work which was part-funded by a grant from Historic England. I retired from this post in 2018.

Both the role of High Sheriff and the Sheriff's Chaplain may, these days, be mostly ceremonial. However, both serve as reminders that the spiritual dimension of life and the rule of law, as derived from the Gospels with the emphasis on justice and mercy, are extremely important for the health of the nation. While I might not be the most theologically orthodox of priests or have a great deal of time for some aspects of the Church of England, it was both a surprise and a delight to be asked by Tricia Thomas to serve as her chaplain during her term as High Sheriff.

Being High Sheriff of Herefordshire in the 2020 pandemic –

Patricia Thomas

Early in the three years of nomination, I was given some great advice by Bill Jackson: go to every event you can and meet as many people as possible.

How glad I was to have followed this advice, when on 20th March 2020, exactly a year ago today, I was declared High Sheriff of Herefordshire in the office of the Under Sheriff as the Covid-19 pandemic took hold and the country went into lockdown.

As for very many other people, those first weeks were a struggle. I was totally bewildered as those years of planning for the year were cast aside. I'm in business and have always been able to find someone to provide a solution if I could not find my own – but not this time.

I am indebted to my regional West Midlands group of High Sheriffs, and other High Sheriffs I had met during nomination. All in the same boat, we were the only people who really understood the position of a newly declared High Sheriff in lockdown. How were we going to fulfil our duties? On Zoom and Teams we shared ideas which inspired and supported each other, and I treasure the friendships I have made.

I recalled a speaker at The High Sheriff Association's summer conference at Burghley a few years back who said, "Remember why you have been nominated and put your experience and expertise into your role". It was a good thought to remember on days when one doubted oneself.

So, what to do? I had been provided with 'The List' by James Hervey-Bathurst so I got stuck in, sending hundreds of emails which lead to phone calls and, very soon Zoom came into its own. This was how I met people. Thank goodness for technology! I learned about our county, how it works and who is who, about the structure of the judiciary and the police, how charities are run, how the charity sector and the local council integrates. And there were benefits. You can attend many more virtual meetings in a week than in person, and no wasted travelling time. It's not the same but I found I got to meet more people on a more personal level, and I made strong connections.

I had decided on a theme for my year, 'Preparing Young People for Work' which I had been working on for about 18 months with some members of Herefordshire Business Board. I, like many other employers, have identified that the majority of young people arrive in the workplace unprepared for the world of work. They do not realise what employers expect of them and the rewards of satisfying employment. Few have the opportunity of inspiring work experience. I wanted to devise a work experience handbook for employers, to make providing work experience placements much easier for businesses of all sizes. I had ideas of how to share work experience between 2 or 3 companies and to have business safari days for groups of younger children. But now, Covid-19 meant companies were facing uncertainty, staff were being furloughed, people were working from home if they could, premises were shut, we were in lockdown. My plans were in tatters so now what? Time for a re-think.

As a novice, I hesitantly embraced social media, which I had thought I would use as a blog about the many accepted invitations which would flood my way post declaration - what a different world we were in when I heard that! As I learned from others how to be proactive and 'out there' on social media in lockdown, Facebook became my shop front. It was my opinion not my diary I was sharing and when people were experiencing hardship and

sorrow, it was a fine line. With all that was going on in the pandemic, did anyone actually care what the High Sheriff thought? Thankfully, some did!

There were many, many calls and virtual meetings: with The Police and Crime Commissioner, The Chief Constable, YSS, HVOSS, MIND Herefordshire, CLD Trust, West Mercia Women's Aid, St Michael's Hospice. Hope Services, Hope Centre, Healthwatch, Encore, Echo, PEGS, NILS, Market town mayors, and more... All doing brilliant work.

Then July saw the easing of restrictions and I was very keen to start meeting people with Hand Face Space advice being followed at all times. There were many highlights:

Meeting Robert Thomas MBE at Vennture and learning about this very worthy cross-church organisation. With their motto of 'Love people Better', the programmes of Family Pastors, Street Pastors, Lean-on-Me, Ambassadors and BBO, are making a real difference with professionalism and kindness.

South Wye Police Boxing Academy is just one of the fabulously successful clubs at the amazing Hinton Community Centre. Vince McNally MBE has developed the centre to be the base for many groups for people of all ages. Lockdown meant things had to stop, but as soon as he was able, Fit and Fed during the school holidays ensured those young people most in need had daily activities and food.

Close House, a youth centre tucked away in the city provides a safe place for young people to chill out. It has fantastic EPIC programme of youth volunteering. I spent most of a day in the woods at The Cart Shed, seeing the calm and safe environment they provide for those of all ages suffering with mental health issues – what a special place.

Meeting Will Lindesay and the HVOSS drift trikes in Castle Pool gardens. Volunteering at Leominster Food bank, which lead to trips to Fare Share in Birmingham for supplies for both Leominster and Bromyard Food Banks

The night when between 9pm and 3am, Richie and I joined Robert Thomas and the Vennture Street Pastors seeing the kindness of the pastors in action in the midst of the night-time economy. My Facebook post of our night out had a record-for-me of over 42,000 reaches!

