



Old Woughton Parish Council Recognition Scheme

Reviewed and adopted March 2026

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to recognise individuals who give generously of their time, skills and commitment to the Parish of Old Woughton and its residents.

Many individuals undertake voluntary activities for the benefit of others, often without payment or personal gain. Their contributions strengthen our community and enhance residents' quality of life. The parish council has a responsibility to encourage such dedication by formally acknowledging and thanking those who serve.

2. Recognition Levels

While a simple verbal or emailed thank you is always welcome, this scheme sets out a framework for more formal recognition where a greater level of acknowledgment is appropriate.

a) **Level 1 – Formal Letter of Thanks**

A motion of thanks is passed by the parish council, followed by a formal letter issued by the Clerk or Chair, as appropriate.

b) **Level 2 – Certificate of Thanks**

A framed certificate is presented to acknowledge a sustained and meaningful contribution to the community.

c) **Level 3 – Lifetime Award**

The highest honour awarded by the parish council, recognising extraordinary, long-term, or exceptional service. This award may be associated with the naming or renaming of a parish feature or the creation of a new commemorative element (e.g., a planted tree or dedicated bench).

3. Criteria for Recognition

a) **Letter of Thanks**

Awarded for service to parish residents that is typically one-off or short in duration but nevertheless deserving of formal acknowledgment.

b) **Certificate of Thanks**

Presented to those who have provided an unpaid service to residents over a significant period. Although the individual or their family may incidentally benefit from the activity, the primary benefit must clearly accrue to the wider community.

Example: Leading a community group that benefits many children in the parish, including the individual's own.

c) **Lifetime Award**

Reserved for exceptional circumstances. The recipient will have demonstrated:

- i) Major and unusual service with **no personal benefit**, or
- ii) Long-term, extraordinary commitment over many years.

In rare cases, an Old Woughton resident who achieves something truly exceptional at a national level—such as an act of outstanding bravery—may be considered. Recognition may include naming or renaming a parish feature or creating a commemorative asset.

4. Ineligibility

Serving Old Woughton Parish Councillors and Milton Keynes Councillors are not eligible for awards other than a formal letter of thanks.

Individuals who have been financially remunerated for the services in question are not eligible for recognition under this scheme.

5. Nomination Process

- a) Any resident or parish councillor may nominate an individual for recognition.
- b) Nominations must be submitted in writing to the Clerk and include clear reasons and justification.
- c) **For a Letter of Thanks:**
A councillor will place a motion on the parish council agenda. If the nomination originates from a non-councillor, the Chair may place the motion on the agenda based on the Clerk's advice.
- d) **For a Certificate of Thanks or Lifetime Award:**
A detailed nomination, including supporting evidence, must be submitted. Nominations may be made by any resident, organisation or parish councillor. The Clerk, Chair and Vice-Chair will initially review nominations to ensure sufficient detail is provided.
- e) Nominations lacking adequate information will be returned to the applicant for revision.

6. Approval

All recognitions require a two-thirds majority vote of the full parish council.

7. Presentation

Certificates of Thanks and Lifetime Awards will be presented at an appropriate ceremony.

Certificates will be professionally prepared using calligraphic or equivalent high-quality techniques and presented in a suitable frame.

Review History

June 2019	No changes
March 2026	Minor formatting changes