



**GREAT  
SANKEY**  
PARISH  
COUNCIL

# Recognition Scheme

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## **1. Executive Summary**

This document sets out the criteria, procedure and arrangements relating to the Tiered Recognition Scheme and the granting of the Freedom of the Parish to individuals.

## **2. Levels of Recognition**

2.1 Community awards: Many residents do good works within the parish for the benefit of others without payment and often with no benefit to themselves. In doing so they contribute to our community and improve the life of residents. The Parish Council has a role in encouraging such service to our community by thanking people and formally recognising those involved.

2.2 Freedom of the Parish: The granting of the Freedom of the Parish is the highest honour that the Parish Council can bestow. Although it carries no powers, rights or privileges, those who receive the honour are able to use the title of Freeman or Freewoman. As this is the highest honour, it should be used sparingly and should not be given too often to preserve its status and value.

## **3. Eligibility**

3.1 An individual or organisation must be either be a resident of, or work within the Parish Council area.

3.2 Existing Councillors and Parish Council staff are ineligible for nomination.

3.3 Nominations may only be made by residents living in the Parish or serving Parish Councillors.

## **4. Community Awards**

### **4.1 Letter of thanks**

A letter of thanks from the Parish Council will be in recognition of service to the parish, typically of a one-off or short duration matter, e.g., volunteering for Sankey Fun Day.

### **4.2 Certificate of thanks**

A certificate of thanks from the Parish Council will be in recognition of an unpaid service to the community performed over a significant period. Examples may be running a community group or litter picking.

### **4.3 Nomination & Decision-making Process**

4.3.1 Any resident or Parish Councillor can nominate an individual for an award.

4.3.2 Nominations should be made via the application form which will be available either on request to the Parish Office or downloaded from the council's website.

4.3.3 Nominations will be checked by the Clerk and/or Chair or Vice-Chair to ensure sufficient detail is included to merit consideration of the nominated individual or organisation. Nominations without sufficient detail will be referred back to the applicant.

4.3.5 Nominations will be considered as a separate, confidential agenda item in Part 2 of the next full Council meeting following receipt of the completed nomination form. The council will decide on the most appropriate form of thanks to be awarded (letter or certificate).

4.3.6 Approval of nominations will be by a majority vote of the council and will be voted on by confidential ballot.

#### 4.4 Awarding

4.4.1 A letter of thanks will be drafted by office staff and signed by the Chair of the Parish Council and sent to the recipient as soon as possible after approval of the nomination by full Council.

4.4.2 Presentation of a certificate of thanks will be made at evening events, the timing of which will be subject to the number of nominations received and approved.

### 5. Freedom of the Parish

#### 5.1 General Information

5.1.1 Parish Councils have the power to confer the title of 'honorary freeman' or 'honorary freewoman' upon persons of distinction who, in the council's opinion, 'have rendered eminent services to the council's area (Local Government Act 1972 s249(5) and (6)).

5.1.2 The admission of an honorary freeman or honorary freewoman must be given by a resolution made at a council meeting that is specially convened for the purpose and where notice of the object of the meeting is given (Local Government Act 1972 s248(8)).

5.1.3 The Local Government Act 1972 s248 additionally states that 'The Council may spend such reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or casket to a person on whom the authority has conferred the title of honorary freeman or honorary freewoman.

5.1.4 Granting the Freedom of the Parish is the highest honour the Parish Council can bestow. Although it carries no powers, rights or privileges, those who receive the honour are able to use the title of Freeman or Freewoman.

5.1.5 The Freedom of the Parish will be awarded for the individual's lifetime and not as a hereditary award.

5.1.6 Any person awarded the honour who is deemed by the Council to have brought the office into disrepute may have the honour withdrawn. Any proposal to withdraw the honour must be made at a full Council meeting by formal vote with no less than two thirds of the Council in agreement.

#### 5.2 Criteria

5.2.1 The nominee must be a resident of the parish; serving Councillors and council staff are not eligible for nomination.

5.2.2 The honour may be bestowed on those who have altruistically, without personal benefit, performed an exceptional service to residents of the parish, or a significant service over many years.

5.2.3 Contributions to the parish may involve:

- a significant allocation of a person's time in serving members of the community for the improvement of their wellbeing.
- the promotion, achievement and/or delivery of community services.
- bravery.
- outstanding acts that promote the parish.
- outstanding sporting achievements.

### 5.3 Nominations & Decision making

5.3.1 Nominations can be made by any resident of the parish or Parish Councillor. Nominations made by a resident must be sponsored by a Parish Councillor.

5.3.2 Nominations should be made via the application form which will be available on request to the Parish Office and should be supported by evidence of services to the community which justify the honour.

5.3.3 Nominations, once received by the Clerk, will be circulated to all councillors for confidential consideration. Councillors must indicate by return if they are in agreement with the nomination or give reasons for any objections.

5.3.4 If two-thirds of the Parish Council is in agreement, the nominee will be invited to accept the honour.

5.3.5 Once a nomination is agreed by both the Parish Council and the nominee, arrangements will be made for an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council to be held.

### 5.4 Awarding

5.4.1 The honour of the Freedom of the Parish will be awarded at an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council, which is convened specifically for that purpose, and to which notice of the object of the meeting is given (Local Government Act 1972, s249(8)).

5.4.2 At the extraordinary meeting, a formal vote will take place to confer the honour of Freedom of the Parish, following which the certificate will be signed by the Chair of the Council and presented to the recipient.

5.4.3 A reception will follow the official presentation of the award.