



*The*  
HIGH SHERIFF  
OF SURREY

2026 AWARDS CEREMONY



# High Sheriff Awards

One of the privileges of being High Sheriff is that during your Shrieval year you are able to witness the amazing contributions made by so many people and organisations across the County for the benefit of our local community; whether through public service, charitable work or volunteering. Suzanne and I have met countless people selflessly giving their time, experience and expertise for the benefit of others.

Another privilege of being High Sheriff is that I can give an award to some of these individuals and organisations as a public recognition of their great and valuable service to our community and hold this ceremony so they can be acclaimed.

The citations that follow in this programme have either been written by me or by people who have nominated somebody within their organisation who has stood out from the crowd or gone the extra mile and are deserving of recognition. The length of the citation is not a determinant of how deserving the awardee is, it is more a reflection on how verbose the nominee was, and I have tried not to abridge any citations received.

I have in four instances given an award to charitable organisations that Suzanne and I visited during the year and where we were impressed by both their achievements and by a number of the people we met. To recognise just one person with an award would seem unjust, so it seemed the best approach was to recognise the charity itself.

Also this year, for the first time in many years, an entry from Surrey was submitted for the National Crimebeat Awards. It received a Commended Award which I am thrilled to be handing out this evening.

Thank you to all the award winners for the shining example you set for the rest of us and for the part you play in enhancing the life of so many within our Surrey Community.

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## Nico Attallah

Nico is a young, learning disabled artist who first discovered his passion for painting and drawing during lockdown. Although sketching is his favourite, he is brilliant with many different media, including watercolour and acrylic. Nico loves manga art and has a special fondness for animals, capturing their essential details so precisely that his drawings look almost like photographs. Nico enjoys his sessions at Artventure and he dreams of becoming a famous artist and he is eager to take his talent to the next level. Nico was truly honoured when the High Sheriff chose his design for his official Christmas card in 2025.

## Nigel Baxter

For the last ten years Nigel Baxter has been a loyal and dedicated volunteer for Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex (KSS), using the skills he acquired during his career as a teacher to great effect by giving talks to school and community groups across Surrey about the lifesaving work done by KSS.

As well as making a major contribution to increasing awareness about KSS himself, Nigel also advises members of the charity's Community Fundraising Team on how to give effective presentations.

Nigel has become a valued member of Team KSS, helping to welcome and induct new volunteers to the charity and conducting tours of the base at Redhill. He has given his time freely to speak at major fundraising events like the annual KSS Carol Concert at Guildford Cathedral, accepted cheques on behalf of KSS from community fundraising groups across Surrey and assisted as a steward at events like the KSS Heli Hike fundraising walks.

Nigel is always ready to help KSS and happy to assist with last-minute requests or to step forward when another volunteer becomes unavailable. In October, he supported a KSS 'Restart a Heart' CPR awareness session at Surrey Sports Park, immediately after attending a cheque presentation at a golf club that same morning.

By encouraging his own golf club to support the charity's work for Restart a Heart Day each October, Nigel has supported KSS's efforts to create an army of lifesavers equipped with the skills to deliver CPR and use a defibrillator to people suffering a cardiac arrest.

KSS is the local air ambulance charity for Surrey. Its helicopters are flying emergency rooms. When there's a life-or-death call, KSS brings specialised doctors, paramedics and treatment to the scene, fast. And they don't stop 24/7, 365 days a year. Every day the charity responds to nine emergency calls on average – giving people the best chance of survival, and keeping families together.

# Greg Bleach

Now semi-retired, for 22 years Greg led Skillway, a manual crafts training workshop based in the old Chapels in Godalming helping young people to find their way forward in life, employment and society when they have been disadvantaged for a wide variety of reasons. Greg has the skills and experience derived from his mechanical work, but that indefinable extra, seeing the potential in these youngsters, encourage them, guide them, and when necessary be tough. Those hundreds passing through his care have emerged with life and manual skills that could enhance their lives and employment prospects. He sees some of his ex-students locally and some have set up their own small businesses, in maintenance or landscaping work.

Not only was Greg a transformative influence on the young people at Skillway, he also nurtured the staff and volunteers who worked with him, building a happy, stable, cohesive team; they even embraced the cold conditions in the workshops!

