



National Association of City and Town Sheriffs of
England and Wales
Cymdeithas Cenedlaethol Siryfion Dinas a
Thref Lloegr a Cymru



Spring Newsletter 2025



Dear Sheriff's Association Fellow Members

Welcome to the Spring 2025 Newsletter. I do wonder where the time has gone since my first newsletter in November as your Chair.

I hope you are all well and enjoying the better weather, lighter nights and, for those who attended Haverfordwest and remembered to plant the bulbs, the daffodils!



(Haverfordwest daffodils, Chris Higgins, Norwich)

It has been a busy time with the executive team as we drive forward our actions and work with our hosts Lichfield for our AGM weekend and 40th anniversary celebrations in September this year, as well as looking further ahead to Lincoln and Newcastle as hosts.

I would like to start with keeping you all updated on the Association business, and finish on a more pleasurable note including a very rewarding time with the National Association of Civic Officers and more social matters as we look towards Lichfield.

NACTSEW Business

This will cover the following:

- NACTSEW Half-yearly meeting
- Membership and GDPR
- Finance update
- NACTSEW Website
- AGM Motion and Report
- 40th Anniversary Luncheon
- 40th Anniversary Booklet

NACTSEW Half-yearly meeting

Although we were hoping for the first face-to-face meeting in several years, the annual half-yearly meeting took place on Teams. This was because we were still awaiting the transfer of funds from the old HSBC account and so were unable to

guarantee covering expenses or venue hire cost. The meeting, on Tuesday 18th of February, was attended by our President, all executive officer's and our committee members from Lichfield and Lincoln as nominated at the last AGM. The content and business aspect of the day is really covered within the aforementioned topics and therefore I will purely just say thank you for everyone who attended and supported the meeting and together help govern and plan our Association work.

Executive Officers

Alongside myself as Chair, the Executive Officer team comprises:



Bob Rudd, Vice-Chair
Bobrudd@aol.com



Xena Dion, Secretary
and website admin
nactsewsecretary@gmail.com



Suzie Mercer, Treasurer
nactsewtreasurer@gmail.com

Membership and GDPR

In the last newsletter we invoked a compulsory requirement for all members to complete a Membership Form and GDPR consent form to enable the Association to function legally and efficiently.

I am pleased to report that about 50% of recipients have responded and I know our Treasurer, Suzie

Mercer, has individually contacted the others to ask for compliance. I cannot state how important this compulsory request is and if you are still to submit the forms please do so with immediate effect. They are, once again, attached for ease. You do not need to pay any subscription at this point (unless your membership fee is outstanding from last year), just complete the form.

Please send the completed documents to our Treasurer, Suzie Mercer as soon as possible by email to: nactsewtreasurer@gmail.com

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation

In other news, Suzie has been compiling a new Membership file on excel spreadsheet and merging all held data to formulate an accurate record fit for purpose.

Finance Update

I am pleased to say the Transfer of funds from HSBC to our new Lloyds bank account was completed, by coincidence, shortly after our half-yearly committee meeting finished!

As a result we have now opened a second account, which is a business savings account, and so the two accounts somewhat mirror image those at HSBC but with the benefit of online banking and debit cards.

Our New Account, as stated in my last newsletter, is:

Bank: Lloyds

Account name: NACTSEW Community Account

Account number: 17875660

Sort code: 30-54-66

Please remember to change any standing orders or BACS settings to these details.

We are currently awaiting the following to be completed:

Receipt of the Financial Income and Expenditure papers and bank statements for the last three years from the former treasurer, Jan Lugg, along with the physical stock of badges and ties.

Once received, Suzie will be able to familiarise herself with them and arrange for them to be examined in compliance with our Constitution.

NACTSEW Website



Our website remains an excellent masterpiece created and maintained by Xena. There have been some updates and additions, and I would bring your attention to the information about the 2025 AGM weekend which is kept updated as any news comes in from Lichfield. Xena has also added some information about 'dress codes' for the weekend to help members and guests with 'what to wear' for each of the events.

I would remind members to submit any news and information from their respective towns and cities to Xena to be added to the website. Her email is: nactsewsecretary@gmail.com

The Website link:

<https://www.sheriffsofenglandandwales.org/>

AGM Motion and Report

Following the AGM motion at Haverfordwest by John Butler concerning the perceived threats to civic office, a pro forma questionnaire was sent to the identified single points of contact for each city and town for completion.

Xena Dion, our secretary took receipt of the replies. She has worked hard to first consolidate those replies and then produce a report which is attached. Xena's report on this really important issue includes some key observations and recommendations. These were, as part of the full report, discussed at the Half-yearly committee meeting. The committee unanimously accepted the report and all the observations and recommendations therein. They agreed the following actions:

- The Chair, acting on behalf of the Executive Officers and the Association, adopt the six recommendations. It was acknowledged that some are already in place and some are being developed and will be introduced in due course in proportion to their timeline of necessity.
- That the key observations, which are relevant to every NACTSEW City and Town be noted and acted upon, as appropriate, by all members, as individuals and Sheriff Associations.
- That the report would be disseminated as a matter of courtesy, firstly, to the single points of contact and then to all recipients of this newsletter.

