

AGENDA 8, Enc iii) Civic Head Report, November 2023 to January 2024

Over the past eight months from May 2023 to December 2023, I had the privilege of attending 43 civic engagements in my capacity as civic head.

These events allowed me to support and highlight a diverse range of charitable organisations and community initiatives. From charity concerts raising funds and awareness, to grant cheque presentations for a whole host of project and initiatives to benefit the community. Each engagement offered impactful opportunities to connect with community members and learn about meaningful causes.

I am grateful to have been welcomed into spaces that demonstrate the spirit of generosity that runs through our town. As 2023 ends, I look back with appreciation of the people I have met, and the inspiring work being done to make lives better.

Engagements attended since my last report include;

Thursday 30th November – Ashington Christmas Light Switch-On

A successful event for ATC with hundreds turning out to see the lights switched on by Daniel James and join in the festive fun at the YMCA. [Ashington Town Council](#)

Friday 1st December – Mortal Fools Youth Theatre

A showcase of Ashington groups work. A well attended night which was also available to watch online.

Wednesday 6th December – Blossoming Communities Small Grant Fund cheque presentation.

The contribution aims to cover the costs of arts and crafts materials for the weekly wellbeing workshops held at Hirst Pavilion. There were eight members of the group present at the session as well as Sharon who facilitates the crafts, today they were making pictures and cards with buttons. [Ashington Town Council](#)

Saturday 16th December – Ashington Christmas Trail certificate presentations

An enjoyable morning spent at Ashington Library handing out certificates and selection boxes to all the children who took part in the Christmas Trail. [Ashington Town Council](#)

Monday 18th December – Christmas Window Display Competition Winner Presentation

Heather and Jasmine of Mind Body & Spirit were delighted to win the window display competition. There were 13 shops took part this year, an additional ten shops compared to last year! [Ashington Town Council](#)

Tuesday 19th December – Readley Charity Christmas Afternoon Tea Event

On the 19 December, Councillor Victor Bridges, attended a fundraising and awareness event for the Readley Charity, at the Grand Hotel in Sunderland.

The Readley Charity was launched, in 2015, by Samantha Cox in memory of her father Paul Readhead. The Charity provides practical support to those who have suffered from Asbestos, particularly through Mesothelioma. During her father's illness Sam gained a personal experience of mesothelioma that highlighted the need for a holistic approach, encompassing emotional, physical, social and financial wellbeing in tackling the disease and its effects. The Charity works closely with Mesothelioma UK in supporting those suffering

from the effects of asbestos and Mesothelioma. Support includes home visits, signposting and monthly support meetings (both on-line and face to face across the NE).

A number Civic of dignitaries from across the North East attended the event including representatives from Blyth, North Tyneside, Sunderland and County Durham. An article was developed for the Town Council website promoting the work of the charity. [Ashington Town Council](#)

Wednesday 3rd January – Ashington Veterans & Elders Volunteer Celebration Night

A thoroughly enjoyable evening hosted by the Ashington and Veterans Elders Institute, which was supported by Asda. The evening was arranged as a thank you to all the volunteers and funders who have worked tirelessly all year for the community. [Ashington Town Council](#)

Please take the time to have a look through the newly formatted Civic Head News page that Sharon and Gary have worked to improve and make more reader-friendly and engaging.

<https://www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk/news/civic-head.php?cat=civic-head>