



Protocol for Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure or Local Holder of High Office

1. Purpose

This protocol provides guidance on the actions to be taken following the death of:

- a) The Sovereign;
- b) A member of the Royal Family;
- c) A senior national figure; or
- d) A local holder of high office.

The protocol aims to ensure that Diss Town Council responds appropriately, consistently and respectfully through flag flying, public communications, civic representation and local commemorative arrangements.

2. Authority to Activate the Protocol

The protocol shall be activated upon the official announcement of the death of a person falling within the categories identified in Sections 3 and 4.

Activation shall be authorised by:

- a) Town Clerk
- b) Facilities & Buildings Manager
- c) Town Mayor
- d) Council Leader
- e) Available Committee Chair

Where urgent action is required outside office hours, the most senior available officer or member may authorise the immediate implementation of this protocol.

3. Senior National Figures

This protocol may be implemented following the death of:

- a) The Sovereign;
- b) Members of the Royal Family where national mourning arrangements are announced;
- c) The Prime Minister or former Prime Minister; and
- d) Any other national figure where Government guidance recommends local civic recognition.

The Council will follow guidance issued by Buckingham Palace, the Cabinet Office, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk Council or any other relevant authority.

4. Local Holders of High Office

The protocol may also be implemented following the death of:

- a) The Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk;
 - b) The High Sheriff of Norfolk;
 - c) The Member of Parliament representing Diss;
 - d) Serving Members of Diss Town Council; and
 - e) Any other local figure where the Town Mayor, Council Leader and Town Clerk consider formal civic recognition appropriate.
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5. Public Communications

Upon activation of the protocol:

- a) A statement will be issued on the Council website and to local media where appropriate.
 - b) The statement will be prepared by the Town Clerk and approved by the Town Mayor and/or Council Leader.
 - c) The Council website may display a temporary mourning notice or banner.
 - d) Official national guidance, condolence arrangements and funeral information may be linked where relevant.
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6. Book of Condolence

Where considered appropriate:

- a) A physical Book of Condolence will be opened at St Mary's Church.
- b) The Council will work in partnership with St Mary's Church to agree arrangements.

- c) The location, opening times and closing date will be publicised through Council communication channels.
- d) Following closure, the Council will arrange for the book to be archived appropriately.

7. Flag Flying

The Council will fly flags in accordance with current Government guidance and any specific instructions issued following the death of the individual concerned.

The Facilities & Buildings Manager, or nominated officer, will be responsible for:

- a) lowering flags to half-mast;
- b) restoring flags to full mast when appropriate;
- c) ensuring compliance with official guidance; and
- d) maintaining flag stocks and equipment.

The Council will refer to current Government flag flying guidance and advice issued by the Flag Institute.

8. Diss Town Council Flag Flying Schedule (current designated flag flying days)

Date	Flag
St David's Day (1 March)	St David's Flag or Union Flag
Commonwealth Day (second Monday in March)	Commonwealth Flag
St Patrick's Day (17 March)	St Patrick's Flag or Union Flag
Wedding Anniversary of HM The King and HM The Queen (9 April)	Union Flag
St George's Day (23 April)	St George's Flag
Coronation Day of HM The King (6 May)	Union Flag
Official Birthday of HM The King (date notified annually by Government)	Union Flag
Birthday of HRH The Prince of Wales (21 June)	Union Flag
Armed Forces Day (last Saturday in June)	Armed Forces Flag
Birthday of HM The Queen (17 July)	Union Flag
Accession Day of HM The King (8 September)	Union Flag
Remembrance Sunday (second Sunday in November)	Union Flag
Birthday of HM The King (14 November)	Union Flag
St Andrew's Day (30 November)	St Andrew's Flag or Union Flag
All other dates	Diss Town Council Flag

Note: Dates that vary from year to year, including Commonwealth Day, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday, the Official Birthday of HM The King and any other Royal occasions, shall be determined in accordance with current Government flag flying guidance and Flag Institute recommendations. Operational updates may be made by the Town Clerk without requiring amendment of this protocol.

9. Floral Tributes

Where appropriate, members of the public may be invited to lay floral tributes.

The designated location will be Mere's Mouth as shown on the approved plan.

The Council will:

- a) provide information on the location;
 - b) encourage environmentally responsible tributes;
 - c) make arrangements for the respectful removal of tributes following the funeral; and
 - d) consider opportunities for composting or re-use where appropriate.
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10. Civic Events and Engagements

The Town Mayor and Town Clerk will review:

- a) civic engagements;
- b) ceremonial events;
- c) public functions; and
- d) Council events

to determine whether any postponement, cancellation or modification is appropriate during the period of mourning.

11. Services and Acts of Remembrance

The Council may:

- a) participate in local memorial services;
- b) support arrangements organised by St Mary's Church;
- c) organise or support public acts of remembrance;
- d) observe periods of silence; and
- e) encourage attendance by councillors and staff where appropriate.

Where a national two-minute silence is announced, the Council will participate and publicise local arrangements where practicable.

12. Council Meetings

A minute's silence may be observed before Council meetings held during an official period of mourning.

The Town Mayor or Chair of the meeting will determine the appropriate arrangements.

13. Records and Archiving

The Town Clerk shall ensure that:

- a) Books of Condolence are archived appropriately;
 - b) relevant records are retained in accordance with the Council's retention arrangements; and
 - c) any significant local commemorative material is preserved where appropriate.
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14. Review

This protocol will be reviewed every four years or following any significant national event that indicates a need for amendment.