

My term as Mayor of Merton has certainly been different. None of us could have predicted what impact the pandemic was going to have and while it's fair enough to say that it has affected my whole term as Mayor in very many ways, I have been determined to ensure that I do my best for Merton and for my charities.

I am so grateful to my fellow Councillors for nominating me and for their support during this last year.

I wish that I could have met more of Merton's residents in person. I wish that I could have met more of Merton's charities and organisations, who do outstanding work to support our community. I would have loved to have done this. I wish that I could have raised more funding for my charities who have worked throughout Covid to support people and be a lifeline to them; always a point of contact and a break from their isolation but despite this I am so proud of what we all achieved during this difficult time.

I loved meeting those of you whom I did. Setting up the scheme to deliver certificates, in recognition of what groups and individuals have done for our community during COVID is something of which I am so proud. Merton has so very many kind, thoughtful and caring people living and working in our

borough. The people of Merton supported each other throughout this time and I saw our local community helping others. Each certificate was given as a result of nominees from Merton residents and it was rewarding to acknowledge people who went ahead and provided for us all.

As I presented certificates, socially distanced of course, I was taken aback at the surprise and delight with which they were received. Certificates were issued to schools, doctors and dentists surgeries, care homes and places of worship, which remained open, in different ways, throughout COVID.

There are still very many people who deserve certificates and recognition that I have not reached and I'm sorry that we didn't have time to get to you all. Circumstances have reduced my ability to visit more people, and now I am running out of time but if anyone does have someone they wish to nominate please do let me know. There are a number of individuals and groups I wish to thank.

My charities; The Merton and Morden Guild, Anne and Hamish and Morden Little League, Andy Butcher, who were tenacious in their support of me in Zoom fund raising events. You must all be well aware of the Zoom Bingo and Sweepstake as well as the online auctions and raffles. My committee,

comprised of, as well as my charities and Deputy Mayor; Councillors Agatha Akyigyina, Janice Howard, Linda Kirby and Edith Macauley, who supported and encouraged me, mainly at a distance via Zoom. My Consort, my daughter Amanda, who was delighted to attend 2 events when conditions allowed. My thanks also to my Deputy Mayor, John Dehaney, whom was a positive support to me with his Consort, his wife Audrey.

Some people have been incredibly generous with donations, whether financially or with prizes. Very many Councillors and the wider community have generously supported the virtual events. To all of you I am extremely grateful. Without your support my position would have been more difficult and frustrating.

My sincere thanks to Sandra and Carl; their attention to protocol is exemplary. They both ensured that I knew where I was going, what to be ready for and the necessary detail I would require. Carl had to be tolerant of my back seat driving; of me telling him the quickest route to take, especially in my local area. We certainly weaved our way around Merton, delivering the certificates in person. Also to Steve, who stepped up to support me whenever needed. Sandra was forever ready to any suggestion I made and was prepared to act at quite short notice which I found invaluable. She always had a ready smile to any idea I had and

enabled me to feel that I could make suggestions and receive a balanced critical response. Sandra is a positive person and is a delight to work with in all areas. Carl, as many of you know, likes a joke and it amused him to find my keys or phone which often dropped in the car without me realizing until I needed them. There the needed item would be in Carl's safe hand. Sandra and Carl are a magnificent team. Together the three of us laughed our way through the ongoing changes in legislation to keep ourselves in a constructive frame of mind.

I wish also to thank Ged and the two Louises for their support with Council meetings.

I sincerely thank every one of you who has helped and supported me during this different year. My very best wishes to Councillor Brunt who will take over this mantle; I shall support you all I can.

Thank you.