



# **Buntingford Town Council**

## **PROTOCOL TO MARK THE DEATH OF A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY (Guidance for Councillors and Officers)**

First Issued 5.7.17  
Reviewed September 2022  
Adopted July 2023  
Re-adopt due May 2027

## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This protocol sets out the action to be taken in the event of the death of:

HM The King  
HRH The Queen Consort  
HRH The Prince of Wales  
HRH The Princess of Wales  
HRH The Earl of Wessex  
HRH The Countess of Wessex  
HRH The Princess Royal

## **2 Implementation of the protocol on hearing of the death**

- 2.1 Plans to mark a death should be implemented only after a formal announcement has been made. For example “It has been announced by Buckingham Palace/Downing Street that ...”
- 2.2 The Mayor in discussion with the Town Clerk has the authority to implement the Protocol.
- 2.3 The authorising person will arrange for the Union Flag to be lowered immediately. Books of Condolence should be opened on the next working day.

## **3. Flag Flying**

- 3.1 On the formal announcement of the death, flags are flown at half mast until 08.00 on the morning following the state funeral. If the death or period of mourning falls on St George’s day, the English flag should be replaced by the Union Flag.
- 3.2 For the Sovereign, the funeral will take place 10 days after the day of death. For other senior members of the Royal Family, the funeral will take place 8 days after the day of death.
- 3.3 The day following the death of the Sovereign is known as Proclamation Day (the day when the new Sovereign is proclaimed). On this day, flags will be flown at half mast until 11.00.
- 3.4 Flags will be flown at full mast from 11.00 on Proclamation Day to coincide with the Reading of the Principal Proclamation, until 13.00 on the day after proclamation Day.

## **4. Book of Condolence**

- 4.1 On the next working day following the death, a book of condolence will be placed in an appropriate place on the ground floor of The Manor House, with a chair, black tablecloth, pens and a framed picture of the deceased.
- 4.2 During a pandemic, the book will be available for 2 hours per day Monday to Friday. A member of staff or Councillor will be on site to supervise ensuring only one person at a time and the use of sanitiser on entering and exiting. Masks to be worn.
- 4.3 The book should be loose leaf so pages can be re-ordered. The Mayor and The Town Clerk should be the first to sign the book. If this is not possible, the pages can be re-

arranged before the book is closed. It also allows for the removal of offensive comments or defacing.

- 4.4 The Mayor will issue a statement via the Town Clerk, expressing the sadness of the Council and people of Buntingford at the news of the death. The statement will confirm flags are to be flown at half mast and give details of the Book of Condolence. The statement will also be posted on social media, with a link to the Buckingham Palace e-book of condolence ([www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk)).
- 4.5 The Book of Condolence will be closed at the end of the working day following the day of the funeral.
- 4.6 The books should be placed in archive and a letter written to Buckingham Palace informing them of the location of the books.

## 5. **Events during the period of Mourning.**

- 5.1 From the day of the death until the day after the funeral, careful thought should be given to the types of events and activities hosted by the Council or attended by the Mayor. Some events may not fit in with the mood of the nation and may need to be cancelled as a mark of respect.
- 5.2 If the Mayor wishes, a Service of Remembrance may be arranged to bring local people together on the eve of the funeral.

## 6 **Proclamation Day**

- 6.1 The Proclamation will be made at St James' Palace at 11.00 (or 14.00 if a Sunday - to be confirmed). The Proclamation is then cascaded.
  - 1. It will be read at the Royal Exchange in the City of London at 12.00
  - 2. The Heralds travel to Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff to make the proclamation the day after the Proclamation in England.
  - 3. Once the Proclamation has been made, The High Sheriff will read the Proclamation at County level. The Lord Lieutenant will be present at that ceremony. Mayors and Chairmen of Hertfordshire will be invited to attend.
  - 4. Once the proclamation has been made at County level, the Chairman of East Herts Council will read it at District level at 14.00.
  - 5. Following the Proclamation by the Chairman of East Herts Council, the Buntingford Town Mayor will read the Proclamation on the steps of the Manor House at 15.00 accompanied by the Town Clerk. Black armbands should be worn and the Mayor his Chain of Office.
  - 6. Arrangements should be made to tell the public in advance and invitations should be sent to Councillors, local Churches, a Deputy Lord Lieutenant and staff.
  - 7. Local Police should be informed of the reading.
  - 8. The proclamation wording will be publicised on the Council's web site and social media accounts. **Wording available from [www.royal.uk](http://www.royal.uk) or [www.privvy-council.org.uk](http://www.privvy-council.org.uk)**

## 7. **Dress Code**

7.1 While flags are at half mast, black ties, armbands should be worn by the Mayor and Town Clerk

7.2 On the day of the death, on the day of the funeral and when public mourning is observed, the Mayor's chain should include a black ribbon.

## **8. Marking a Silence**

8.1 On the death of the Sovereign or other senior member of the Royal Family, there will be a 2 minute silence at 11.00 on the day of the funeral led by the Mayor on the steps of the Manor House. Arrangements should be made to tell the public in advance. The end of the silence will be marked by the Mayor.

## **9. Letters of Condolence**

9.1 On the death of the Sovereign, a letter of condolence should be sent to the New Sovereigns Private Secretary asking for condolences to be sent to the New Sovereign.

9.2 On the death of a member of the Royal Family, a letter of condolence should be sent to the Private Secretary of the deceased asking for condolence to be passed to the next of kin and other members of the family.

## **10. Marking the death of:**

The Prime Minister

The MP for North East Hertfordshire

A serving member of the Town Council

10.1 Flags to be flown at half mast on the day of the announcement of the death.

10.2 Usual flag flying arrangements will resume on the days between the announcement of the death and the day of the funeral.

10.3 Flags will fly at half mast again on the day of the funeral.

**All actions required by the Mayor to be undertaken by the Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's absence.**

### **Buntingford.**

#### **Death of the Sovereign.**

Arrangements will be made for public flowers to be laid around the War Memorial, the Mayor to lay flowers as soon as practical following the announcement of the death. Flowers to be cleared no later than 1 week following the funeral.