

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR

What a year.

It started with Her Majesties Jubilee and the huge number of street parties right across the Borough. David and I happily visited many of them, in every area of Havering. Fortunately the intermittent heavy rain didn't dampen the spirits of our residents or lessen their celebratory mood.

On to the Olympics and particularly the celebrations, parades etc. within our schools. I visited and joined in many of them. There were the events which the Borough organised, which I believe everyone who came along, enjoyed. Then I chased the torch from Hornchurch to Rainham Village. Everyone turned out in such numbers to see and mark this occasion.

Onto the Royal Anglians who exercised their Freedom of the Borough rights, which to me, was the most memorable of the big events. The brave young men and women parading through our town within days of returning from Afghanistan, was, in my mind a strange mix, of feeling both humble and proud at the same time. I again salute their bravery.

Next we had the honour of the Queen opening the new kid on our educational block - Drapers Academy. I believe that this school will prove to be a great success and will impact very favourably on its surrounding area.

Over the year I visited many schools and witnessed the dedication and commitment of the teachers and staff. The school Christmas Pantomimes and plays are a happy memory and indeed, for me, leave West End productions in the shade. I have also been privileged to be able to entertain many of our primary schools and uniformed groups in the Chamber and Mayor's Parlour. The children asked many questions some of which were quite challenging and certainly kept us on our toes. I would like to think that this will help our young people to appreciate the democracy we live in.

There have been so many events all of which in one way or another underlined for me the tireless efforts of so many to enrich the lives of both the community and individuals.

I would like to congratulate a young lady called Princess Bright, who has just been elected as Havering's new Young Leader. She will represent the views of young people at a local level and across London, and will advise Councillors on issues affecting young people in this borough.

I end my year with an overwhelming sense of pride in Havering and its residents.

I thank my staff for their patience and support.