

Mayor's Communications, Wednesday 28th November 2018

The past few months have been extremely busy with Ipswich bursting with activity as we move into winter.

There has been a number of young people visiting the Mayor's Parlour from local Ipswich Brownies and Junior Sea Cadets, students from the Ipswich school, and the Ipswich High School as well as children from St Joseph's School Council. Adam and I were also pleased to welcome members of the Ipswich Building Society when they visited in early September.

I also made several visits to Christchurch Mansion. I joined the children from St Helen's Primary School when they "took over" Christchurch Mansion last week for an afternoon of history - and fun! And, of course, I had to see Rodin's Kiss and Tell exhibition, which was launched last Friday. This is an amazing exhibition and definitely worth a visit. The exhibition will be open until 28th April 2019.

It has also been the season for celebration - and for remembrance.

Adam and I have joined local businesses in Ipswich to celebrate special milestones. There's been the 10th anniversary of the Glasswells store in Ipswich, 25 years of the Stained Glass Studio on Stoke Street and now the opening of their new studio. We attended the Black History Month celebrations and a graduation ceremony for students from the University of Suffolk; we've presented awards at the Ipswich Society's annual awards, the Ipswich Allotment Holders Awards and attended the Suffolk BME Business Awards.

We also joined residents at the Hazeldell Care Home to celebrate the 100th birthday of Florence Lucas.

It is of course the 100th anniversary of Women's Suffrage and I've enjoyed attending a Women's Festival event at the University of Suffolk, taken part in a Suffrage Flag walk in Ipswich, and named an Ipswich Bus the "Constance Andrews" after an Ipswich Suffragette.

This November has also been the 100 years since the end of World War One. The Ipswich community has commemorated this in so many memorable ways and Adam and I have been privileged to be part of it.

We took part in the launch of the county's Poppy Appeal held in Sailmakers Shopping Centre in Ipswich, which included a gun carriage being pulled by cadets through the streets of Ipswich.

Ipswich School invited us to attend an unveiling of art work and opening of a memorial garden for students from the School involved in World War One.

We attended an "Eve of Peace" service organised by the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk at Bury Cathedral.

Ipswich also hosted two Armistice children's services, one at the Cemetery at Belvedere Road and one at the Cenotaph in Christchurch Park. Both were very well attended with 20 schools taking part including dignitaries from Arras, France accompanied by three award-winning English-speaking students.

There was also the World War One Tea Party at St Mary at Stoke Church and the Sunset Service at St Mary & St Botolph's Church, Whitton, where I had the honour to lay a wreath.

Our Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph in Ipswich on Sunday 11th November was a dignified and well-organised event. The park was beautiful, the weather played its part, and as expected, the people of Ipswich attended in their thousands for this special Remembrance event.

We are now moving into the festive season and Adam and I took part in switching the Ipswich Christmas Lights on last Thursday. We were delighted to join the people of Ipswich and the Regent Theatre panto cast for what was a spectacular evening of entertainment on the Cornhill.

I'd like to thank everyone who supported both my Charity Folk Music concert and the Shelley's Vegetarian Supper. These events were a great success raising over £1,300 for my charity: The Suffolk Law Centre. The next charity event is a Festive Tour of Christchurch Mansion on Tuesday evening, 11th December starting at 6.30pm. It's £5 per person, so please contact the Mayor's Office to book your place.

Finally, as you may know, Judge John Devaux will be retiring as the Honorary Recorder for Ipswich at the end of this week. John has carried out the duties of the Honorary Recorder for Ipswich very conscientiously during his 18 years in post and he and his wife Fiona have been a credit to Ipswich. On behalf of the Council and the people of Ipswich, I would like to record a vote of thanks to John and Fiona at this meeting, and we send our best wishes to him and his family for the future. The Council will be considering a replacement for the Honorary Recorder for Ipswich in the New Year.