



Citation for Freedom of the Town of Edlington – Robert Reid

Robert Reid was born on 3rd January 1975 and has lived and worked in Edlington for the majority of his life. Robert's maternal and paternal Grandparents had all moved to Edlington from around the UK to work at the Yorkshire Main Colliery.

Growing up in Edlington, Robert and his siblings Karen and Tina were encouraged to attend local youth groups by his parents and Grandfather Jimmy Reid, who was at this time a member of the Royal British Legion Committee and responsible for organising the communities Annual Remembrance Parade. Robert enjoyed helping his Grandad Reid to distribute and collect poppy appeal tins each year and took a keen interest in the parade, which he is now one of the main organisers of for Edlington Town Council.

At a young age Robert attended the Methodist Chapel Sunday School, Youth Club and Boys Brigade, the Scouts, Edlington Diamonds Jazz Band (on the baton) and St John's Church Choir. Robert was also a member of the Warmsworth Swingers Jazz Band playing the Marimba. Robert's talent and interest in singing and music was encouraged (following in his Mother's Footsteps as a soloist for the Methodist Mission Partnership in Yorkshire) he then joined the choir at Victoria Road School, singing solos to represent the school at church services all across Doncaster and singing for the Bishops of Sheffield and Beverley on numerous occasions.

Robert took great pride in his community from a very young age and attended the odd Edlington Town Council Meeting as young as age 10, only then being allowed to sit outside of the door. As a teenager Robert first became a community organiser to raise funds for the Doncaster Baby Unit Trust which he founded following the difficult birth of his friends Twin Girls.

Encouraging local people to join the committee, very quickly £2000 was raised through raffles, street collections and fancy dress floats. Robert sought to gain a Royal Patronage for the Baby Unit Trust, writing to Her Majesty the Queen, Prince Charles and Princess Diana and Her Majesty the Queen Mother, none of whom, were able to accede to his requests. Rob then continued writing to Her Majesty the Queen Mother who took a great interest in the work going on in Edlington and then sent Robert a missive from Clarence House offering to donate a prize for a raffle. Her Majesty then sent a presentation case containing individually wrapped silver spoons and a letter of congratulations to Robert on his efforts.

Robert wrote his first ever funding bid to raise funds for the Warmsworth Swingers Jazz Band around 1988. He wanted to replace every instrument and provide a new uniform for the band of 45 children. Weeks later the bid was won bringing in a grant of £6000. When Rob presented the cheque to the treasurer of the Band, Lynn Hudson, she did not believe the cheque was genuine, gave him a telling off and rang the grant provider to check it was official.

Robert was also at this time a Cadet in the St John Ambulance and was selected within a group of 5 Cadets to compete in Nursing and First Aid competitions. Rob's team went on to win the local, Borough, County and Regional Finals meaning they won a ticket to compete at the prestigious St



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John Ambulance National Finals in London with teams competing from across the Commonwealth and World. The previous year had produced a winning Team from Edlington.

Robert's team were told at the time that the unit could not afford the £700 to fund the trip and Robert decided to try and raise the funds by resurrecting the then abandoned Miners Gala which had folded years earlier and developed an idea to create an umbrella charity to manage this.

Robert wrote numerous letters to Shirley Newton the Youth Leader at Edlington Youth Club at the time presenting his proposed constitution for the idea, and was invited along to speak about his ambitions. Within months a committee of local people came together to support Robert at the youth club to enable the St John Ambulance team to attend the national finals. The Community Profile Charity was then born. The Gala was a huge success for the community raising over £1000, enabling Rob and the team to compete at the National Finals in Croydon, London. Sadly no trophies were won but Edlington was again proudly represented at National Level, with the Gala continuing on for many decades onwards.

The community Profile Charity went from strength to strength and during the following 4 or 5 years, thousands of pounds were raised from raffles, events and fundraising enabling small grants to be provided to 15 local groups. Over time the charity evolved becoming ECHO a few years later and then setting the stage to enable later formation of Edlington Community Organisation, that has gone on to do amazing things over the years generating over a million pounds of funding to support vital services to the community, beginning during the period of Objective One funding from Europe.

During the early stages of Community Profile, Robert was then taken under the wings of Cllr Tommy Mahon, who was Mayor of Edlington at the time, former Town Mayor Cllr Eddie Walsh, Ward Councillor Colin Wedd and Member of Parliament Martin Redmond and was reported in the press at the time as Edlington's Brainchild.

