



# Community and Council Awards Policy

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TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED 4<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024

NEXT REVIEW OCTOBER 2027

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In March 2022 Totnes Town Council launched its Community Award scheme to recognise the efforts of individuals who volunteer their time to help or enrich the lives of others in the community. The Council also has discretionary power to bestow the title of honorary freeman on the rare occasion that an individual has shown exceptional long service to the community.

This policy sets out for each award: the categories of award; eligibility; nomination process; Council consideration of nominations; format and presentation of awards.

## Community Award

### Categories

There are three categories of Community Award:

- Individual award;
- Community group award; and
- The Judy Westacott Award for life-time achievement.

### Eligibility

Nominations should be for individuals or community groups that are carrying out their work within the Totnes parish boundary.

Individual Town Councillors and council officers are not eligible to receive an award under this scheme and any nominations for them (regardless of whether they are acting outside of their council role) will be discounted.

## **Nomination Process**

Nominations are invited from members of the public and Councillors to propose one name per category for those who they consider deserve recognition for the time they give to the community. This could be through a number of different ways, for example: caring and supporting those in need; working with young people, the elderly or vulnerable; helping people's health and feeling of togetherness through exercise and sport.

Nominations can be made by email, in writing, by telephone or in person.

The timeline each year for the nomination process is as follows:

- February - nominations will be invited from the public through the Totnes Directory, Town Council Website and Social Media with a closing date of mid-March.

## **Council consideration of nominations**

The timeline for Council consideration of the awards each year is as follows:

- End March - Town Matters Committee will consider the nominations received in Part 2 of the meeting, and make a shortlist of recommendations to Full Council.
- April - Full Council considers Town Matters Committee recommendation.

## **Format and presentation of awards**

Depending on the number of nominations received, the top three nominees in each category (as determined by Full Council) will be invited to attend the Annual Town Meeting in May where the awards will be presented.

Council officers will write to all nominees informing them that they have been nominated and depending on numbers inviting them to attend the Annual Town Meeting.

Certificates will be produced and presented to all nominees, the runner up and winner in each category.

The winners of each award will be presented with a medal based on the town council logo, engraved on the back with the year, name of the winner and the category of award. The individual medal will be presented on a ribbon and the group medal in a presentation box.

All medals and associated costs will come from the Civic Events budget.

## **Honorary Freeman Award**

### **Process for considering nominations**

The process for considering the award of the Honorary Freeman title is set out in the Local Government Act 1972, which was amended by the 2009 Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 as follows:

*“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. Section 249(8) of the 1972 Act as amended provides that the admission of an honorary freeman or honorary freewoman must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full council specially convened for such purpose and passed by no than less two-thirds of the members of the council. Section 249(8) also requires “notice of the object of the meeting” to be given. This confirms the need for the agenda with the public notice and summons to members in respect of the council meeting to itemise a motion to confer the title of honorary freeman or honorary freewoman.”*

The award of the honorary freeman title is discretionary, and only reserved for exceptional, long serving members of the community.

### **Eligibility**

Serving Councillors cannot apply/be nominated.

It should not be awarded when the nominee has undertaken the community role as an exclusively paid position.

### **Nomination Process and Council Consideration of Nominations**

The Clerk needs to receive a minimum of two separate nominations from members of the public or Councillors for an individual to receive the honorary freeman title before the request is taken to Committee.

Council Matters Committee to consider any nominations in Part 2 (personal information) as required, with a recommendation to Full Council who will discuss and make the final decision.

There are budgetary costs associated with the award of the title, for example invites to all Council events and any ticket costs (borne by the Civic budget) and Council contributions up to £1000 towards the wake after a civic funeral.

### **Presentation of the Title**

Depending on the timing of the decision being made, the title could be awarded:

- in a separate ceremony (as happened in 2019, the last time the title was awarded);
- as part of the Mayor Making Ceremony in May; or
- as part of the Annual Town Meeting (alongside the Community Awards).