

C FREEMEN AND HONORARY FREEMEN

5.15 The LGA 1972 did not affect any person's status as, or his right to be admitted to the status of, a freeman of a previously existing borough. The freemen's roll is kept by the district council (T), whose chairman must examine and decide claims to be admitted. The Act also expressly preserved the special rights of freemen, their appropriate relatives or associates, the relatives by marriage of their widows or children and of existing or future inhabitants in any property or otherwise¹.



A local council and charter trustees may admit as honorary freemen or honorary freewomen persons of distinction and those who have rendered eminent service to the place or area². This must be done at a meeting specially convened for the purpose and requires a two thirds majority of those voting. Such honorary freedom carries none of the special rights preserved by the Act³.

¹ LGA 1972, s 248.

² LGA 1972, s 249(5) as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

³ LGA 1972, s 249(8).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 s249

(5) Subject as follows, a relevant authority may admit to be honorary freemen or honorary freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority—

- (a) persons of distinction, and
- (b) persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area.

(6) In this section "relevant authority" means—

- (a) a principal council;
- (b) a parish or community council;
- (c) charter trustees in England constituted—
 - (i) under section 246 of the Local Government Act 1972,
 - (ii) by the Charter Trustees Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/263), or
 - (iii) under Part 1 of the Local Government and Public Involvement and Health Act 2007.

(7) The power in subsection (5) above is exercisable by resolution of the relevant authority.

(8) A resolution under subsection (7) above must be passed—

- (a) at a meeting of the relevant authority which is specially convened for the purpose and where notice of the object of the meeting has been given to the members of the authority by not less than two-thirds of the members of the relevant authority (in the case of charter trustees, of the trustees) who vote on it.

(9) A relevant authority may spend such reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person to whom the authority has conferred the title of honorary freeman or honorary freewoman under subsection (5) above.

(10) The admission of a person as honorary freeman or honorary freewoman does not confer on that person any of the rights referred to in section 248(4) above.

