HELLESDON PARISH COUNCIL

Operation Menai Bridge

Introduction
Operation Menai Bridge is the codename of the plan for what will happen in the days following the death of HM King Charles III or another senior national figure.

Following the official announcement from Buckingham Palace, 10 days of state mourning will follow. D day is death day and D10 is the date of the full state funeral in Westminster Abbey, unless D10 falls on a Sunday in which case the funeral will be held on D11 Monday.

This protocol document had been drawn up to prepare Hellesdon Parish Council (HPC) for the death of a senior national figure. It applies to:

H.M. The King (The Sovereign)
H.M. The Queen (Camilla)
H.R.H. The Prince of Wales (William)
H.R.H. The Princess of Wales (Kate)
H.R.H. Prince George of Wales
H.R.H. Princess Charlotte of Wales
H.R.H. Prince Louis of Wales
H.R.H. The Earl of Wessex (Edward)
H.R.H. The Princess Royal (Anne)

The following appendices are included:

Appendix 1 - Guide for Flying Flags at Half-mast
Appendix 2 - Chairman's Statement

Guidance should always be sought from official sources in the event of the death of The King or another senior figure, to ensure there are no changes to this protocol

Implementation of the Protocol
Plans to mark a death should be implemented only when a formal announcement has been made. So, for instance, if news agencies are saying that *"reports are coming in of the death of ..."* it must be treated with caution. If possible, wait for a more definite announcement (perhaps along the lines that *"it has been announced by Buckingham Palace / Downing Street that…"*

This protocol for HPC identifies those who are authorised to implement the plans. For the Sovereign or another senior member of the Royal Family the decision will be delegated to the Parish

Clerk or duly authorised Deputy, in consultation with the Chairman. For other figures, there may need to be consultation at the time on the appropriate ways in which the death should be marked.

The day of the death of the Sovereigns will be known as D-Day, then D+1, D+2 etc. through the ten days of national Mourning. The state funeral will be held on D+10, except if this date falls on a Sunday, when the funeral will be on D+11.

Following the Death of the Sovereign

Day	**National**	**HPC**	**National and HPC Flags**
D (Day of death)	Formal Announcement	HPC website homepage updated (SA). Chairman's Statement published on website and social media (Clerk/SA). Grounds staff to ensure war memorial is clean and tidy for flower laying (Grounds). Flowers ordered and to be laid by Chairman at the earliest opportunity (Chair).	Flag lowered to half mast
D+1	Books of condolence opened Proclamation Day, St James' Palace 11am (2pm if Sunday) and noon at the Royal Exchange	Book of Condolence opened at HCC (Clerk). Online book of Condolence opened (SA) HPC to liaise with church to ensure details of services can be publicised (Clerk). Check war memorial in the morning and afternoon (grounds) Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	Flag returned to full mast at 11am and throughout D+1 until 1pm- on D+2
D+2	Regional Proclamations take place (Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast at noon) Second reading in Edinburgh at 12.30pm	If HPC is to make a proclamation it should be done at 4pm Check war memorial in the morning and afternoon (grounds)	Flag returned to half mast at 1pm

	Proclamation by the High Sheriff at County Hall between 12.30 and 12.45pm (Borough/District Councils at 12.50)	Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	
D+5	Lying-in-State at the Palace of Westminster	Check war memorial in the morning and afternoon (grounds) Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	Flag remains at half mast
D+6	County Service of Commemoration at Norwich Cathedral	Check war memorial in the morning and afternoon (grounds) Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	
D+7	Local Services of Commemoration	Check war memorial in the morning and afternoon (grounds) Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	
D+10	Lying-in-State concludes, Procession to Westminster Abbey Two-minute silence at 11am State Funeral Service (if Sunday, this is deferred to Monday) State Procession to Windsor via Wellington Arch Private burial in King George VI Memorial Chapel	Check war memorial in the morning and afternoon (grounds) Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	

D+11	Books of Condolence close at 5pm	Book of condolence closes. Flowers are collected for composting	Flag returned to normal at 8am

Following the Death of a Senior Member of the Royal Family

Day	**National**	**HPC**	**National and HPC Flags**
D (Day of death	Formal Announcement	HPC website homepage updated (SA). Chairman's Statement published on website and social media (Clerk/SA). Grounds staff to ensure war memorial is clean and tidy for flower laying (Grounds). Flowers ordered and to be laid by Chairman at the earliest opportunity (Chair).	Flag lowered to half mast
D+1	Books of condolence opened	Book of Condolence opened at HCC (Clerk). Online book of Condolence opened (SA) HPC to liaise with church to ensure details of services can be publicised (Clerk). Check war memorial in the morning and afternoon (grounds) Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	
D+6	Local Services of Commemoration take place	Check war memorial in the morning and afternoon (grounds)	

		Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	
D+8	Funeral at St George's Chapel, Windsor	Check war memorial in the morning and after-noon (grounds) Check book of condolence at the end of each day (caretakers)	
D+9	Books of Condolence close at 5pm	Book of condolence closes. Flowers are collected for composting	Flag returned to normal at 8am

Flag Flying
Flag flying will adhere to national guidance.

Proclamation Day Schedule
In the case of the death of the Sovereign, the day following the death D+1 will be Proclamation Day, which is the day the new Sovereign is proclaimed.

D+1 - The Proclamation will be made at St James's Palace at 1100hrs (or 1400hrs if it is a Sunday). The Proclamation will then be 'cascaded'. At noon on Proclamation Day it will be read at the Royal Exchange in the City of London.

D+2 – At noon on D+2, it will be read: in Edinburgh by Lord Lyon King of Arms at Mercat Cross and at the drawbridge to Edinburgh Castle; in Cardiff by Wales Herald Extraordinary at Cardiff Castle and in Belfast by Norroy and Ulster King of Arms.

Once these Proclamations have been made it is appropriate for the Proclamation to be read at County, City, Borough and then at Parish level. High Sheriffs will read the Proclamation at County level along with Lord-Lieutenants. Most High Sheriffs are expected to make their readings at 1400hrs on D+2. It is suggested that local civic leaders should therefore make their readings at or after 1600hrs.

Proclamation Day
On Proclamation Day flags will, at the start of the day, be flying at half-mast.
All flags will then be flown from the mast-head from 1100hrs on Proclamation Day (D+1) to coin-cide with the reading of the Principal Proclamation, until 1630hrs the following day, (D+2). This is

due to the official schedule of the Proclamation (see below for more details), it will be read in London on Proclamation Day (D+1), then read at noon in Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff on the day following Proclamation Day (D+2). Once those Proclamations have been made at 1400 hrs on D+2, High Sheriffs will then read the Proclamation at County level and Lord-Lieutenants will be alongside them.

Proclamation Day Protocol
Having flown at half-mast since the announcement of the death of the Sovereign, all flags will be raised to full-mast at 1100hrs on D+1 (the day after death), when the Proclamation is read at St James's Palace in London. They will continue to fly at half-mast until 1300hrs on D+2 to allow for the Accession Proclamation to be read out in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh. These times are fixed as part of the National plan for mourning and should not be interpreted locally. It is important that all flags are raised to full-mast at 1100hrs on D+1 and are returned to half-mast following the High Sheriffs Proclamation reading on D+2.

Books of Condolence
Books of Condolence will be opened on the first working day after the day of death D+1.

All books will be placed in an easily accessible location Hellesdon Community Centre (room to be confirmed) though it is important the place is quiet enough to enable those signing the books a moment of privacy and quiet reflection.

Books will be placed on a good-sized table, covered with a suitable cloth, a chair, a supply of pens along with a suitable framed photograph on the table and a small arrangement of flowers.

A good supply of paper, hole-punched to fit in a loose-leaf binder will be provided and kept well stocked. A loose-leaf folder offers an opportunity to act if the book is defaced or offensive comments included. Pages including any questionable comments should be quietly removed until such time as a decision can be taken by the Chairman, on whether they should be permanently excluded.
The Chairman may wish to agree a form of words for a message, expressing sorrow at the news of the death. This may be the form of words included in a press release, Twitter or Facebook message or on the home page of the website.

Dependent on local circumstances it is suggested that Books of Condolence should be closed at the end of the day following the day of the funeral (i.e. if the funeral falls on a Thursday, Books should close at 1600hrs on the Friday). Books of Condolence are essentially a local record of the sentiments expressed by local people on the death of a national figure. As such, they should form part of the Parish Council archive, so that future generations are able to gain access to them easily and find out the way in which national events were marked in the area.

It is simply not feasible for every book from all sad occasions to form part of the Royal Archives. However, in a letter of condolence from the Chairman reference should be made to the Book of

Condolence and its existence in the local archives. The letter will then be stored in the Royal Archives and act as an effective cross reference.