Robert attributes his keen interests in politics to the mentoring he received during this period of his youth and the opportunities he was afforded to represent Edlington to grant funders and community stakeholders across the region including organisations such as The Prince's Trust, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and attending Civic and Military events with delegates from Edlington Town Council, Doncaster Council and Parliament.

Rob then went on to a career in the newly forming Call Centre industry working in British Gas Northern Call Centre in Leeds and onwards to managing and developing call centre operations for Ventura, Vertex, The Department for Work and Pensions, United Utilities and Major FTSE 100 companies across all major industries in the UK based in major cities all across the North West of England.

Robert has also dedicated his adult life to fostering young people, first becoming a private foster carer in 2008 and later becoming a professional foster carer with Fostering People in 2016, which he continues to this day. Robert has fostered 4 young people in his lifetime on a long term basis and has involved all the children in his care in all aspects of his civic life, with his foster son Chris becoming the Youngest Mayor Consort in the Towns History at 12 years old and his foster son Kyle



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following in Chris' Footsteps becoming Mayor Consort in 2020. Leoni Grace Anderson then went on to become the youngest Mayor Consort in 2019 at the age of 11. Rob is extremely proud to have encouraged young people to become involved in the civic life of the community and is also proud to have become the first openly gay Mayor of Edlington in 2018.

Upon his return to the community Robert again became involved in community work and volunteering as well as taking a keen interest in Politics which continues to this day. Beginning as a volunteer at the Edlington Hilltop Centre in 2013, Robert went on to become the Community Officer for Sir Thomas Wharton Academy and Centre Manager for the Edlington Hilltop Centre, responsible for managing and generating funding bids and grants. Working part time and volunteering full time hours, Robert managed a turnover in excess of £1,000,000 over the time he worked at the Hilltop Centre with a social return of investment of many millions more. Robert also writes funding bids for the Town Council and supports community groups and individuals with bid writing.

Time Line

Childhood Years - Edlington Boys Brigade, 39th Doncaster Scout Group - Edlington, St John Church Choir, Victoria Primary Choir, St John Ambulance Cadet, Edlington Diamonds Jazz Band, Warmsworth Swingers Jazz Band,

1989 Founder and Vice Chair of Edlington Community Profile Umbrella Charity

1989 Founder - re-established Edlington Gala (formerly Edlington Miners Gala)

1990 Co-Founder and Secretary of Doncaster Baby Unit Trust, Doncaster

1991 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother donated Silver Spoons

2012 Chair of Edlington, Warmsworth & Conisborough Branch Labour Party (BLP)

2012 Volunteer in the Constituency Office of the Rt. Hon. Caroline Flint MP

2012 Vice-Chair of Membership for Don Valley Constituency Labour Party (CLP)

2012 Volunteer Appropriate Adult, SOVA, South Yorkshire Police Stations

2013 Volunteer First Aider with the St Johns Ambulance, Edlington

2013 Commendation for Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults in Police Custody - SOVA

2013 Volunteer Mentor with the Youth Offending Service, Doncaster

2013 Secretary Edlington, Warmsworth & Conisborough Branch Labour Party (BLP)

2014 Chair of Martinwells Centre Patient Participation Group

2014 Governor & Director - Sir Thomas Wharton Community College Co-operative Academy Trust

2014 Member Sir Thomas Wharton Community Choir



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- 2015 Chair of the Don Valley Constituency Labour Party (CLP)
- 2015 Director of Edlington Youth Direction CIC – Company Secretary
- 2016 Trustee of Altogether 4 Autism
- 2016 Lead Organiser for the Annual Cadet Forces Remembrance Event
- 2016 Volunteer and Grants Lead for Edlington Community Woodland Project
- 2017 Town Councillor Edlington Town Council
- 2017 Deputy Mayor of Edlington Town Council
- 2017 Director of Exceed Learning Partnership Multi Academy Trust
- 2017 Governor and Trustee of Edlington Victoria Academy
- 2018 Mayor of Edlington Town Council
- 2019 Co-Founder and Co-Leader of Edlington and Warmsworth First Political Party
- 2021 Doncaster Borough Councillor Edlington and Warmsworth Ward
- 2022 Co-Founder and Trustee – Tarquins Animal and Bird Sanctuary