

Marilyn Porter - Citation – 2022

As Civic and Lieutenancy Officer at Dorset Council, Marilyn Porter has provided support to countless community and charitable causes across Dorset.

Having served under five Lord-Lieutenants since taking up the role in the 1970s, Marilyn has organised visits to the county by members of the Royal Family, including Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Majesty King Charles III, then Prince of Wales.

Marilyn describes her job, which mainly involves supporting the Lord-Lieutenant in their duties as The Monarch's representative in the county, as "an honour and a joy". Aside from royal visits, she particularly enjoys the many opportunities to meet the volunteers serving their communities. In 2000, her own service was recognised when she was made a Member of the Royal Victorian Order.

Marilyn has fond memories of her childhood and education. A horse lover from an early age, she recalls turning down the chance to attend a boarding school in favour of a local grammar, as it meant she could stay close to her precious pony and not risk having to share her with other children at the school. Marilyn's own aspirations to study a degree were put aside after her beloved father died suddenly, leaving her mother to take on the running of the family's 500-acre farm, which she did very successfully. Marilyn remained in Dorset to support her mother, who she cites as an exceptional role model, and enrolled instead at a private secretarial college. Having completed the course ahead of schedule, Marilyn immediately secured work and soon joined Dorset County Council, first as Secretary to the County Architect and then as Secretary to the Chief Executive. As her responsibilities grew to include managing a team, Marilyn invested further in her education and gained a postgraduate management qualification while working and bringing up her two daughters, who were just nine and ten when she was very sadly widowed.

Marilyn attributes her ability to work alongside people from all walks of life to her happy and fortunate upbringing in rural Dorset, where her parents hosted the families of farm workers as well as local dignitaries. This has led her to believe in the importance of valuing people for who they are, not where they come from.

Pro Chancellor. I have the honour to present Marilyn Porter, and I ask you to confer upon her an Honorary Fellowship of Bournemouth University.

Words: 366