



Proof of Life Certification Policy

1. Purpose

Diss Town Council periodically receives requests from residents for certification of 'Proof of Life' documents required by overseas pension providers and other organisations.

This policy sets out the circumstances in which Council officers may complete such certifications and the evidence required before doing so.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all officers asked to complete or witness Proof of Life documentation.

The service will normally only be provided to residents of Diss. At the discretion of the Town Clerk, requests from residents of neighbouring parishes may also be accepted. Other applicants may be referred to their relevant parish or town council.

3. Principles

Council officers may only certify facts that they have personally observed.

Officers must not make assumptions regarding a person's identity, entitlement to a pension, or any matter that they have not directly verified.

The Council reserves the right to refuse any request where it is unable to verify the information required to complete the certification.

4. Standard Verification Procedure

Proof of Life certifications will normally only be completed where:

- The resident attends the Council offices in person.
- The resident is physically present before the officer completing the certification.
- The resident provides valid, in-date photographic identification.
- The officer is satisfied that the certification accurately reflects what has been personally observed.

The officer's certification shall be limited to confirming that the individual attended in person on the date stated.

5. Remote Verification

The Council will not accept the following as sole evidence that a person is alive or present:

- Photographs.
- Video recordings.
- Live video calls.
- Images displaying newspapers, dates or other objects.
- Statements provided by relatives, carers or third parties.

This restriction reflects the increasing risk of fraud, image manipulation and artificial intelligence generated content.

6. Residents Unable to Attend

Where a resident is unable to attend the Council offices due to illness, hospitalisation, mobility limitations or similar circumstances, Council officers will not normally complete a Proof of Life certification unless the individual can be seen in person.

Any request for an officer to undertake an in-person verification away from the Council offices will be considered at the discretion of the Town Clerk. The Council is not obliged to provide an off-site service.

Residents should be advised to contact their pension provider or organisation to determine whether alternative certifiers, such as healthcare professionals or other authorised persons, may complete the documentation.

7. Disclaimer

Completion of a Proof of Life certification by the Council does not constitute confirmation of a person's entitlement to receive any pension, benefit or payment. It confirms only those facts personally witnessed by the certifying officer.