Any feedback or outcomes from the observations would be most welcome prior to Lichfield to enable myself to present a summary of achievements and

completed actions at the next AGM. Please submit feedback on actions and achievements to Xena for her to collate and pass on to myself. Thank you.

Rest assured, this will as I see it, be ongoing work by all of us to promote and protect the office of Sheriff which we have all proudly served or have served and uphold.

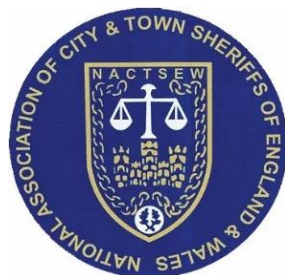
To this end, it was timely to have forged a relationship between NACTSEW and the National Association of Civic Officers, which I will explain later in this newsletter.

40th Anniversary Luncheon

This proposed event always had a tight timeline with potentially challenging factors such as sufficient time for preparation and planning, hire costs and the ability to have access to our funds and the ability to discharge financial obligations. Sadly, the Executive officers agreed that it was an impossible task given the factors above and a decision was made to abandon the event, which was ratified at the half-yearly meeting.

40th Anniversary Booklet

The printing of 200 copies of this publication was unanimously agreed by all at the half-yearly meeting and I am busy finalising the document ready to place the order with the appointed printers.



It is intended that all members who attend Lichfield should receive a free copy and arrangements will be made for those not attending and who wish for a copy. The estimated remainder of about 80 will

be made available at cost to members who would like a second copy, and a copy will be retained for incoming Sheriffs in 2025 and 2026.

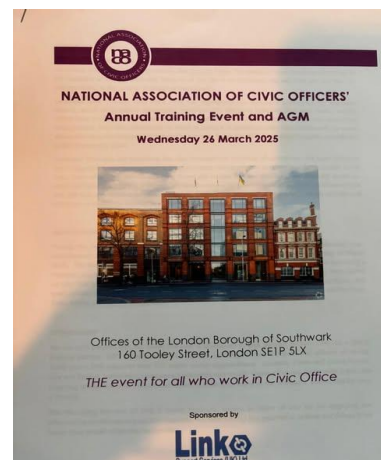
You will be pleased to read that this now concludes the formal business part of my newsletter!

We now move onto news of events, invites and our AGM weekend in Lichfield.

NACTSEW Events & Invitations

National Association of Civic Officers (NACO).

With reference to the AGM Motion Report, it was timely that I was able to accept the invitation from the Chair of the NACO to attend their annual training day.



NACO is an Association who are committed to supporting elected members in their civic role and hold training events for those in civic office, particularly helping with chairing council meetings and promoting their roles within the community – very relevant considering the Report.

Our previous Chair, David Brown had made contact with NACO and saw the value in creating a relationship between them and ourselves. I was, therefore, very pleased to be able to attend their annual training event and AGM, at the invitation of their Chair Tracy Frisby.

The event was on Wednesday 26th of March at the Offices of the London Borough of Southwark.



The invitation included dining with Tracey and her Executive Team, including their President and founders, on the evening before. This proved to be a real ice-breaker and conversation immediately highlighted dual areas of interest, concern and uncertainty as we all progress to the Government's drive to unitary authorities and change.

On Wednesday morning this theme continued during an excellent first workshop entitled "Relevance of the Civic Office in the 21st century - what can save us?"



This was led by Phil O' Brien, NACO Communications Officer and an affiliated Consultant at Link Services (UK) Ltd, a partner of NACO and their training provider.

The areas discussed resonated clearly with many aspects of the 'Notable Observations' and 'Recommended Actions' within our AGM Motion Report.

This common theme reoccurred in the afternoon Plenary session entitled "Uniting for Excellence: A Collaborative Journey". I was honoured to be on the panel taking questions from the audience of over 90 civic officers, along with representatives from:

- The Deputy Lord-Lieutenant
- Guild of Mace-bearers
- Association of Democratic Service Officers (ADSO)
- National Association of Local Councils (NALC)
- Link Support Services (UK) Ltd

It was clear that many Civic Teams clearly take pride in their work whether they have a Mayor only or, additionally, a Sheriff, and share many of our concerns.

The cities of Chester, Norwich and Newcastle were represented and I was pleased to make the acquaintance of Newcastle's sole part-time Civic Officer Brenda Joyce. It was a great opportunity to diplomatically raise that Newcastle would be hosting the NACTSEW AGM weekend in 2027 and initiate dialogue.



Andy Swinburne (centre) with NACO team - from left to right: Paul Millard, Vice-Chair; Penny Harrison, Secretary; Tracy Frisby, Chair; Phil O'Brien, Communications Officer)

During the event key links were made with both NACO and NALC, along with the Training provider Link Support Services (UK) Ltd. I have no doubt that these will prove useful for the future. Also present were some trade stands who supply

various merchandise including ties, scarfs, badges, banners and much more which may well be of valuable use as some of our previous suppliers no longer exist.

