

CRITERIA

Nomination for Honorary Freedom of Buckden

POLICY STATEMENT

Today, the grant of honorary freedom in the United Kingdom is governed by the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009). The 1972 Act enabled the councils of cities, royal boroughs, boroughs, and parishes (or, in Wales, communities) with the status of a royal town to confer the status of honorary freeman on "persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the council, rendered eminent services" to the local area. The 2009 Act extends the ability to grant the status of honorary freeman to any county, city, district, borough, town, parish or community council (so removing the requirement for the town to have 'royal' status, and also enabling county councils to confer the honour).

From 12 January 2010, all Parish Councils may exercise powers to confer the title of "Honorary Freeman" or "Honorary Freewoman" to persons of distinction and those who, in the Parish Council's opinion, have rendered eminent services to Buckden (section 249(5) and (6) of the 1972 Act). The admission of an Honorary Freeman or Honorary Freewoman must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full council specially convened for such purpose and passed by no less than two-thirds of the members of the Parish Council (Section 249(8) of the 1972 Act). That section also requires "notice of the object of the meeting" to be given. This confirms the need for the agenda with the public notice and summons to members in respect of the council meeting to itemise a motion to confer the title of Honorary Freeman or Honorary Freewoman. A local council may spend a reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person on whom it has conferred the title of honorary freeman or honorary freewoman (Section 249(9) of the 1972 Act).

From time to time, members of the community demonstrate outstanding service and/or contribution to the wellbeing of the Buckden or outstanding feats of endeavour or achievement that bring credit to the community and it is recognised that their commitment should be acknowledged. The Parish Council may choose to do so by awarding to an individual the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Village of Buckden.

SERVICE

The nominee may have given extensive and eminent service to the Parish of Buckden and its local community or may have made a significant contribution to the well-being of its residents, the preservation of its historic character or its natural or built environment. The nominee must have made an outstanding contribution to the Village such that the nominee's contribution can be seen to have been a wholly altruistic and public-spirited desire to contribute to the benefit of Buckden and its residents. Exceptionally, a nominee may have achieved outstanding feats of endeavour or achievement which brings national or international credit to the community.

NOMINATION CRITERIA

The following will be taken into account when consideration is given to granting the honour of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Village:

1. Service in a voluntary capacity, but this should not preclude the honour being awarded to a person whose dedication and contribution is significantly above that expected from their occupation;
2. Nominees need not necessarily be residents of Buckden but will be judged on their contribution to the Village;
3. The nominee's contribution to the wellbeing of the community must be considered outstanding, exceptional or unique. They have brought distinction to the Village of Buckden and enhanced its reputation as a direct result of their actions;
4. The work of the nominee has made a significant difference to the life of others – such service may be continuous over a period of time or through one significant single action or initiative;
5. The nominee exemplifies selflessness and sustained commitment to voluntary service in their community;
6. Buckden Parish Councillors who have served on the Parish Council for a minimum of three years in duration will automatically be nominated for the honour.

When considering applications, the group may wish to split nominations into categories to allow further clarity in their decision making. The following categories are suggested:

1. Charitable
2. Community
3. Culture
4. Business, Innovation and Science
5. Education
6. Health and Environment
7. Military
8. Parish Council
9. Miscellaneous other
10. It is accepted that some requests may fall into more than one category and applicants therefore need to address that in their submission.

NOMINATION PROCEDURE

Any person may nominate an individual for the honour of Freeman/Freewoman of Buckden.

1. All nominations for the Honour of Freedom of Buckden should be made on the nomination form (nominate a Freeman/Freewoman) and supported by a reference from two people familiar with the work of the nominee. All nominations will be private and confidential and shall be submitted to the Parish Clerk
2. Nominations must be made in writing to the Parish Clerk. Applications will then be considered by the Honours Working Group as soon as practicable.
3. If the Honours Working Group agrees the nomination, the matter will be put before the Full Council in confidential session with a secret ballot. If Full Council resolves that the nominee should be made an Honorary Freeman/woman of the Village, the nominee will be invited to accept the honour. If agreed, the nomination will then be put before Full Council in open session.
4. No fewer than two thirds of the Parish Councillors must vote in favour of the nomination.
5. The decisions of the Council on all nominations (whether affirmative or negative) are final.

ENTITLEMENTS

The rights attached to the honorary position are not stipulated in legislation, accordingly, this Parish Council will invite its Honorary Freeman or Freewomen to the Village's civic events. Any person declared an Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Buckden may designate himself/herself 'Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Village of Buckden. The award shall be made at a small ceremony which may take place at a Parish Council meeting or other village event that is open to village community.

Most importantly, everyone who is nominated should get a formal letter of recognition from the Parish Council, highlighting how they have served the village and thanking them for their contributions.

LIMITATION ON HOLDERS OF AWARD

The Parish Council to bear in mind the special nature of this award and limit its numbers accordingly.

Under extreme circumstances, where a Freeman or Freewoman of Buckden has brought the village into disrepute, the honour may be withdrawn. The withdrawal of an Honorary Freeman or Honorary Freewoman award must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full council specially convened for such purpose and passed by no than less than two-thirds of the members of the Parish Council.