

Proclamation Day (applicable only on the death of the Sovereign)

The new Sovereign succeeds to the throne as soon as his or her predecessor dies and is at once proclaimed at an Accession Council in St James's Palace

In London the public proclamation of the new Sovereign is then read out, first at St. James's Palace and afterwards at other locations. This is Proclamation Day when flags should be flown at half-mast from 8.00 a.m. and then at full mast between 11.00 a.m. and sunset (see paragraph 4.1 below).

Once the Proclamation has been made at St. James's Palace in London it is read out publicly, later that day, in Edinburgh, Windsor and York as well as at Guildhalls, Shire Halls and Town Halls throughout the country. In each city or town the accession is traditionally proclaimed at a number of different spots.

It is hoped that the wording of the Proclamation to be read out will be easily available and a watch should be kept on the Buckingham Palace website (www.royal.gov.uk) and the Privy Council website (www.privy-council.org.uk). As soon as the National Association of Civic Officers has the information it will also appear on their website (www.leicester.gov.uk/naco).

Proclamation Day takes place very soon after the Sovereign's death. In 1952 it was on 8th February, two days after The King's death. It is therefore essential that plans are in place before they are required so that careful thought can be given to issues such as:

- who will read the Proclamation;
- from where it will be read;
- the arrangements that will be made to tell the public in advance of the reading of the Proclamation;
- who will be invited to be present;
- who will be in the platform party.

These are essentially local decisions but ones which require careful thought ahead of the inevitable pressures at the time of the Succession.

Flag flying

- At half-mast from the announcement of the death of the Sovereign until 0800 on the day after the funeral, except on Proclamation Day when they are hoisted to the top of the mast at 11.00 a.m. and remain there until sunset. Half-mast means two thirds of the way up the flag pole and flags should be first raised to the top and then down one third of the way.

Church Bells

- Local churches may toll bells providing the Local Parochial Council agrees, at noon on day of death or day after (depending on time of death)