

PRESS RELEASE

The 2023 Town Mayor's Civic Celebration

This year's Civic Celebration, for the first time was held at the Loughton Synagogue on Sunday 26 February, and was organised by the current Town Mayor, Cllr Barbara Cohen.

Councillor Cohen reflected on her year in office, and highlighted the many engagements she attended, including the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the beacon lighting on the Hillyfields Open Space, the death of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II after which she read the proclamation at Loughton Library proclaiming the new King, Charles III.

She also spoke about the Jessel Green Fun Day, the Town Council's Citizenship Awards which will be presented at the Annual Town Meeting on 15 March, the Building Design award, Christmas window competition, Remembrance Sunday service and parade, the service to celebrate 150 years of St Mary's Church in the High Road, the Menorah lighting on Standard Green and the Holocaust Memorial Day service on the green at Traps Hill.

She said "All of this happens in Loughton of which I am immensely proud of. It is my home; I am appreciative of the opportunities I have had and filled with gratitude at being given the honour of being Loughton Mayor this year".

The ceremony conducted by Rabbi Yanky Abrams included an insight into the Jewish Year of Festivals accompanied by music from Rafi Sandford, a reading titled "3 Forest Hamlets" by Councillor Chris Pond and prayers read by the Epping Forest Youth Councillors Krish Gohil and Olu Ayandare, a prayer for the Royal Family and a prayer for the people of Ukraine, respectively. Rafi also performed two further songs "When you Believe" composed by Stephen Schwartz from the Prince of Thieves and "One Day" Matisyahu song.

Guests included Deputy Lieutenants of Essex Amrik Sandhu and Sidra Naeem, Epping Forest District Council chairman, Councillor Mary Sartin together with chairman from neighbouring Parish councils of Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, Epping and Waltham Abbey.

Also attending were Luke Lowrie (Red Balloon Foundation which provides drop-in centres for teenagers), Iona Kay (Roding Valley Nature Reserve) Nina Goswami (Citizen Advice), Pesh Kapasiawala (YES Partnership and 3Food4U).

The delicious afternoon tea was provided by Loughton Shul Catering and the security and parking were organised by Les Gilbert and his team.

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