



The role of
the Mayor



First Citizen

Every year a long serving councillor is appointed as the Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane.

The Mayor is the first citizen of the borough. This means that only HM The Queen, members of the Royal Family and the Lord Lieutenant take precedence over the Mayor at events in the borough.

The Mayor's correct title is 'The Worshipful the Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane'.

The Mayor's term of office is for one year and the Mayor changes in mid-May.

'The Worshipful the Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane'

Functions

The Mayor attends many different types of functions throughout the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane, such as formal dinners, official openings of events or new facilities, talking to clubs and societies and visiting schools.

The Mayor also hosts visits to the Mayor's Parlour from various organisations and is always happy to receive a request for a visit.

The Mayor asks the Deputy Mayor to stand in if the Mayor is not available.

The Mayor is responsible, in a non-political way, for furthering the interests of the borough whenever, and wherever, an appropriate occasion arises.

The Mayor acts as host to distinguished visitors to the borough, including royalty, national representatives of various organisations and foreign visitors, especially those from our twin towns.

'The Mayor attends many different types of functions throughout the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane'

The Mayoress, Consort or Escort

If the Mayor is male, it is entirely up to the Mayor who he calls his Mayoress, it can be wife, daughter or friend. The title has no official recognition and is a strictly honorary one.

If the Mayor is female then her husband would be the Mayor's Consort. If the Mayor is unmarried, her official escort is named Mayor's Escort.



The meaning of 'Mayor'

The word 'Mayor' and 'Major' derive from the same latin word 'Magnus' meaning 'great'. The office of Mayor, together with the Domesday book and the feudal system, were brought to this country by the Normans. Such an office had existed on the continent since at least the fifth century.

'The word 'Mayor'... meaning 'great''

First Mayor

The first English Mayor was the Mayor of London, appointed in 1189 by Richard I. The first Basingstoke Mayor, George Baynard, was appointed in 1641.

*'Steadfast
in Service'*



Civic occasions

On very formal occasions, such as the annual meeting of the council, Remembrance Day, Civic Sunday and Freedom of the Borough ceremonies, the Mayoral robes are worn.

On these occasions, the chain of office is also worn with the Mayoral robes, which are edged with synthetic fur. The chain can also be worn

on its own for other important engagements in the borough. When the robes are worn the Macebearer must attend, together with the council's Chief Executive.

The Mayor's chain and badge

In 1978 the Basingstoke District Council successfully petitioned the Queen to be made a borough and the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane was formed.

The Mayor's chain and badge was purchased by local companies - which are listed in the Mayor's Parlour - and presented in 1979.

The chain is made of gold links and was made by Thomas Fattorini of Birmingham.



The coat of arms

The badge carries the coat of arms of the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane. The design consists of the simplest form of armorial bearings, a shield of arms, without crest or supporters. This was the earliest form of civic arms and is borne by several ancient corporations - including, Winchester, Lincoln, Canterbury, York and Durham - as well as many modern boroughs such as Fareham and Epsom and Ewell.

The shield forms a kind of heraldic map with the two former rural districts of Basingstoke and Kingsclere and Whitchurch symbolised by two beech trees, a predominant feature of the natural scene, on a background of gold representing agriculture.

A narrow blue wave in the form of a chevron suggests the Test, Bourne, Loddon and other local rivers watering the district. Below the chevron is St Michael and the dragon, which is featured in the ancient seal of the former Borough of Basingstoke and has been used in the past in lieu of a coat of arms. This is as shown in recent versions except that the staff in his left hand is topped with the distinctive St Michael's Cross, with rounded ends, as it is in the ancient seal. This cross may be seen prominently displayed in St Michael's Church, Basingstoke.

The motto 'Steadfast in Service' is derived from the mottoes of Lord Porchester and the Earls of Carnarvon ('Ung Je Serviray') and Lord Portal ('Constanter').

The armorial bearings were designed by Mr H Ellis Tomlinson, MA FHS.

'The chain is made of gold links'

The mace

The Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane has two maces:

- **The King Charles Mace (small)** - This is very fragile and is no longer used. It was given to the borough by King Charles I in 1641 and is made of silver gilt.
- **The Queen Anne Mace** - This is the Mace used now for ceremonial occasions and was presented to the borough by Queen Anne in 1710. It is made of silver gilt.

The use of ceremonial maces has its precedence in the use of the mace as a weapon of war. Today's ceremonial maces are a highly ornamental descendant of the prehistoric club or bludgeon.

The mace was adopted as a special weapon for the Serjeants-at-Arms appointed first by Phillip II of France (1180-1223) to guard himself from

suspected assassins when he returned to France.

In the course of time, the mace became no longer a weapon but a symbol of authority. Today's ceremonial maces are therefore carried upside down.

The absence of the mace from a council meeting today would not invalidate the outcome of the business transacted. This was not always so. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a Mayor could not be sworn in unless the mace was present.

The mace precedes the Mayor when entering and leaving the Council Chamber and lies in front of the Mayor when council is sitting. When the Mayor is settled, the mace rests horizontally before him or her. In St Michael's Church there is a holder in the civic pews for the mace.

The Mayor's Chaplain

The Mayor's Chaplain is chosen by the Mayor. It is an honorary title and the Chaplain attends civic functions, for example Remembrance Day or any

occasions when the Mayor is robed. He/she is responsible for prayers before council meetings and Grace at Civic Dinners where requested.



'In the course of time, the mace became no longer a weapon but a symbol of authority.'

For more information about the Mayor call the
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