

Freeman and Freewoman of the Borough and Freedom of the Borough

FREEMAN/FREEWOMAN OF THE BOROUGH

The title of Honorary Freeman (and Freewoman) of the Borough is the highest honour that this Council can bestow upon a person. The title is awarded to persons of distinction and persons who have rendered eminent services to the borough.

The origins of freemen in England, are to be found in the guilds of the medieval merchants and craftsmen whose influence helped to found and stabilise urban communities.

A 'freeman' was often a man who had served his apprenticeship and was free to conduct his trade in his own town. The 'freeman' title has long since disappeared and replaced by the title 'Honorary Freeman' (and more recently 'Honorary Freewoman').

FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH

The title of 'Freedom of the Borough' applies predominantly to military units that have been given the Freedom of Entry to the borough.

Permission to enter conferred the practice upon individual Regiments the right "to march through the borough with due ceremonial, drums beating, bands playing, banner flying and bayonets fixed", in recognition of the confidence, trust and friendship existing between the citizens and soldiers.

During the Middle Ages, formed bodies of troops were not allowed to march through a borough without first seeking permission. As most boroughs were surrounded by a fortified wall the borough fathers were in a position to refuse access if, for some reason, they were suspicious of the Military Commander's intentions. The Freedom of Entry to the borough was normally granted to locally based troops after sufficient time had elapsed for mutual confidence and friendship to be established and when the citizens were satisfied that the troops would protect their interests.

Policy Statement

The freedom most commonly arising today is that of being made an Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Borough, which under the Local Government Act of 1972 (previously the Honorary Freedom of Boroughs Act, 1885) may be conferred by any borough.

The Borough Council of Sandwell wishes to recognise the efforts of members of the community who demonstrate outstanding commitment to the well-being of the borough.

To be granted the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman is a mark of distinction upon the person whom the council wishes to honour, reflecting the eminence of the person on whom it is conferred or as recognition of significant and valuable services/acts rendered to the borough by that person.

Council, at a specially convened meeting for the purpose, will decide whether to award an individual the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Borough. This honour will be awarded only in rare and exceptional circumstances that meet a specific criterion - set out below.

Nomination Criteria

The following will be taken into account when consideration is given to granting an individual Freeman/Freewoman of the Borough.

To be considered for the honour of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Borough, the nominee should meet at least two of the following criteria:

1. has delivered in a way that has brought distinction to the borough and enhanced the borough's reputation as a directly result of their actions.
2. has a made a significant improvement to the life of others in the borough as a direct result of eminent service.

“Eminent service” in this context includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:-

- o public service
- o artistic and/or cultural endeavours
- o improvement to the built and natural environment
- o religious and spiritual life
- o sporting activities

3. demonstrated exceptional innovation and entrepreneurship which is delivering significant economic growth and prosperity in the borough.
4. exemplified selflessness and sustained commitment to their community through charitable deeds.

Nomination Form

I, CouncillorSuzanne Hartwell wish to nominate the following person (organisation) to be considered for the status of Freeman/Freewoman of the Borough for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

Nominee: Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust

I am aware that the following criteria is applied to the achievements of the nominee.

The Nominee has:-

[Please delete as appropriate]

1. delivered in a way that has brought distinction to the borough and enhanced the borough's reputation as a directly result of their actions.
2. made a significant improvement to the life of others in the borough as a direct result of eminent service in relation to

- public service
- artistic and/or cultural endeavours
- improvement to the built and natural environment
- religious and spiritual life
- sporting activities
- other, please state

.....

3. demonstrated exceptional innovation and entrepreneurship which is delivering significant economic growth and prosperity in the borough.
4. exemplified selflessness and sustained commitment to their community through charitable deeds.

I believe the nominee has met the criteria in the following way(s):-

National Health Service has celebrated its 75th birthday on the 5th July and I would like to nominate Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust for Freedom of the Borough (Sandwell) for the selfless public services they have given and commitment shown to Sandwell residents over the years

The NHS overall and in turn the Trust is a kind, caring, compassionate and great institution that we have every reason to be proud of.

Bestowing this honour on the Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust acknowledges the hard work, devotion and impact the NHS and the Trust, particularly it's staff, has had on Sandwell residents.

This honour, which is the highest honour that the Council can bestow, is a clear demonstration of the deep affection Sandwell has for the Trust and NHS and to do so in the 75th anniversary year of the NHS is a fitting way to show our heart-felt appreciation.



Signed: .

Date: 4 August 2023

Nomination supported by:Cllr Kerrie Carmichael.....

Date:03/08/2023.....

Please return this form to the Chief Executive