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Burlescombe Parish Council Honours and Awards Policy

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**PART 1. INTRODUCTION**

**THIS SECTION IS IMPORTANT AND REQUIRES YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION**

From 12 January 2010, all local councils may exercise powers to confer the title of “honorary freeman” or “honorary freewoman” to persons of distinction and those who, in the council’s opinion, have rendered eminent services to the council’s area in accordance with statutory provision the *Local Government Act of 1972, Section (249), Subsections (5) and (6)*.

From time to time, members of the community demonstrate outstanding commitment and contribution to the wellbeing of the Parish and it is recognised that their efforts should be acknowledged. The Council will do this, in special circumstances that meet the criteria of this policy, by awarding to an individual the title of ‘Honorary Freeman (or Honorary Freewoman) of the Parish of Burlescombe’. This honour will be awarded only on rare and exceptional occasions.

Burlescombe Parish Council (the Council) wishes to recognise the efforts of members of the community who demonstrate outstanding commitment to the wellbeing of the parish. The Council will do this, in special circumstances that meet the criteria of this policy, by awarding an individual the Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of Burlescombe or with a Community Award. These honours will be awarded only on rare and exceptional occasions.

 **PART 2. NOMINATION CRITERIA**

Burlescombe Parish Council will take into account the following when consideration is given to granting an honour:

1. Preference will be given to a person/organisation which performs in a voluntary capacity, but this should not preclude honours being awarded to those whose dedication and contribution is significantly above that expected for their occupation.
2. Nominees need not necessarily be resident within the Burlescombe Parish area but the contribution being recognised must be for the benefit of the parish.
3. Any nominated parish councillor should have retired from elected/co-opted post prior to consideration or nomination.
4. The contribution to the community of Burlescombe parish should comprise of one or more of the following:
	1. A significant allocation of the person's/organisation's time in serving members of the community for the improvement of their well-being;
	2. The promotion, achievement and/or delivery of community services in which a real personal contribution has been made; and/or,
	3. A contribution which is seen to stand above the contributions of most others.

**PART 3. NOMINATION PROCEDURE**

Nominations should be made in the strictest confidence without the nominee's knowledge. Any resident or elector of the Parish of Burlescombe may make a nomination but it must be sponsored by a parish councillor.

Nominations must be made in writing to the Parish Clerk and supported by evidence of the voluntary service provided by the individual/organisation to the community, and any other evidence of service which justifies the honour.

Received nominations will be distributed to all parish councillors, as part of the agenda process. The matter will be considered at an ordinary Parish Council meeting, with the press and public excluded. The purpose of this part of the process is to ensure that there is general support for the nomination.

If the Parish Council is minded to approve the nomination, the nominee will be informed and invited to accept the honour. Following the nominee's informal acceptance, a meeting of the Parish Council, specially convened for the purpose, and where notice of the object of the meeting has been given, shall be arranged in accordance with the *Local Government Act of 1972, Section (249)*.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act of 1972, Section (249*, at least two-thirds of the Members present and voting must agree the nomination.

**PART 4. ENTITLEMENTS**

Any person declared an Honorary Freeman (or Honorary Freewoman) of the Parish may designate himself/herself ‘Honorary Freeman’ (or Freewoman) of the Parish of Burlescombe’.

The award shall be made at a small ceremony which may take place at a Council meeting. A scroll will be presented to the recipient.

The award does not confer on any recipient any entitlements to attend, participate in meetings of the parish council, or carry out any role on behalf of the council, or bestow any other entitlements, but is intended to be a recognition of the valuable contribution made by that person to the local community.

**PART 5. LIMITATION ON HOLDERS OF AWARDS**

At any one time, a maximum of six persons, unless otherwise decided by the Council, may hold the title ‘Honorary Freeman’ (or Freewoman) of the Parish of Burlescombe’.

Any one time, a maximum of one award, unless otherwise decided by the Council, may be granted a Community Award in a twelve (12) month period.

**PART 6. WITHDRAWAL**

Any person awarded the honour who is deemed by the Council to have brought the office into disrepute, may have the honour withdrawn. No less than two thirds of the council, at a formal vote, must agree the withdrawal.