During Covid when education settings were locked down, Greg volunteered for a Hospice. Even in normal times, he devoted hours and enormous amounts of energy to fundraising events such as the London 100 cycle ride, and was always ready to lend a hand to those he saw in need of practical help. In his current 'semi-retirement' that still continues. For many he has been a valued, confidential, supportive listener, easing the pain, grief or frustrations of those in need of support.

Greg is a local man, 'born and bred', close to his family, neighbours and church members. A modest citizen with a gift for helping others, a pleasure to work with and someone we could all learn from.

## Leah Boxall

Leah has built a phenomenally successful career, winning a silver medal in the best new business category at Best Business Women Awards 2024, and winning the South East Region award at the UK Start-Up Awards 2024. Her achievements are all the more extraordinary as she endured a traumatic childhood which drives her today to help ensure no other young people have to suffer her lived experience. Spearheading an initiative to ensure systemic change in the way we help identify those at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and detecting those who may be at risk within their own home, she has been a key part of the High Sheriff's NEET initiative this year.

## Hayley Bull

Hayley has been at Bloomin' Arts for seven years and CEO for the past three years. She continues to build on the charity's focus of providing theatre workshops and a diverse range of creative arts courses within the community.

She manages a wonderful team that supports learning disabled, physically disabled and neurodiverse adults in exhibiting their skills and talents in visual art, dance and theatre. Their courses engage and celebrate diversity, valuing everyone's unique voice, ability and talent. They provide lifelong opportunities for up to 85 participants, some of whom have been actively participating for many years.

## Kevin Delf

Kevin has recently stepped down as CEO of Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership after an incredible 25 years supporting the charity, which helps to improve learning opportunities and engagement across Surrey. Through his inspired leadership they pioneered and managed many successful educational projects including schools catch up programmes, a social enterprise which provides alternative learning programmes for young people, and employment and skills hubs. Working with a range of organisations across Surrey, he has encouraged people to enhance their lives through learning.

## Derrek Douglas

Acting Special Inspector Derrek Douglas transferred to Surrey Police in December 2023; his arrival marked the beginning of a transformative period for special constables, driven by his rare combination of operational skills and instructional expertise.

As a TPAC-trained officer and qualified police driving instructor – achievements that are demanding to achieve and maintain – Derrek has used his skills to improve driving standards, increase operational readiness, and support public safety across Surrey.

Over the last two years, Derrek has dedicated over 1,900 hours of his time to Surrey Police. A significant portion of this time has been spent training others, all while maintaining his own qualifications and continuing to deliver operational shifts – an achievement made even more impressive given his demanding career outside policing.

Derrek has divided the Force's traditional driving courses into modules, making training inclusive and accessible to special constables who balance their volunteering in policing with demanding professional and personal commitments. Derrek has delivered a full range of initial and refresher driver training courses to both special constables and regular (paid) officers. His efforts have directly increased the number of skilled police drivers available to respond to emergencies, improving service delivery and public safety.

Derrek's contribution has lifted morale across the Special Constabulary, helping colleagues feel that specialist skills are within their reach. His professionalism and approachable leadership make him a standout role model, a highly trusted member of the Special Constabulary Leadership Team and a deserving nominee for this award.

## Wendy & Ray Dunnett

Wendy and Ray, who are both turning 80 this year, show extraordinary dedication to Street Angels and they consistently go above and beyond to support our work in practical and meaningful ways.

Both are active members of the URC church and contribute significantly to its community, as well as to our charity. For example, they organise a Christmas tree for our charity in their church, managing the logistics, decorations and collection of donations – all of which go directly to support our cause. Beyond this, they regularly volunteer for Street Angels on Saturdays, covering shifts without any complaint, even the night before their Sunday church service.

Wendy and Ray's commitment is not just about showing up – they actively engage, offer encouragement to others, and inspire fellow volunteers with their reliability, kindness and tireless energy. Over the years, they have become pillars of our volunteer team, always ready to help wherever needed, whether it's sorting donations, assisting at events, or supporting our outreach activities.

They are lovely, passionate, and selfless people, deeply committed to Christ and to making a positive difference in their community. Their unwavering dedication, generosity, and consistent service make them truly deserving of this recognition.

## Caroline Edwards

Caroline has been brave to state that she is a survivor of abuse. This, combined with a career in safeguarding children, led her in 1996 to begin a lifelong dream of creating Oasis, a place where no one would ever have to feel isolated and alone again. She set out to create a second family for those who had none. A sanctuary for those seeking safety. A place where people would feel listened to, could seek advice, and be given the means to rebuild their self-confidence, resilience and independence. The charity has over many years established a wide range of preventative services to support families from falling into crisis as well as safeguarding services that support children and adults identified as victims of abuse. Oasis has through Caroline's inspired leadership, amongst many other achievements, helped over 6,000 children stay with their families.

## Charles Farmer

Charles 'just gets on with it' and has been described as 'silently dedicated'. He doesn't consider what he does to be any more significant than what other volunteers do at Guildford Food Bank, but those who have met him know otherwise.

On Sunday he picks up Waitrose customer donations and delivers them to St Clare's, Monday 7am collects Sainsburys customer donations, then Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday packs fresh produce for food bank clients. Each volunteer regards him as special to the day that they volunteer, some not knowing the full extent of what he does, but realising that he is special. Charles is very happy to stay and chat to those who come into the food bank cafe for company, helps clients to their cars with their food parcels and also makes deliveries when clients unexpectedly don't have suitable transport. The food bank team would like to think that he takes Thursdays and Saturdays off, but we know that he is searching supermarkets for boxes to pack food parcels into or, on a quiet day, preparing box labels. Many people have tried to encourage him to have a day off, but Charles won't hear of it.

He is so positive about the work of the food bank and often describes it as fantastic. He is a wonderful person to be around, hardworking, gentle, humorous and incredibly kind. A phrase regularly heard from volunteers and staff at the food bank is "Charles is just amazing". He is a huge blessing to the work of Guildford Food Bank and we love him dearly.

## Phoebe Gaydon

Phoebe has been known to Suzanne and I for many years; after we responded to an advert in the local supermarket advertising singing lessons, for our young daughter. Over the years Phoebe has grown her singing business, A Touch of Musicality and leads a number of local choirs, one being at The Meath, a residential home for those with epilepsy. She also founded and runs ChoirBLAST, an annual gathering of choirs from across the country, held in Godalming. In 2025, over 80 choirs took part. As Phoebe says “from sparking joy to building bonds, group singing has a magic all of its own - it brings people together like nothing else.” Her energy is infectious and the pleasure she brings to so many people is undeniable.

# Dianne Godden

Dianne has been a dedicated volunteer with The Meath Epilepsy Charity for over five years. Every week, she comes for two hours minimum to support the horticulture club. Club members are made up of our residents and external day clients – all with learning and physical disabilities and many are non-verbal in addition to having complex epilepsy and challenging underlying healthcare needs.

She regularly goes above and beyond her role by sourcing what we need from various garden centres locally or further afield at excellent prices, in her own time, helping us make the most of our resources while creating a thriving and enjoyable gardening experience for everyone involved. Her creativity and wonderful ideas consistently enhance the sessions and encourage strong participation from the group. She has built excellent, trusting relationships with the residents who attend the horticulture club, contributing greatly to their enjoyment, confidence, and sense of community. In addition to her work with the gardening group, she has also willingly supported our on-site café when needed, always showing flexibility, kindness, and a positive attitude. Her commitment and enthusiasm make her a truly valued member of our volunteer team.

Along the way, we've celebrated some wonderful moments; shared successes — growing pumpkins from seeds together, carrots, garlic and spring onions. As well as creating a vibrant and colourful courtyard garden full of colour in pots, troughs and beds last summer, creating an environment visually stunning and for all to sit and enjoy. Now looking ahead to the start of our Friendship Garden, our new project for this coming spring, it's an exciting next step that reflects the strong sense of community we continue to nurture. All we can say, is the most enormous thank you to Dianne!

## Anna-Marie Goodacre

Anna-Marie Goodacre is recognised for her outstanding service to the community of Stanwell. She is the Founder and CEO of Stanwell Events and Stanwell Food Bank and whilst always crediting the work of the wider team, her dedication, compassion and commitment have played a vital role in supporting local residents and strengthening community spirit. She has been the driving force of many positive projects in Stanwell including the modernisation of the old changing rooms in Long Lane Recreation Ground into a modern community space. Her contribution and the positive difference she has helped to achieve for the community of Stanwell and the wider community of Surrey is extraordinary.

