THE SHRIEVAL CHAIN AND BADGE OF OFFICE PRESENTED TO ALDERMAN AND SHERIFF-ELECT ALISON GOWMAN

The Sheriff's authority is represented by the three stranded chain and the City's coat of arms. The jewel, or badge, is a frolic allowed to the Sheriff to express their own coat of arms, interests and supporters. A chance to shimmer as a Sheriff.

I chose to have the collar and jewel designed by Dave Harper of W.H.Darby, working in consultation with Wynyard Wilkinson of the Company of Arts Scholars. The actual fabrication of the jewel was carried out by Martyn Wykes and his British-trained team.

My coat of arms is engulfed by mobius strips that speak to my activity and energy and show the paradox that abounds in life, needing us to look at things in different ways.

The prominent shields are of my Livery Companies - the Glovers, Plaisterers, Solicitors and Chartered Surveyors. My position as an honorary Upholder is marked by the eider duck that also notes my interest in birds. The flame represents both my position as honorary Fueller and Methodism in linking to the Aldersgate Flame of John Wesley, commemorated in the bronze flame outside the Museum of London where I am both a trustee of the Flame and of the Museum. Methodism still burns in my heart. As an Honorary Constructor, six links are golden bricks referencing the construction business and my professional life as a City commercial real estate lawyer.

The shields of the Vintry and Dowgate Wards Club alongside the City Livery Club and The Royal Society of St George are organisations where I have undertaken the leading role and promoted the City to a wider audience.

Durham University and Van Mildert College are essential to my backstory and the Palatinate Purple background underpins the central jewel. My motto Sic Vos Non Vobis is my College motto taken from Virgil and translates as "Not for (Y)ourselves", indicating my wish to serve selflessly but alongside others (not alone).

Between the jewel and the chain is London Bridge – an enduring symbol of the City representing the philanthropy that flowed from Londoners towards the bridge and still emanates today from the City Bridge Trust where I served as Chair.

The coat of arms was designed by William Hunt working with John Petrie, Windsor Herald. As an unmarried woman my coat of arms must be displayed on a lozenge; neither shield nor crest is allowed, being martial devices. The formal description of the coat of arms is: Per fess Argent and Sable on a Pale engrailed counterchanged in chief two Billets palewise in pale Or between two St Cuthbert's Crosses Purpure and in base a Sword erect Gules between four Billets palewise in pale Or.

The Shrieval Chain and Badge of Office
Presented to
Alderman and Sheriff-Elect Nicholas Lyons

The theme of the design is an eternal Celtic knot, and its shape is taken from The Book of Kells, the ninth century masterpiece kept at Trinity College, Dublin.

The interwoven construction of the badge shows the many facets in the life of a Sheriff drawn together. Nicholas's coat of arms in hand-painted enamel has the shield of King's School, Canterbury, where Nicholas and Felicity met and where their four children were educated, at its centre. The quadrants within represent Livery Companies the Merchant Taylors, the Educators and the Insurers, the scales of Justice also reflecting the Old Bailey. Above, the lion rampant, holding the green harp of Ireland, rises from the white tower of Tower Ward, decorated with sheaves of wheat for the Bakers Company.

Around the arms, the intertwined knot loops hold the "floating" shields of Trinity College Dublin, Gonville and Caius College Cambridge, The Honourable the Irish Society, St Paul's Cathedral, Canterbury Cathedral, St Dunstan's College, Tower Ward Club and the County of Norfolk.

The badge rises via the façade of Temple Bar, the only surviving ancient City gateway, to the coat of arms of the City of London mounted on an iconic Dara Knot, symbolising inner strength.

The three strands of chain ascend to the shoulder pieces featuring open books representing Nicholas's father's academic distinction, Felicity's publishing career and Nicholas's own passion for education. Engraved on the pages are the emblems of four golf clubs of which he is a member: Sunningdale, Royal St George's, Royal West Norfolk and the Seniors Golf Society.

The badge was designed by Grant Macdonald and made in his Bankside workshop.

The Armorial Bearings for Nicholas Lyons were designed by John Petrie