



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

As adopted at a meeting of Meppershall Parish Council on 8th March 2021

CONTENTS

DOCUMENT CONTROL.....	3
DOCUMENT AMENDMENT HISTORY	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL ON HEARING OF THE DEATH (D DAY).....	4
3. DATE REFERNCES	5
4. BOOK OF CONDOLENCE	5
5. EVENTS DURING THE PERIOD OF MOURNING.....	6
6. PROCLAMATION DAY	6
7. DRESS CODE	6
8. MARKING A SILENCE	7
9. LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE	7
APPENDIX 2 – PARISH COUNCIL STATEMENT.....	8
APPENDIX 3 – PARISH COUNCIL STATEMENT.....	9
APPENDIX 4 – NOT PART OF PROTOCOL – FOR INFORMATION ONLY	10

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation	Meppershall Parish Council
Title	MPC Protocol for Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure or Local Holder of High Office
Creator	Alessandra Marabese - Clerk
Source	Clerk
Approvals	Monday 8 th March 2021
Distribution	Internal and External
Filename	MPC Protocol for Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure v1.0 2021©
Owner	Clerk
Subject	Standards
Protective Marking	None
Review date	Bi-annually or as required

DOCUMENT AMENDMENT HISTORY

Revision No.	Originator of change	Date of change	Change Description
V1.0	Clerk	8/3/2021	Creation

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. **Meppershall Parish Council** ('the Council') has adopted this Protocol ('the Protocol')

1.2. This protocol sets out the action to be taken in the event of the death of:

- The Queen (London Bridge)
- The Duke of Edinburgh (Forth Bridge)
- The Prince of Wales
- The Duchess of Cornwall
- The Duke of Cambridge
- The Duchess of Cambridge
- Prince George
- Princess Charlotte
- Prince Louis
- The Duke of Sussex
- The Duchess of Sussex
- Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor
- The Duke of York
- The Earl of Wessex
- The Princess Royal
- The Countess of Wessex
- The Duke of Gloucester
- The Duchess of Gloucester
- The Duke of Kent
- Prince Michael of Kent
- Princess Michael of Kent
- Princess Alexandra

- The Prime Minister
- A serving Member of Meppershall Parish Council

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL ON HEARING OF THE DEATH (D DAY)

2.1. MPC's mourning Protocol will be implemented on the formal announcement, by Buckingham Palace or Downing Street, of the death of any one of those persons named under point 1.2 of this Protocol, or upon confirmation from a relative of the death of a serving member of the Council.

2.2. Implementation will be authorised by the Parish Council Chair or Parish Clerk (or in their absence, by their relevant substitute).

2.3. The normal business of the Council will be suspended for the day.

2.4. There is no reference to the flying of flags in this protocol as no flag poles existing the village.

3. DATE REFERENCES

3.1. D Day – Day of the Death

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

3.3. 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.

4. BOOK OF CONDOLENCE

4.1. On the first working day following the announcement of the death of the Sovereign, The Duke of Edinburgh, The Prince of Wales or The Duchess of Cornwall, a Book of Condolence will be opened at the Meppershall Village Hall. 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 Parish Council Chair, Parish Clerk or Village Hall Trustees.

4.2. The location of the book will be displayed on the Parish Council's website and social media pages.

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

4.4. 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.

4.5. Parish 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.

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

4.7. 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.

4.8. The Parish Clerk will ensure that a stock of items including loose-leaf black folders, black table cloths and framed photographs of members of the Royal Family are held at the Council Offices.

4.9. The Parish Council Chair will issue a statement via the Council Offices, expressing the sadness of the Council and people of Meppershall at the news of the death of

4.9.1. The statement will also appear on the home page of Meppershall Parish Council's website and the Social Media pages operated by the Council.

- 4.9.2. 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.
- 4.10. On the death of any another significant person, the Parish Clerk will discuss with the Parish Council Chairman whether a Book of Condolence should be opened on the Parish Council's own website.
- 4.11. Guidance on the content of the statement is set out in Appendix 2.