## Amelia Hadfield

Amelia, is Director of CIFAL Surrey, Co-Director of the Institute for Sustainability, Associate Vice-President for External Engagement, and Founding Director of the Centre for Britain and Europe at the University of Surrey. It is in this latter capacity that she led the research project, commissioned by Peter Cluff as High Sheriff, into the composition of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) in Surrey. She has continued to provide dedicated support with her team in hosting conferences, producing reports and helping to drive the Shrieval initiative to help stop young people from becoming NEET.

## Abdul Hamid

Abdul is the Chairman of the Maybury Support Group. A charity that creates a welcoming space where everyone—regardless of ability, background, or language—can come together, learn, and thrive. It is through his inspiration and dedication that the charity was created to help support the local community in Maybury and Sheerwater. Through his positive leadership, the Group arranges activities that are open to everyone; focusing on empowerment, education, and wellbeing; to help people look after themselves. His commitment to supporting communities facing high deprivation, social isolation and language barriers by providing safe, welcoming spaces, has made a huge impact in reducing loneliness and building friendships.

# Rob Harris

Deputy Unit Leader Rob Harris has been an invaluable and influential part of the Volunteer Police Cadet Scheme for over two years now, playing a key role in the successful running of the Guildford's Volunteer Police Cadet Unit.

Having once been a cadet himself before beginning his policing career, Rob brings a deep understanding of the programme's purpose and impact. Now serving as a Chief Inspector within Criminal Justice, he continues to dedicate his time and energy to supporting young people despite the demands of his role. Each week, Rob helps deliver the cadet curriculum in a way that is engaging, supportive and enjoyable, ensuring that cadets feel encouraged, included and motivated. His enthusiasm and commitment are evident in every session, and he consistently strives to ensure cadets receive a positive, meaningful experience.

Rob's contribution extends well beyond cadet weekly meetings. He actively looks for opportunities to enhance the wider cadet experience across Surrey, demonstrating initiative and leadership in organising visits to operational policing units, helping cadets gain valuable insight into real-world policing. He regularly offers support to fellow leaders by assisting with training delivery, always willing to share his expertise and help strengthen the programme.

Rob consistently demonstrates the highest standards of professionalism, inspiring cadets and fellow leaders. His dedication, leadership and passion for supporting young people make him an invaluable asset to Surrey's Volunteer Police Cadet Scheme and a deserving recipient of a High Sheriff's Award.

## Craig Hills

Craig has been instrumental in creating the wonderful community space at the Lockwood Centre. Comprising 40,000sq ft, it is now home to a wide variety of creative art and charitable organisations. He had the vision of converting a building initially built as a daycare centre in 1972 into a thriving community hub providing enterprise, education & skills for young people; promoting community health & well-being; and supporting the creative industries & community arts. His enthusiasm and dedication to the creation and development of this facility is truly inspiring.

## David Hopkins-Holder

As Chief Operating Officer of Brooklands Museum, David plays a critical role in ensuring the Museum not only delivers an excellent service to our visitors but supports the needs of our members, volunteers and staff. Much of his work is behind the scenes and is about enabling others to succeed. His hard work, dedication and passion inspire his teams to deliver to the best of their abilities. He always takes his time to speak to our volunteers and members to find solutions when issues arise.

In recent years, David has played an instrumental role in supporting 11F Air Cadet Squadron relocate to the Brooklands Museum site at a time when they risked being closed. He is passionate about enabling young people to experience the benefits of belonging to the Air Cadets and was a leading champion for their relocation to Brooklands Museum. In recognition of his support, he now sits on the civilian committee of the Squadron to ensure cadets can have full benefit of the Brooklands Museum site.

## Stephen James

Steve, the Deputy Manager of Artventure Trust, celebrates this year an extraordinary 35 years of dedicated service. Often regarded as the heart and soul of the charity, Steve has a unique and deeply trusted bond with every participant. Steve is not just a brilliant art worker, he also takes meticulous care of the studio, and he is the one who knows at any given moment where to find a painting or which are the best working marker pens. His knowledge, experience, kindness and unwavering commitment have shaped Artventure into the creative and supportive space it is today.

