

CAMPTON AND CHICKSANDS PARISH COUNCIL

PROTOCOL FOR MARKING THE DEATH OF A SENIOR NATIONAL FIGURE OR LOCAL HOLDER OF HIGH OFFICE

This protocol was agreed by Full Council July 2022

Reviewed May 2024

**This protocol is due for its next annual review not later than
May 2025**

PROTOCOL FOR MARKING THE DEATH OF A SENIOR NATIONAL FIGURE OR LOCAL HOLDER OF HIGH OFFICE

PART 1 Implementation of the Protocol on hearing of the death (D Day)

Campton and Chicksands Parish Council recognises that a formal procedure will be required to manage the occurrence of the death of a senior national figure or local holder of high office.

Plans to mark the death of the Sovereign or senior member of the Royal Family must only be implemented after a formal announcement has been made by the Royal Household or Downing Street.

This procedure should be implemented by the Parish Clerk or in her/his absence the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

It might also be appropriate to use elements of the procedure when responding to an incident which has led to a large number of deaths, for example, a train crash or terrorist attack. This would apply if a National Day of Mourning was announced by 10 Downing Street. This would be at the discretion of the Clerk/Chairman.

When the Policy is to be used: This Policy should be used in the event of the death of:

Group 1

Working members of the Royal family as advised.

Group 2

- The Prime Minister
- Any former Prime Minister
- The Member of Parliament for the Parish's Constituency

All references to the flying of flags in this protocol shall refer to the Union Flag, which is being stored by the Chairman of the parish Council.

If death occurs late in the day, ceremonial arrangements may be changed, as directed by Buckingham Palace or Downing Street.

PART 2 Flag flying

Immediately following the announcement, at the request of the Chairman or the Clerk, the Union Flag will be flown at half-mast.

Appendix 1 to this protocol sets out the correct procedure for flying a flag at half-mast.

If the death falls on St. George's Day, or the period of mourning includes St. George's Day, the flag of the Patron Saint, or any other flag should be replaced by the Union Flag at half-mast.

Applicable only following the death of the Sovereign: (D)

On Proclamation Day (D+1) the Union Flag will - at 11.00hrs - be raised to full-mast and flown throughout the day at full mast. On the day following Proclamation Day (D+2) it will be returned to half-mast at 13.00hrs.

Proclamation Day (D+1) = the day following the death of the Sovereign, when the new Sovereign is proclaimed

On Subsequent Days:

Following the death of the Sovereign or other members of the Royal Family identified in the list on page 1, the Union Flag will continue to be flown at half-mast until 08.00hrs on the day following the funeral.

For all others identified as group 2, the Union Flag will fly at half-mast on the day of the announcement of the death. On subsequent days the usual local arrangements will resume until the day of the funeral when they will again fly at half-mast.

The funeral of the Sovereign will take place 10 days after the day of death. For other senior members of the Royal Family the number of days will be fewer.

PART 3 Book of Condolence

On the first working day following the announcement of the death of the Sovereign, The Prince of Wales or The Duchess of Cornwall, a Book of Condolence will be opened within the village. The Book of Condolence will be open from 09.00hrs to 16.30hrs Monday to Friday. Subject to public demand,

and the availability of supervision, the Book of Condolence may also be available outside of these hours by arrangement with the Chairman or Clerk.

The location of the book will be displayed on the Parish Council web page, Noticeboards and Social Media pages.

The Book of Condolence will be placed in a quiet place to afford those signing privacy and quiet reflection.

The table to be covered with a suitable black cloth. A photograph, copy of the printed announcement and small floral arrangement to be placed on the table with the Book of Condolence and pen.

Clerk to ensure there is adequate paper available in the book. Pages that have been defaced or include offensive or other questionable comments should be quietly removed until such time as a decision can be taken on whether or not they should be permanently excluded.

Consideration will be given, by the Committee, at the time of each death on whether a Book of Condolence should be opened for other members of the Royal Family.

Books of Condolence will be closed at the end of the day following the day of the funeral. After which the book will be bound and kept in the Parish Council's archives.

A statement from the Chairman will also appear on the home page of the Parish Council's website and the social Media pages operated by the Council.

The statement will confirm that flags are to be flown at half-mast and will give details of the Book of Condolence. In the case of the death of the Sovereign or a member of the Royal Family it will also mention any arrangements for an e-Book of Condolence on the Royal website.

On the death of any another significant person, the Clerk will discuss with the Parish Mayor whether a Book of Condolence should be opened on the Parish Council's own website.

Guidance on the content of the statement is set out in Appendix 2.

PART 4 Events during the period of Mourning

Review the schedule of Council meetings to ensure it is appropriate to proceed in a time of national mourning.

PART 5 - Marking a Silence

Where the death of a senior member of the Royal Family is to be marked by a Silence, an announcement will be made by Buckingham Palace.

Consideration will be given at the time of each death on whether a Silence will be kept for other members of the Royal Family.

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PART 6 – Letters of Condolence

The day after the State Funeral, a letter of condolence will be sent from the Parish Council to the new Sovereign's Private Secretary (in the case of the death of the Sovereign) or the Private Secretary of the deceased (for other senior members of the Royal Family).

Clerk to prepare letter to be signed by the Chairman.

Reference to the existence and location of the Book of Condolence should be made in the Letter of Condolence

APPENDIX 1

Flying flags at half mast

Authoritative information on flag flying can be found on the website of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Information is also found on the website of the Flag Institute (www.flaginstitute.org). But bear in mind that the Institute is not an official body and whilst its guidance can assist it does not carry the same weight as information from the Government.

Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole, with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole. Flags cannot be flown at half-mast on poles that are more than 45° from the vertical, but a mourning cravat can be used instead (see the Flag Institute's website for further details).

When a flag is to be flown at half-mast, it should first be raised all the way to the top of the mast, allowed to remain there for a second and then be lowered to the half-mast position. When it is being lowered from half-mast, it should again be raised to the top of the mast for a second before being fully lowered.

When a British national flag is at half-mast, other flags on the same stand of poles should also be at half-mast or should not be flown at all. Flags of foreign nations should not be flown, unless their country is also observing mourning.

APPENDIX 2

Statement to be issued by the Chairman on the announcement of the death of a senior national figure or other prominent figure.

The statement should begin with a suitable expression of the sadness of the Authority on hearing the announcement.

It might go on to state that flags will be flown at half-mast.

If it is an occasion when Books of Condolence will be opened, then reference could be made to that.

DRAFT statement:

It is with great sadness that we learn of the passing of...