5. EVENTS DURING THE PERIOD OF MOURNING

- 5.1. Review the programme of Civic engagements to be undertaken by the Parish Council's Chari and Vice-Chair to ensure it is appropriate in a time of national mourning and that it sits comfortably with the national mood.
- 5.2. Review the schedule of Council meetings to ensure it is appropriate to proceed in a time of national mourning

6. PROCLAMATION DAY

- 6.1. The Proclamation will be read as follows:
- 6.1.1. By the Parish Council Chairman at 16.00hrs on the day following Proclamation Day in the Village Hall in Meppershall.
- 6.1.2. All those listed in Appendix 3 to be invited to be present. Parish Council Chair to be dressed in dark lounge suit / jacket and trousers / Black tie or dark suit.
- 6.1.3. Reading of the Proclamation to be publicised on the Council website and media pages operated by the Council.
- 6.1.4. Notification of the reading of the Proclamation to be given by the Parish Clerk and to those identified in Appendix 3.
- 6.1.5. Parish Clerk to ensure that the public are informed by way of a press release and item on the Council's website and Social Media pages.
- 6.1.6. The wording of the Proclamation to be read out will be available from the Buckingham Palace website www.royal.gov.uk or the Privy Council website www.privacy-council.org.uk

7. DRESS CODE

- 7.1. Black ties or mourning rosettes and dark clothing to be worn by Councillors, and Officers attending following the death of a senior figure.
- 7.2. A stock to be maintained in good order by the Parish Clerk ready for issue to Councillors.
- 7.3. At the time of the annual review of this protocol consideration will be given to the number of items in stock, their condition and the need for cleaning, repair or replacement. A list of suppliers for these items is set out in Appendix 4.

8. MARKING A SILENCE

- 8.1. 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.
- 8.2. Consideration will be given at the time of each death on whether a Silence will be kept for other members of the Royal Family.
- 8.3. In Meppershall, when Silence is to be kept, the Parish Council Chair will lead a Public Silence in the Village Hall Car Park or the Recreation Ground.
- 8.4. All those listed in Appendix 3 to be invited to be present. All to wear the Chain of Office dark lounge suit / jacket and trousers / black tie or dark suit.
- 8.5. The Public Observing of the Silence to be publicised.
- 8.6. Notification of the reading of the Proclamation to be given by the Parish Clerk and to those identified in Appendix 3.
- 8.7. Parish Clerk to ensure that the public are informed by way of a press release and item on the Council's website, social media and notice board.

9. LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE

- 9.1. 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).
- 9.2. Parish Clerk to prepare letter to be signed by the Parish Council Chair.
- 9.3. Reference to the existence and location of the Book of Condolence should be made in the Letter of Condolence

APPENDIX 2 – PARISH COUNCIL STATEMENT

Statement to be issued by the Parish Council Chair 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.

When a decision has been taken on the Parish Council Chair's programme of events and engagements, and the Council's schedule of meetings, it might be stated that events are being cancelled as a mark of respect or that they will begin with a period of silence.

If in doubt, do not rush out a statement which commits the Parish Council to action before that action has been discussed and has the necessary agreement.

DRAFT statement:

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

APPENDIX 3 – PARISH COUNCIL STATEMENT

Those who might be invited to be present at the Reading of the Proclamation on the accession of a new Sovereign and at the Public Observance of a Two Minute Silence:

- The Parish Council Chair / Vice-Chair
- Members of the Parish Council
- Council Officers
- Past Parish Council Chairs.
- CBC Ward Councillors
- Bedfordshire Police
- Local Schools
- Local Churches
- Leaders of Community Groups
- Youth Activity Groups

APPENDIX 4 – NOT PART OF PROTOCOL – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

List of Possible Suppliers

Black mourning rosettes can be purchased from:

Toye Kenning & Spencer - £ 3 . 70

<https://toyekenningandspencer.co.uk/shop/craft-black-mourning-rosette.html>



Black ties can be purchased from:

Amazon UK - £3.45

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Funeral-Tie-Great-British-Club/dp/B07MTLJFKB/ref=sr_1_5?crid=3USPPSCXB7QUY&dchild=1&keywords=funeral+black+clip+on+tie&qid=1612203338&s=clothing&sprefix=black+clip+on+tie%2Cclothing%2C163&sr=1-5



Table cloths can be purchased from:

Amazon UK - £11.99

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Trimming-Shop-Polyester-Rectangle-Christmas/dp/B01N3OB9MT>



Framed photographs can be purchased from:

Mike O'Keefe (mike@royalimages.co.uk) Custodian of the Official Royal Image Library of H.M. The Queen and H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh.