



NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

HONORARY FREEMEN and HONORARY FREEWOMEN

Adopted by Northam Town Council on ***tbc***

	Name	Signature
Mayor		
Town Clerk		

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Version	Date	Note	Drafted by
V0.1	n/a	Original policy replacing the protocol for nominating Honorary Aldermen / Alderwomen	Town Clerk

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Northam Town Council has appointed Honorary Alderman since 2012, despite not having the power under the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972 (as amended) to make such appointments.

1.2 Section 249(5) of the LGA 1972 (as amended) confers power on a parish or town council to admit honorary freemen or honorary freewomen of its area persons of distinction and persons who have rendered eminent service to the communities of Appledore, Northam or Westward Ho!

1.3 Section 249(9) of the LGA 1972 (as amended) enables councils to spend reasonable sums of money in the exercise of these powers.

1.4 A specially convened meeting of the council must be held (after the appropriate notice has been given) and a resolution to confer the honour must be passed by not less than two-thirds of the members present (LGA (1972) s.249(8)).

1.5 This policy sets out how Northam Town Council will manage the nomination and appointment process of granting the title of Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewoman.

1.6 Northam Town Council will recognise the exceptional level of service by a member of the community by awarding to them the title of Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewoman. This title will only be awarded on rare occasions.

1.7 The title of Honorary Freeman is the highest honour that a Town Council can bestow, it is therefore above the award of Community Champion (see separate policy).

Policy Aims

- Recognise the contribution of members of the combined communities of Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho! to the life of those communities.
- Extend that recognition beyond elected members of the council. Should an elected member of the Council be nominated, they must have **been elected and served for at least one full term of office (4 years).**
- Granting the status of honorary freeman is a means of paying tribute to the recipient. It confers no material honours or special privileges, nor does it entitle the person to participate in the proceedings of the council meetings or in any ceremonial events. It is purely and simply for merit.

2. NOMINATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

2.1 Nominations must be made by completing the nomination form (appended) and returning it to the Town Clerk & RFO at Northam Town Council.

2.2 Nominations should be made in the strictest confidence without the nominee's knowledge. Any resident or elector of Appledore, Northam or Westward Ho! may make a nomination, but nominations require a proposer and a seconder who are elected Northam Town Councillors. Town Councillors can propose or second more than one application if they wish.

2.3 The completed form should provide detailed evidence as to why an individual

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is being nominated.

2.4 If evidence is missing, or the criteria is not achieved, the applicant will be contacted and asked to resubmit the form with further evidence.

2.6 The following criteria will be considered by Full Council when a nomination for an Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewoman of Northam is received:

- A significant allocation of the person's time in serving members of the community for the improvement of their well-being,
- The promotion, achievement and/or delivery of community services in which a real personal contribution has been made,
- A contribution which is seen to stand above the contributions of others,
- Bravery,
- Outstanding acts that promote the Town and its communities,
- Outstanding sporting achievement.

2.7 At any one time, a maximum of twelve persons, unless otherwise decided by the Council, may hold the title of Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewoman.

3. PROCESS

3.1 Upon receipt of any nomination for Honorary Freeman, the application will be reviewed and voted on by Full Council at a specially convened meeting, as described in LGA (1972) section 249(8). The power to appoint an Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewoman must be exercised by a resolution of Full Council at a confidential meeting that has been specially convened for this purpose.

3.2 Nominations for Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewomen will be decided every four years, in the final year of office. If any nominations are received a specially convened extraordinary meeting will be called. In extraordinary circumstances the title may be bestowed at any time as the Council sees fit.

3.4 There will be a maximum of **three** Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewomen awarded in each term of office.

3.5 At the specially convened Full Council meeting, to award the title of Honorary Freeman to any nomination, a two-thirds majority of those Councillors present must agree to the nomination(s).

3.6 The Town Clerk & RFO will inform the successful nominee(s). If they accept the title, arrangements will be made to bestow the title upon them and their name(s) added to the honours board at a convenient time.

3.7 The title of Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewoman will be bestowed at the next Mayor's introduction ceremony. During the ceremony the Honorary Freeman will be **presented with a certificate and an Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewoman badge** that will be worn to any future civic events the individual is invited to attend.

4. REMOVAL OF THE HONOUR

4.1 Any person nominated who is deemed by the Council to have brought the office into disrepute, may have the title of Honorary Freeman / Honorary Freewoman removed. No less than two-thirds of the Council, at a formal vote, must agree the removal.

5. REVIEW

5.1 This policy should be reviewed every three years.

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I certify that the details given are correct, that I have not been influenced or canvassed in any way and that the person nominated has no knowledge of the present application.

I understand that all matters relating to the nomination are confidential and the personal details enclosed within this form will only be held as required by the Council for the proper performance of its duties.

All information will be disposed of securely, in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations.

PROPOSED BY

Councillor:

Signature:

Date:

SECONDED BY

Councillor:

Signature:

Date:

Please Complete and return by **31 January**, to: the Town Clerk & RFO at the Council Offices, Windmill Lane, Northam. EX39 1BY