## Brendan Keaney

Brendan celebrates an incredible 30 years at Brooklands Technical College—a journey that began with his own apprenticeship. Since then, he has shaped the careers of countless engineers and mentored a new generation of educators. A loyal, passionate, and deeply committed member of the team, Brendan's legacy is seen in the success of the many students he has inspired. This award recognises three decades of making a tangible difference in the lives of others and of his commitment to Brooklands Technical College.

## Phil Lambert

Phil is a dedicated community champion whose voluntary work has made a meaningful impact across the Surrey and Whitmore Vale communities. An advocate for accessibility and inclusion, Phil serves as a Transport Champion for Whitmore Vale, represents local voices in stakeholder meetings, and contributes to Surrey County Council's Get It Right initiative by reviewing easy-read materials. He volunteers weekly at the Whitmore Vale Club at the Hub, is an Expert by Experience Co-trainer for the Oliver McGowan Tier 2 Training and is the elected Chairperson of the West Surrey People's Group. Through his leadership, lived experience, and commitment to positive change, Phil continues to strengthen community engagement and promote inclusion for all.

## Simon Morris

Simon began volunteering with Surrey Police in 2019 and over the last seven years he has dedicated over 1,100 hours of his time to the Force.

Simon has made a significant contribution to community safety through his consistent and proactive community engagement. By producing monthly newsletters and sharing weekly "In The Know" updates, he ensures residents, neighbourhood watch groups, and partners stay informed about crime trends, witness appeals and crime prevention advice.

Simon has actively sought ways to broaden engagement, including promoting updates through social media and regularly attending community events to support those who may be harder to reach, particularly people with limited digital access. His efforts have strengthened trust in local policing and provided vital support to the Safer Neighbourhood Team during periods of high demand.

Motivated by increasing reports of fraud, Simon has expanded his volunteering by joining the Fraud Prevention Programme, where he now plays an important role in delivering tailored fraud prevention talks to elderly and vulnerable groups. His willingness to share his experience, help train other volunteers and support the development of training materials, has helped grow the Fraud Prevention Team's capability and impact.

Simon's dedication, reliability, and community focused approach make him a highly deserving recipient of this award.

## Cate Newnes-Smith

Cate has been a force for good in our community for many years and as CEO at Surrey Youth Focus worked with charities, community groups, health, education, police and social care and more, from across Surrey and beyond. She and her team supported and delivered a wide range of initiatives that inspired new thinking and amplified lived experience, including The Big Chat, Hidden Talent, Time for Kids, Unheard Voices, CommuniLAB, Care Leavers, Inclusive Communities, the Surrey Wellbeing Partnership, VCSE Alliance, Peer Research with the University of Surrey and Communities of Practice. Each reflects the power of connection, collaborative learning and collective action.

## Helen Palmer

Helen Palmer from HMP Send is our most amazing Prison Employment Lead and bridges the gaps between a prisoner's custodial sentence and the community for all of their employment needs. Her mantra is 'teamwork makes the dream work' and is known for her passion, enthusiasm and commitment to simply getting things done.

Women are supported through career advisors, personal development plans, job interviews and into a job on release which is pivotal to reducing reoffending and ultimately protection of the public. Helen recognises that employment doesn't just offer a wage at the end of the week or month, it's more their self-worth, self-esteem,

confidence, capability, resilience and above all, hope. Building on these little steps with so many of our women helps them start their journey after custodial sentences.

Breaking down the barriers of having a prison record is really difficult in the employment landscape. Helen and her team have hosted 'lived experience' events to grow on the seeds of hope in our population and showcasing what they are capable of. Lived experienced guests, presentations and workshops at HMP Send have been transformational and have helped some of our women who have successfully been employed by Greggs, Iceland and Railtrack on release. Helen works with local, regional and national companies to secure job opportunities so that the transition from custody to the community is seamless.

There is a property just outside the prison fence, known as 'The Spinney' that has been derelict for about 7 years. Helen proposed collaborating with Wates Construction in order to completely refurbish the property and this is now underway. The aim is to build a multi-functional space for learning, recruitment, training, staff care teams, a hot desk for regional colleagues and our Prison Group Director and in the future a safe, welcoming and trauma informed space for prisoners on temporary day release licence with their families.

