

**Guidance Notes for
Parishes:**

**Death of HRH The Duke
of Edinburgh.**



The death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh is a significant national event. He has been a longstanding national figure, sometimes controversial, but widely respected for his unwavering support for the Queen and his service of the country. Biographical background can be found [here](#).

Planning for the events that will follow the Duke's death has already been done by a planning group of civic and diocesan representatives, so that those with key roles know what is expected and the key tasks can happen in an organised and co-ordinated way. These have been updated in the light in the pandemic.

First actions in parishes and deaneries

Please pray for the Royal family and for the nation. Resources will be available on the Church of England website and can also be accessed through their social media links and through the diocesan and Cathedral websites.

From the formal announcement of HRH's death, **flags are to be lowered to half-mast** until after the funeral. British Flag Protocol is described [here](#), including how to correctly fly a flag at half-mast.

Due to the pandemic, local physical Books of Condolence will not be possible. There is an online Book of Condolence available on the national Church of England website [here](#) and you can also light a virtual candle [here](#).

On the day of HRH's death, the Bishop will make a statement on behalf of the Diocese which will be available on the Diocesan and Cathedral website and on social media. The Lord Lieutenant and other civic leaders will also make public statements, issued as press releases and on websites. The Archbishop of Canterbury's statement can be found [here](#).

Events during the period of Mourning.

Plans will be made for an online service of remembrance and thanksgiving at Leicester Cathedral in the coming days – more details to follow when available. Local churches may wish to share details of this or hold their own local online or in person service, being sensitive to the local and national mood and keeping within COVID guidelines.

Prayers for the Royal Family will of course be said in every service during this period. Prayers and liturgical material will be published by the Church of England nationally on its [website](#): and on the Cathedral's [website](#). A Church Near You Resource Hub will also provide liturgy for services in churches and for use by people in their own homes as well as the National Anthem and a photograph of the Duke of Edinburgh.

Following the death of HRH there will be a **one minute silence** at 11.00 a.m. on the day of the funeral. In the current conditions, people should not gather in large numbers for this.

From the day of the death until the day after the funeral, careful thought should be given to the types of **events and activities** that the local church community runs or hosts; some will 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 will need to be reached with great sensitivity.

Clergy should **contact local Head-teachers** to offer support or input to Collective Worship in schools soon after the death of HRH and perhaps also on the day of the funeral, when children will be very aware through the media of what is happening. If possible in a COVID-secure way, it may be helpful for local church leaders to spend time with the children, talking about the events that are unfolding and answering questions.

Contact with the media.

Media enquiries and statements from key civic figures will be co-ordinated by the Lieutenancy Office via the County Council Communications Officers, in liaison with our own Diocesan Communications Office. Parishes and clergy should seek advice about their own media statements or enquiries from Jo Griffin in our Comms team.

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For social media, please follow the diocesan and national C of E lead, which will include suspending all non-essential social media posts to begin with. The diocesan and cathedral social media will share the national CofE social media posts.

Revd Rosie Woodall, Chaplain to the Bishop of Leicester, April 2021.

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