Spending a day in the magistrates' court courtesy of the Chair of Herefordshire Bench, Libhin Bromley JP, where I saw the Justice System in action. HHJ James Burbidge kindly came to the courts to meet me. I returned to Hereford Justice Centre just before Christmas to join HHJ James Burbidge and our newly appointed Lord Lieutenant Mr Edward Harley OBE to witness new JP's being sworn in.

A visit to Ledbury Police Station to meet Inspector Tudge and his SNT teams which later lead to a trip in a police van with one of the Rural Crime officers. We went to my home village of Pencombe to visit a local farmer who had had his lorry stolen. I'm not sure who was more surprised to find me there – him or me! Smart Water was deployed.

2 days of cobbing the walls of the new round building at Longlands Care Farm at Whitbourne. It was muddy, hard work and great fun.

Attending the naming of Canary Bridge by our then Lord-Lieutenant Lady Darnley, complete with Canary Girls in period attire. Giving online talks to Rotary clubs and groups. Meeting Police Cadets by Zoom.

A cuppa outside with a group of carers at Bodenham, listening to their stories and sharing some of my shrieval tales. A couple of hours that made a world of difference to them after months of isolation as care packages stalled.

Meeting Dave Tristram, Funding and Enterprise Officer at Herefordshire Council, and finding funding streams for organisations in need, such as PEGS and West Mercia Search and Rescue.

Connecting people, and connecting with people, really is what being the High Sheriff is all about.

I had thought Hereford Cathedral would be my second home with many services planned in 2020. In the end I attended only two services to commemorate 75th VJ day and the end of WWII, both were beautiful and memorable. Near Armistice Day, the RBL Field of Remembrance was another moving event, and there was a handful of short wreath laying ceremonies at the war memorials at Hereford, Bromyard and Pencombe, either in person or pre-filmed, or both.

I was the guest of The Worshipful Mayor of Hereford, Cllr Kath Hey, at the Mayor's Parlour at the Town Hall. I enjoyed the tour by Mayor's Officer John Marshall of the small museum of city history. Well worth a visit.

I wrote to the mayors of our five market towns, asking to meet their teams, visit the high street and a charity. Visits followed to Bromyard, Ross-on-Wye, Kington, and Leominster. Each one special in its own way, all had stepped up to the challenge of ensuring those shielding had food and medicine delivered. The dedication, resilience, resourcefulness, and community cohesion shone through. Oh those town clerks know so much!

The High Sheriff's Fund is held at Herefordshire Community Foundation and at the end of each year in office the High Sheriff can make grants to organisations of their choice. We are lucky to have a foundation in our county distributing money to Herefordshire organisations and individuals in need. Each High Sheriff is expected to contribute to the fund, but not specifically to fund raise. The more you add the more you can distribute, and not being the sort to ask for money, I wanted to hold events that would open up the shrieval world to many more people - and that would be fun! But how do you do this in a pandemic?

With a group of friends and with trusty navigator Bill Pardoe by my side, I've taken part in a rallye tour in the Charente for the last three years in my father's Jaguar XK140. This combines two things in life I love – food and cars so what better way to raise money! Could I organise a similar event and promote the hospitality sector in our county which had been so badly hit by Covid-19? I outlined my idea to the Police Superintendent and in theory it looked OK, so I forged ahead. I contacted venues who were amazingly supportive of the idea and Bill Pardoe with his fabulous knowledge of Herefordshire and rallying, mapped out the tulip route book. This is no small feat, it took Bill days of driving round, on his own as he was still shielding. I designed the route book, found sponsors, checked and re-check Covid compliance and arranged food at each venue, and sourced items for the contactless raffle and for a goody bag for each car. Entries for the tour sold like hot cakes! The pandemic meant that cancellation was a possibility at any moment, so the run up to the event was very nerve wracking - apparently I was rather difficult to live with.

The High Sheriff's Foodie Tour of Herefordshire took place on Sunday 30th August. In glorious sunshine, 60 cars each with 2 people from the same household left Broad Street in

groups of 3, forming a bubble of 6 for the day. After coffee and pastries at the city centre's wonderful Green Dragon, we went to Pensons for hot drinks, delicious cake and an art exhibition, headed to Lomore Manor for a gourmet picnic lunch, on to The Hay Barn at Dulas for afternoon tea and finally ending with a glass of perry at Westons. Any age of car was allowed with free raffle tickets for drivers of electric cars. We had an eclectic mix of new, not so new, vintage, 4x4, sports and super cars, and raised £11,000. The day was enjoyed by all, and lots of people were introduced to the role of the High Sheriff for the first time. I was delighted - and relieved! Thank you to everyone who took part, donated and sponsored this event. Special thanks to Bill as without him we would not have had a Foodie Tour and to Meg Thomas, Ella Pickard, Caroline Davies and Tracey Williams who sold raffle tickets and marshalled on the day.

