

## **The Current Role of High Sheriffs**

The Office of High Sheriff is an independent non-political Royal appointment for a single year. Today, there are 55 High Sheriffs serving the Counties of England and Wales.

Supporting the Crown and judiciary remain a central element of the role.

They give active support and encouragement to the police and emergency services, to the probation and prison services and to other agencies involved with crime prevention, particularly among young people. Under the Criminal Law Act 1826, High Sheriffs present awards to people assisting the apprehension of offenders. They can act as Returning Officers for parliamentary elections in some counties.

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.

Many High Sheriffs give their own personal awards to individuals, often unsung heroes within small voluntary groups, who have made an outstanding contribution in some way.

As the Office of High Sheriff is independent and non-political, they are therefore very well placed to bring together a wide range of people within the community they serve. High Sheriffs receive no remuneration.

The High Sheriff's role can be summarised as follows:

- To uphold and enhance the ancient Office of High Sheriff and to make a meaningful contribution to the High Sheriff's County during the year of Office.
- To lend active support to the principal organs of the Constitution within their county – the Royal Family, the Judiciary, the Police and other law-enforcement agencies, the emergency services, local authorities and all recognised church and faith groups.
- To ensure the welfare of visiting High Court Judges; to attend on them at Court and to offer them hospitality.
- To support the Lord-Lieutenant on Royal visits and on other occasions as appropriate.
- To take an active part in supporting and promoting voluntary organisations within a County.