Prison Governor Esther Dainton commented "I'm gifted, honoured and privileged to govern HMP Send and I'm gifted, honoured and privileged to have Helen on my team."

## Stephanie Parker

Steph has played a pivotal role in transforming how the Surrey Fire and Rescue service owns and governs its critical documentation. Demonstrating exceptional dedication beyond her day-to-day responsibilities, she has introduced robust new processes that ensure safety critical policies and guidance are reviewed promptly and effectively. Through her determination, departments are now clearer in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities within the governance process, significantly strengthening the organisation's assurance, professionalism, and overall safety standards.

## Pam Robinson

Pam Robinson is the CEO of Change of Scene, a Farnham-based charity providing animal-assisted, outdoor, one-to-one education for disadvantaged young people in Surrey and Hampshire. She leads the charity in helping vulnerable children and young people (ages 8-25) who struggle in mainstream education by using nature-based, hands-on activities to build self-esteem and resilience.

She has shown immense fortitude in securing a new home for the charity and raising the necessary funds to ensure that it can continue to help those most in need.

## The Surrey Bench Management Team

The Surrey Bench Management Team, in addition to their role as volunteer magistrates, support the Surrey Bench Chair, Dee Wilkinson, in looking after 185 magistrates and 2 court houses and help to make the wheels of justice run smoothly. With the ever-increasing pressures on the judiciary and lack of resources, this entails extra workload both in terms of the welfare of the individual magistrates, their working environment and liaising with the court service. All this is done as yet more voluntary work, and with willingness, good humour and the utmost dedication.

**Team members: Michael Kelly, Alison Sanders, Nicola Minett, Alexandra Vinall, Ian Mathews**

## Artventure

Artventure is a long established charity that has been offering visual art sessions for adults with learning disabilities for over 40 years. It provides a safe, welcoming space where participants can explore the visual arts, build confidence, socialise and make new friends. Artventure runs sessions in two studios, based at St Peter's School in Merrow and Gosden House School in Bramley. Supported by a dedicated team of art workers and volunteers, participants are guided to develop their skills and identity as artists. A key aim of Artventure is to celebrate and share the value of its artists' work with the wider community through exhibitions and Meet-the-Artist events.

## Claygate Youth and Community Hub

Claygate Youth and Community Hub offers fun youth activities and support to all young people aged 11-19. We provide a safe and welcoming space for young people to socialise, learn new skills, and get support and advice when needed. Our services include Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday youth nights, as well as holiday clubs for 11-16s. Our hall and outside space are also available for community hire, with proceeds funding our youth work.

Our vision is to create a community where all young people have access to the support, resources and opportunities they need to thrive and succeed. We believe in empowering young people to achieve their full potential and make positive contributions to their communities.

# Hale Community and Youth Centre

The Hale Community and Youth Centre (HC&YC), based adjacent to Sandy Hill Estate in north Farnham, provides a broad range of services and activities for the local community. Founded in 1998, the centre occupies a leased Surrey County Council facility built in 2002, accompanied by an adjacent youth centre acquired in 2021 when the charity adopted its current name.

Today, HC&YC is a vibrant hub for the whole of north Farnham. Relying on income from room hire, donations and grants, our many activities include a community café; a Fridge and Cupboard Project; Yoga, Strength and Balance classes; Seniors to Parents and Pre-school groups; Cookery lessons; Craft activities and Wellbeing support. Run by a small staff team and led by Trustees, our initiatives are supported by in excess of 60 volunteers from across Farnham who help run our successful programme of activities and events.

