

## Halton Registration Service Service Standards

### Our Vision and Mission:

- To achieve excellence in national, regional and local quality standards
- To provide our customers with the best modern practices in service delivery
- To provide value for money to both our customers and the council tax payers of Halton, by ensuring that our services are efficient and effective
- To provide our customers with a fair and consistent service

### The Local Registration Service is responsible for the delivery of statutory services, this includes:

- Registration of births and still births
- Registration of deaths
- Re-registrations
- Notices of marriage and civil partnership
- Marriages and civil partnerships
- Civil partnership conversions
- Licensing venues for marriages and civil partnerships
- Keeping records of authorised persons
- Collecting and submitting quarterly returns of marriage for the clergy and authorised persons
- Reporting suspected sham marriages to the Home Office
- Delivery and management of citizenship ceremonies
- Custody and care of historic records and the issuing of copy certificates
- Delivery of the Government's Tell Us Once service (part one – capture)

### Our Promise to you is that:

- Our staff will be polite, courteous and identifiable by name
- We will interview you in private
- Your information will be treated in the strictest confidence; we will not pass it on to anyone who is not entitled to it by law. For more information please see the privacy notice on the Council's website
- We will offer to explain any complex rules and regulations
- We aim to see everyone within 10 minutes of their appointment time. To help us to do this, please arrive in good time for your appointment
- We will treat all customers fairly and consistently
- If you telephone us, the call will be answered by our Call Centre staff, there is a call queueing system; and your call will be answered as soon as possible
- Where your enquiries do not relate to our service, we will signpost you accordingly.

### At the Register Office at Runcorn Town Hall we:

- Register Births and Deaths
- Issue copy Birth, Death, Marriage and Civil Partnership Certificates from our records
- Take Notices of Marriage and Civil Partnership for ceremonies to be held in Register Offices, Approved Buildings and some religious buildings
- Conduct Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships in our own building and in other Approved Buildings (e.g. Hotels) within Halton
- Arrange for Registrars to attend various religious buildings within Halton to register marriages
- Conduct Citizenship Ceremonies
- Hold pre-ceremony planning meetings
- Delivery PD2 passport signing service

### **At Halton Direct Link Offices, and via our Contact Centre we:**

- Give information on and process applications for copy Birth, Death, Marriage and Civil Partnership certificates within Halton
- Make appointments to Register Births and Deaths
- Make appointments for giving Notice of Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Take payments for services and ceremonies (we also take online payments).

### **Birth Declarations:**

- People who are wishing to give a declaration of a Birth that occurred outside Halton, should contact the Register Office for the District where the Birth occurred.

### **Birth Registrations:**

- People who are registering a Birth that occurred in Halton, will be offered an appointment at our office within 5 working days of contacting us. Registering a Birth takes up to 20 minutes
- There is no charge for registering a Birth. However, a fee, set by the Government is charged for any copy Birth certificates.

### **Death Registrations:**

- People who are registering a Death will be offered an appointment at our office within 2 working days of contacting us. Registering a Death takes up to 30 minutes
- There is no charge for registering a Death. Death certificates can be purchased for a fee, set by the Government.

### **Marriages, Civil Partnerships and other Celebratory Services**

- People who are giving Notice of Marriage or Civil Partnership will be offered an appointment at our office within 5 working days of contacting us or within sufficient time to allow the ceremony to proceed at a time and venue of the customer's choice. Giving each notice takes about 20 minutes
- A fee is payable for giving Notice of Marriage or Civil Partnership
- A reservation fee is payable to secure the ceremony date of your choice. If you subsequently wish to change the time, date or venue you have arranged, an administration fee is payable
- A fee is payable for conducting ceremonies at Runcorn Town Hall or in an Approved Building, (i.e. Hotels) or for a Registrar to attend at a Non-Conformist Church to register your marriage. (Please note that our fees are in addition to any charged by Hotels and Churches). The fee is payable no later than 8 weeks prior to the ceremony
- If you choose to have your celebrations at Runcorn Town Hall or an Approved Building, you will be offered a choice of ceremonies and readings.

### **Citizenship Ceremonies:**

- We will conduct group ceremonies for the award of British Citizenship bi-monthly
- All applicants will be offered a ceremony within 3 months of the notification that citizenship has been granted
- We will arrange an individual Citizenship ceremony, for an additional fee, for those who prefer.

## Certificate Applications:

- There is a statutory priority service for issuing a certificate on the same day, subject to availability. This service must be requested before 3pm, and an enhanced fee is payable. Requests received after 3pm will be issued the next working day.
- Other current certificate applications will be issued in 21 days (15 working days) of receipt
- Historical certificate applications (where we hold the original record) will be issued in 21 days (15 working days) of receipt

## If things go wrong:

- Unfortunately, from time to time, things can go wrong. When they do, we want to correct them quickly
- If you have a complaint about the Service, you can telephone, write or email using the contact details below, for the attention of the Registration Service Manager
- We will try to deal with your complaint immediately. If that is not possible, you will receive an initial written acknowledgement within 5 working days and a full response within 14 days
- Further information explaining Halton Borough Council's complaints procedure is available on the Council's website.

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[www.halton.gov.uk](http://www.halton.gov.uk)

[www.weddingsinhalton.co.uk](http://www.weddingsinhalton.co.uk)