

Address to the Parish Council Forum

Title slide -

This is a very important forum. Each of you is here representing a parish; and between you all, you represent rural Rutland. You are the first level of government. You have real down to earth knowledge of our community; knowledge of the needs, achievements and hopes of those who live in Rutland. You are also, between you, in a position to communicate with all Rutlanders.

As Lord-Lieutenant I want to represent Her Majesty The Queen to everyone in Rutland. To fulfil my role well, I need to tap into your knowledge, to be kept informed and invited to events. Please can you ensure that if there is something happening in your parish that parishioners consider important, you invite me to it? (But please give me plenty of notice!) Please use my role. I need your help to know all that is going on in Rutland.

A Lord-Lieutenant is Her Majesty's eyes and ears in county. As such I wish to encourage deserving groups or businesses to gain Queen's Awards and individuals to get recognition from Her Majesty. I believe that we have outstanding individuals and many voluntary groups doing really great things in our county. I also believe we have outstanding businesses. With your help, I would like to increase the recognition that groups and individuals get. I would like to see more individual honours, and more Queen's Awards for voluntary groups and businesses in Rutland. I need your help to identify likely candidates. I chair an Honours Committee and that committee will give advice and help to anyone who wishes to put a group or individual forward for an award. So please get in touch and we will try to make any application the very best it can be. I would need the

name, contact details and a brief outline of why an award would be deserved in order to put it to the committee.

For groups there are two main types of Queens Awards. These are highly prestigious – the most prestigious awards of their kind. They are judged in London by the honours secretariat, to exacting standards.

New slide - QAVS

One type of award is for voluntary groups – the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. I think we are an outstandingly altruistic county with a huge number of voluntary groups working to meet local needs and make Rutland the happy place it is. Yet we do not have Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service winners. With your help I would like to change that. This award is the MBE for voluntary groups – a really high honour.

For the Queens Award for Voluntary Service, the voluntary group cannot apply itself. The application has to be done for them. So somebody has to nominate them. You may be able to help either by identifying voluntary groups who are making a big difference or by finding a nominator. Let me know if you think a voluntary group is doing something extraordinary and we can see what recognition might be appropriate and where to go from there. As Lord-Lieutenant I do not make nominations myself because I will be involved in the assessment process prior to it being sent to London for national scrutiny. However, the committee and I can give guidance and help find nominators.

New slide - QAE

Queen's Awards for Enterprise are for businesses, although these can include not-for-profit businesses. Unlike the awards for voluntary

service these awards have to be applied for by the enterprises themselves. They are the ones with the detailed knowledge of turnover etc that is necessary for the application.

New slide – Award Categories

There are four categories: Innovation, International Trade, Sustainable Development and Promoting Opportunity. Enterprises can apply in more than one category.

New slide - Eligibility

There is a common misapprehension about these awards which is that they are only for businesses the size of Marks and Spencer. However, this is not true. To qualify, businesses need to have at least two employees. Small and medium sized businesses are very successful. 88% of winners in 2018 were small or medium size enterprises and more than half of winners had less than 50 employees. Out of 8 double award winners, 3 have 10 or fewer employees. An enterprise does not need to be big to win. But it does need to have a message to tell; and to tell it through quantitative and qualitative evidence.

New slide - Individuals

For individuals, Royal recognition comes in varying ways. There are invitations to garden parties. I have the privilege of putting forward names. I would appreciate your help on this, year on year. Please give me names, brief cv and contact details. Do not tell the people you are giving me their names because I cannot guarantee to get everyone an invitation, nor can I guarantee one in the year I am given their names. However, I would expect to get the majority an invitation if they have not been to a Garden Party before and are clearly deserving.

New slide - BEM

The honours system recognises exceptional community effort with a special honour, the British Empire Medal. Her Majesty asks the Lord-Lieutenant to present these on her behalf in county. Recently we had a lovely gathering at Catmose Cottage for a ceremony to present one to Mrs Sheila Saunders for her exceptional services to the communities of Ketton and Barrowden. Please have a think; maybe there are other individuals who are making a big difference in your parish whose names could be put forward.

New slide – MBE etc

There are other honours – MBE, CBE and a Knight or Damehood. Again give me names and a cv, and contact details for **you**. People who are put forward for these honours are not supposed to know – which can make finding out the relevant information difficult. I cannot be a nominator because as Lord-Lieutenant I am a (small) part of the national review process. However, the Lieutenancy Honours Committee can and will offer help and is keen to have names submitted to them.

New slide - Communication

Sometimes I may be a source of information for all of you. For example, I sent out emails to all Parish Clerks in August and followed this by physical letters in September about all that could be done to commemorate the centenary of WW1. I was delighted by the response across the county and to see how many different villages had poppies, beacons and so on. Thank you all very much. It was really special.

New slide – RCC info

I would like to flag though that there are some parishes where the email displayed on Rutland County Council's website does not work. Please can you check this, because it is important that clerks are contactable. I would like to feel that if there is something of importance for the whole county I can communicate quickly with all of you – as I said, you are at the cutting edge the real ground roots of government.

There are many initiatives for the good of our community that you should be aware of. I want to mention a few.

New slide -

At the moment a scheme called the 'Village Ventures Project' is aiming to establish itself in villages to promote health and well-being and liaison between military veterans, the military and the non-military community. The idea is to run events that will benefit all; such as forming a befriending scheme, walking groups, providing gardening, yoga, get togethers etc. It is supported by Rutland County Council and I do hope that you can spread the word about it. It is run by Tony Gray.

New slide -

We all know that mental illness can be a problem. I would like to alert you to the existence of LAMP which is a mental health advocacy organisation and can be of great help to those who are struggling.

New slide -

As many of you know the issue of children's mental health is one that has received national publicity, largely thanks to the interest taken by Young Royals. I am glad to say that Rutland is ahead of the game and has just won a half a million pound lottery grant to introduce

mental health resilience training and first aid across schools in Rutland.

New slide -

Another great initiative is the Sir Laurence Howard Scholarship scheme which has been set up specifically to support Rutlanders who are going to Leicester University so that they do not have to 'earn while they learn'. This is something many students have to do. If you know of someone applying to Leicester please alert them to the scheme. Also at the moment it needs a volunteer to act as a secretary. If you know of somebody who has maybe recently retired and would like a small but responsible and interesting job, please let me know.

New slide -

'For Rutland' is an example of a voluntary organisation that makes a big difference in county. It puts those with life limiting conditions in touch with all financial help available to them. It is brilliant. Many of the people who end up benefitting did not believe they would qualify for help. They had to be persuaded to apply. There is help available so if you know of someone whose circumstances have changed due to a life limiting condition please persuade them to go to Citizens Advice in Oakham. For Rutland fund two specialist advisors here in county. These specialists alert people to all they will qualify for and put in applications with them. They bring in a million pounds a year to ill Rutlanders. Quite something.

I could go on but I will not. I just urge you to consciously try to tell your parishioners about all that is going on in county and put them in touch with Citizens Advice Rutland, me or the County Council if they are in difficulty.

New slide - Thanks

Finally, I would like to thank you all for all you do. Rutland is a remarkable place. Our inhabitants are some of the most generous donors to charity per head in the country. We have an enormous number of voluntary groups doing good for the community. We are also one of the happiest places to live in the country. You play an important role in making Rutland what it is. Please help me fulfil mine. Keep me informed, invite me to things and give me names so I can increase the honours awarded in county.

Thank you very much.