# RASASC

RASASC Guildford Limited is a registered charity supporting people of all genders aged 13+, from across Surrey, who have experienced the trauma of sexual harm, whether recently or in the past. We are the main specialist rape and sexual abuse support organisation in the county and provide a range of free, confidential, specialist services to ensure that survivors can move forward with their lives, untethered by the impact of abuse. Survivors and their voice are at the heart of everything we do, and they do not have to have reported the abuse to access our help. We provide them with life changing support through these key services:

**Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs)** who provide one to one practical and emotional support.

**Adult, family and youth counselling** both one to one and in groups, remotely and face to face.

**Education, Awareness Raising and Partnership Working.** We work with the Police Victim Care Unit, South West Surrey Domestic Violence Youth Service, STARS (Sexual Trauma Assessment, Recovery and Support Surrey), the SARC, Sexual Health clinics, GPs, Hospitals, Community Mental Health Teams, SEN charities, schools, colleges and universities, who also refer survivors into our services. More widely, we advise organisations throughout the county. This includes training staff from Surrey Police, to ensure that a survivor's needs are at the forefront of criminal justice processes. Our work also extends into the community. Our Outreach ISVA delivers community clinics for vulnerable survivors and a free programme of teacher training and student assemblies to secondary schools. This vital project educates young people on issues such as consent, misogyny and healthy relationships.

In the last year, 1,293 survivors received our life changing support, 255 teachers benefited from our training and over 3,000 young people took part in our school workshops.

# National Crimebeat Award

## Edge of Change: Changing Lives and Reducing Knife Crime Project

Knife crime is a growing concern in Surrey, with increasing numbers of young people and their families feeling at risk from both carrying and being victims of knives.

Misconceptions such as 'carrying a knife makes you safer' are common and tragic incidents in Surrey, including the murder of Surrey teenager Charlie Cosser in 2023, and more recently Luis Guembes in January 2026, highlight the need for ongoing education and prevention. Surrey's Volunteer Police Cadet (VPC) Units set out to challenge these myths, reduce opportunities for knife crime and raise awareness of the dangers of carrying a knife.

The Edge of Change project combined education, operational policing support and community outreach. The project's objective was to empower young people to make safer choices, reduce knife crime and stand alongside those affected by violence.

Responding to cadet feedback, an interactive programme of learning about knife crime was developed and delivered across all six VPC units during September and October 2025. These sessions focused on myth busting and role playing, helping cadets to understand the dangers of carrying a knife. Through peer-to-peer interactions and workshops, the sessions allowed the concerns of young people to be addressed in a practical and engaging way.

Innovation came from blending education with operational policing and community action. Cadets didn't just learn about knife crime – they joined test purchase operations, bridging the gap between awareness and enforcement. During Op Sceptre (15–18 November), cadets took part in five test purchase operations across Surrey to identify retailers selling knives unlawfully.

Cadets collaborated with Fearless and Charlie's Promise, extending their reach beyond policing into advocacy. Inspired by Charlie's father Martin and Fearless Outreach Worker Phil, cadets signed up to Walk53: Steps for Change.

A standout example is the series of sponsored walks organised by Surrey's volunteer police cadets with the support of their leaders. Each of Surrey's six VPC Units walked a minimum of 8.83km – in total cadets walked 53km to recognise the 53 lives lost to knife crime in the UK in 2024, ensuring their memory drives positive change. This event raised over £1,500 for Charlie's Promise and Fearless.

Walk 53 not only provided financial support to charities working with victims and families, but also created a visible, community wide statement against knife violence which was promoted on social media. By raising funds and awareness, cadets demonstrated that young people can lead impactful, innovative projects that strengthen community safety.

The Edge of Change Project has made a measurable difference in Surrey. Many young people have been educated about the dangers of knife crime, and test purchase operations have held educated retailers to account, reducing opportunities for unlawful sales.

National Crimebeat is the youth crime prevention charity of the High Sheriffs' Association and is governed by trustees who are mainly former High Sheriffs as well as previous participants. Its purpose is to give recognition to the most innovative and successful crime prevention projects carried out by young people and it has given a Commended Award to the Edge of Change Project, the first Surrey-based project to be recognised for many years.

# Special Thanks

I would also like to give special thanks to the people who have supported Suzanne and myself during my Shrieval Year:

**Caroline Breckell**

Under Sheriff

**Simon Butler**

High Sheriff's Chaplain

**Grace Courtenay-Wheeler**

High Sheriff Cadet

**Imogen Day**

High Sheriff Cadet

**Andy Newbold**

High Sheriff photographer  
and social media guru

**Alison Burrows**

PA Support

My thanks also go to the pupils from St Catherine's School in Bramley for the welcome music and Topsy Pigs for providing the catering this evening.