On-Line Book of Condolence
HPC will be accepting online submissions for the Book of Condolence through a link on our website: www.hellesdon-pc.gov.uk The submissions will then be collated and included in the Book of Condolence. Alternatively, a link to the Buckingham Palace e-Book of Condolence will be included on the website: www.royal.gov.uk

Events During the Period of Mourning
From the day of the death until the day after the funeral, careful thought will be given to the types of events and activities which the Chairman should host or attend. Scheduled Parish Council meetings will be reviewed for postponement or rescheduling. Also, any Civic Lunches, dinners, receptions and so forth, may not fit with the mood of the nation and as a mark of respect may need to be cancelled or postponed. This is a local decision and one which need to be reached with great sensitivity.

Church Services
Hellesdon Parish Councillors will be sent details of all Church services being held in the Parish. (The Clerk will liaise with Rev Alder)

Flowers
The War Memorial will be the designated area allocated as a place for residents and visitors to lay flowers during the period of mourning.

Should residents wish to lay flowers during this time, they may do so. It is important to note that all of the plastic wrap should be removed before laying them. At the end of the mourning period, at 9am the day following the funeral, there will be a ceremonial removal of the flowers. Any message cards will be kept with the Condolence Books as part of the local archive. The flowers will be taken away to compost. The compost produced will then be used to plant a memorial tree.

Dress Code
A view will be taken locally on what is the correct dress in the event of the death of a senior national figure. Whilst flags are at half-mast, it will be appropriate for black ties, ribbons and arms bands to be worn by Council members. A supply of armbands for councillors and staff on duty will be held by the Clerk.

Marking a Silence
On the death of the Sovereign there will be a two-minute silence at 1100hrs on the day of the funeral (D+10). Which will be a public holiday (unless D+10 is a Saturday).

It may be that silence will be kept for other member of the Royal Family, perhaps on the day of the funeral as part of the funeral service. However, action on a silence for members of the Royal Family other than the Sovereign should await an announcement from Buckingham Palace.

Website
After the official announcement from Buckingham Palace HPC will activate a website holding page with a black background featuring: a photograph of the deceased, the year of birth to the year of death, and links to the following information: Council Services, Condolence Books, Church Services, Flowers and Flying of Flags. The holding page can be closed, for visitors to then access the main homepage. Each of the links will lead to a website page with the relevant information.

The page will be activated as soon as an official announcement is made.

Public Holiday
On the day of death workers can be sent home early.
The day of the state funeral will be a public holiday unless it falls on a Saturday.

Letters of Condolence
It is usual, in the case of the death of a member of the Royal Family, for letters to be sent to the Private Secretary of the deceased, asking that condolences be passed to the next of kin and other members of the Royal Family. Except in the case of the Sovereign's death, in which case they should be sent to the new Sovereign's Private Secretary asking that condolences be passed to the new Sovereign. In each case, other than exceptional local circumstances, one letter of condolence only should be sent.

Appendix 1 - Flying Flags at Half-Mast

Authoritative information on flag flying can be found on the website of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole, with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole. Flags cannot be flown at half-mast on poles that are more than 45° from the vertical, but a mourning cravat can be used instead (see the Flag Institute's website for further details).

When a flag is to be flown at half-mast, it should first be raised all the way to the top of the mast, allowed to remain there for a second and then be lowered to the half-mast position. When it is being lowered from half-mast, it should again be raised to the top of the mast for a second before being fully lowered.

When a British national flag is at half-mast, other flags on the same stand of poles should also be at half-mast or should not be flown at all. Flags of foreign nations should not be flown, unless their country is also observing mourning.

Appendix 2 - The Chairman's Statement

A statement will be issued by the Chairman 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 Hellesdon Parish Council on hearing the announcement.

Suggested statement:

Chairman's Message Of Sympathy:
I***t is with great sadness that Hellesdon Parish Council and the residents of the parish mourn the passing of [title], much loved servant of our great nation. Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with family members at this sad time.***
A book of condolence will be available at the parish office between the hours of [9.30am – 4pm Monday to Friday] until [date].
Flowers, without cellophane coverings, can be laid at the war memorial.

The Parish Council will continue to offer services as usual and conduct its business and meetings during the period of mourning. Please check this page for further information which will be posted when arrangements for commemoration events have been confirmed.

[Name] Chairman of Hellesdon Parish Council