

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MAYOR**

May I begin by telling you of the great pleasure I had in welcoming the Bishop of Chelmsford, The Right Reverend Stephen Cottrell, to the Council. It was my first official appointment as the Mayor of Havering and Bishop Stephen's visit was the perfect start to my year in office.

I would now like to congratulate everyone involved in the Council's successful £1.7million Heritage Lottery funding bid, to help restore Raphael Park to its former glory. A great deal of work went into the bid which was put together with the help of residents and volunteers from the Friends of Raphael Park.

Congratulations are also in order for The Havering Safe and Sound Group which has received a top award from the Association of Town Centre Management Awards. The award for Developing the Evening and Night-time Economy recognised the excellent teamwork of the Council, the police, licensees, door supervisors, taxi marshals and street pastors to make Romford a safer and more pleasant place to enjoy a night out.

Also in the award spotlight is our Trading Standards team. I was privileged to be at the presentation of an award by the Anti-Counterfeiting Group which named the team as the best department in the country in their annual awards.

The team was given the 2011 Department Award for Excellence for 'outstanding work' in Operation Augusta – the investigation and successful prosecution of a criminal network engaged in a multi-million pound fake golf club scam on eBay.

And speaking of winners – our Havering Youth Games team did incredibly well to secure medals in a number of sports at the 2011 London Youth Games. We came seventh overall and were extremely good sports with an exemplary performance on and off the pitches.

I can't tell you enough how proud I am of our school children and students. No matter how many events I attend their talent, dedication and sheer hard work never fails to impress.

Pupils at the Primary School Festival of Music and the Speak out Challenge gave exceptional performances.

Staying with music, once again the performance by the Westminster Philharmonic was outstanding at the Langton's Summer Concert – and a just reward for the 2,000 or so people who braved the weather.

I was also one of the many here who celebrated Armed Forces Day. It was a great way for us to show our appreciation of the servicemen and women who serve our country. It was a very proud day for us all and I had the added honour of presenting awards of meritorious service to local people who had given distinguished service to the borough. Well done to everyone involved in these events for making them such a success.

This year is also the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our town twinning with Ludwigshafen. The relationship between us is long and meaningful. It represents the hopes of a post-war generation and has grown over time, bringing us together with a greater understanding of our cultures, through education, business or friendship... and long may it continue.