Overall, this proved to be a very useful event where we, as NACTSEW, made some excellent contacts and were able to promote our Association. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank David Brown for his proactiveness in forging this link on our behalf.

Further work will be now reviewed by the executive team and I look forward to NACO' s Chair Tracy Frisby hopefully attending Lichfield as our guest.

Invitations

I was pleased to accept an invitation from our former Chair and now Honorary Vice President, Barrie Ferguson to attend the York Shrievalty Dinner at The Grand Hotel in York on Wednesday 23rd of April. I am very much looking forward to meeting old acquaintances as well as the current Sheriff of York, Councillor Fiona Fitzpatrick, who was unable to attend Haverfordwest in her year in office.

This will be closely followed by the Berwick Shrievalty Dinner on Friday 25th of April where we will be hosted by the current Sheriff Jo Lang, who many of you did meet at Haverfordwest.

This will be my first Sheriffs Dinner on home turf as Chair of NACTSEW and whilst proud of my role it will be tinged with sadness as we lost former Berwick Sheriff Alan Bowlas earlier this year. Alan and his wife Jo were great supporters and advisers for myself in 2010 when in office and in particular at our weekend in Lincoln. Thank you Alan.



As well as attending events, we are also, of course, busy assisting Melanie, Jo and the Lincoln Shrievalty plan the 2026 AGM weekend. And during April/May time, will be making further steps in approaching Newcastle as hosts in 2027

Talking generically of events, please do not forget to send information on events in your own city and town to Xena as she is always keen to have fresh material to post on our website.

Lichfield AGM and 40th Anniversary Celebrations.



At the Half-yearly meeting Lichfield committee members Robert Yardley and Michael Mullarkey provided a report outlining the weekend and it is clear they are well organised and are planning an excellent weekend for all of us to celebrate our anniversary and also enjoy the city of Lichfield and its hospitality. I commend their hard work on this.

Details of the weekend can be found on our website which Xena is updating continuously, but a provisional summary includes:

Friday 26th September

Welcome reception at 6.30 to 8pm at The Hub, at St Mary's in the Market square. There will be a welcome drink with light refreshments.



Afterwards, delegates may dine in various local restaurants. Recommendations will be made by the Lichfield team and will be on the website.

Saturday 27th September

The AGM will take place in the council chambers. Tea and coffee will be available from 09.30 with a prompt start to the AGM at 10.00.

A light lunch will be served after the meeting in the Guildhall followed by a choice of afternoon tours which include:

- A guided tour of Lichfield Cathedral
- Visit to the National Memorial Arboretum
- Tour of Dr Johnson's birthplace museum and the Erasmus Darwin Museum
- A Guided walking tour of the City
- Free time to self-explore the City

The formal Dinner will take place at the Guildhall at 7pm for 7.30pm with a very interesting guest speaker! All will be revealed in due course!

Sunday 28th September

09.00 hrs - Robing at the Guildhall, formal photographs and the procession to Lichfield Cathedral.

▼ Footnote on the Sunday Procession and Church services

As Vice-Chair and now Chair I have sadly seen a growing trend for some members to not attend the Sunday service but head away home early, find other things to do or just linger around the town or city until after Sunday lunch!

May I remind you as NACTSEW Members, that we have all been that Sheriff representing our City or Town in full chain and robes on the Sunday. It can be nerve racking for some, but it's also a very special part of the weekend for those in office and the support given by their peers is key to the success of the day and is very much appreciated.

Also, if you take into consideration the time and effort by the hosts to arrange the Sunday morning we need to reverse this trend.

For this year, Lichfield have been fortunate to be able to hold a special service for NACTSEW in the Cathedral, along with a procession which includes horses, mace and sword bearers. It promises to be a remarkable and memorable event.

So may I ask all of you who attend Lichfield this year to do Lichfield, your own Sheriff, yourselves and NACTSEW (in our 40th celebratory year) proud and not forgo this important part of the weekend. Please - let's see you all there!

As I close my newsletter I wish to thank the team behind me, Bob Rudd, Xena Dion and Suzie Mercer for all their hard work and support they provide to the Association and myself. As we approach Easter it only leaves me to wish you all a very happy Easter.



I look forward to the Summer newsletter and the AGM weekend booking forms that accompany it!

Kind regards

Handwritten signature of Andy Swinburne.

Andy Swinburne
Chair NACTSEW

Email: andyswinburne322@btinternet.com



(Haverfordwest Daffodils,
Derek Burke, Southampton)

A Message from our President

Dear Member,



I'm pleased to have this opportunity to say a few words. As I write, the daffodil bulbs they gave us at Haverfordwest are out in bloom and reminding me of a great A G M there last year. The new NACTSEW Committee are now well into their work of keeping the Association relevant and well organised. I Look forward to seeing everyone in Lichfield later this year.

With very best wishes ,
Andrew Gravells.



(Haverfordwest Daffodils, Xena Dion, Poole)