So what about my theme? In October I launched Just the Job, a school's competition for Y6 and Y7 to raise aspiration of work opportunities and employability skills. Over 1700 young people were registered for the competition and 250 submitted entries – not bad for a first competition I am told, and especially in these challenging times of remote teaching for schools.

Just the Job is about getting students to think about what kind of person they are, what subjects and topics they like, what kind of jobs would suit or inspire them, and what POWER skills they need to that job really well. I call Power skills all the things that are not a subject at school – being reliable, listening, punctual, resilient, being willing and interested, taking the initiative when needed, being communicative, not resenting being told what to do etcetera. I had a great team working on Just the Job – Helen Bowden, Frank Myers, Debbie Gittoes, Chloe Thomas and other member of Herefordshire Business Board, and Jo Henshaw project managed. It's been a tough challenge for schools to deliver this project during another lockdown and we had to move the closing date and accept entries digitally so they could be judged remotely. Huge thanks to teachers and students for their submissions. You can see who won on the new High Sheriff of Herefordshire website!

In November, the Shrieval Lecture usually takes place in Court No:1 to an audience of around 80 people. The Honorary Recorder of Hereford, HH Daniel Pearce Higgins, another Pencombe resident, had been helping me find a new venue (as Court No:1 is out of action) and a speaker. I was genuinely thrilled when Baroness Hale of Richmond agreed to deliver the lecture on 13th November, and I looked forward to welcoming her back to Herefordshire. As the date approached, the country was sliding into lockdown again but thankfully Lady Hale was happy to deliver the lecture remotely. Rural Media agreed to kindly facilitate with the live stream to YouTube and we planned that Daniel and I would go to their offices to guarantee there were no technical hiccups. At the last minute this plan had to change due to social distancing issues and we were then both relying on Pencombe telephone exchange. Thankfully Rural Media were 'with' us and it went without a hitch. Lady Hale wearing a spider brooch, delivered an excellent lecture on the Rights and Responsibilities of Children which was viewed by a much wider audience, and has had around 290 post event views on YouTube.

And since Christmas, I've still been Zooming, working on the new website (I may have mentioned it!), preparing for the judging and prizes of Just the Job, and working on a non-prescriptive handover pack for Jo and those who follow. I have been finding funding streams for organisations and considering where grants from the High Sheriff Fund are

going this year. I have also instigated a SING, that's 'Sheriffs in Nomination Group' which will meet informally, hopefully over lunch, 3 times a year to share experiences and ideas.

And during all of this busy-ness, it's been a tad exasperating to be pitied by people who think I haven't done anything and that I have had a boring year! It was not the year I expected but why dwell on the negative when I have no control over the situation?

Here is the response to pity of Dr John Manley, High Sheriff of the City of Bristol 2020: The High Sheriff is the oldest secular office in the Country and in the nearly 1100 years of history since Saxon times it has lived through The Black Death, The Great Plague, Norman Conquest, WW1, WW2, English Civil War, 100 Years War, ... and every time we have adapted. This is another such year...

For the 2020 High Sheriffs, possibly always to be known as The Corona Sheriffs, the rolling motto for 12 months has been:

Plan, Check, Re-think, Change, Wait. Plan, Check, Re-think, Change, Wait.

Being adaptable and flexible in one's approach, and remaining positive, has been key in bringing meaning and purpose to the role. I had help from key people for whose support I am extremely grateful.

The Under Sheriff, Jeremy Wilding Esq MBE, who as the oracle of all things shrieval in the county, has provided me with considered and timely advice. His role is so important providing continuity year on year and he does a very good job!

My most irreverent chaplain, The Rev'd Andrew Mottram has had little to do this year due to Covid-19 restrictions, so I am delighted for him that he is playing a part in today's ceremony.

HH Daniel Pearce-Higgins has provided helpful support throughout the year, working on the Shrieval Lecture venue, procuring the guest speaker and generally giving me lots to think about.

Mrs Elizabeth Hunter, High Sheriff of Hereford and Worcester 2010, and now President of the High Sheriffs Association has always been there for me when I needed a shrieval ear.

And of course, out of adversity comes opportunity.

Without ceremonial duties or events to attend, the ambassadorial side has come to the fore. I have had more time to thank and connect people and champion wonderful organisation in our county; it shows that this ancient role in today's world still has relevance and that if you are lucky enough to be High Sheriff of Herefordshire, you can truly make a worthy contribution during your year, even in a pandemic.

I send every best wish to the next High Sheriff of Herefordshire, Joanna Hilditch, whose year I hope will open up and be nearly normal – fingers crossed. Jo has exciting ideas for her term of office and I know the Shrievalty in Herefordshire is in very good hands.

Tricia Thomas

20.03.2021

tricia@pencombecourt.co.uk

