

CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF HONOURS

The overriding principle is that awards should be made on merit. Merit for honours is defined as:

- Achievement
- Exceptional service

In each strand, the standard, and the consequent criteria, should be high. In terms of service, honours should not just go with a job well done or because someone has reached a particular level. They should be awarded because an individual has, in plain terms, “gone the extra mile” in the contribution they have made. For distinction the standard should be that someone stands out “head and shoulders” above his or her peer group in what has been achieved. In some individuals these strands are intertwined.

Specific attention is paid to people who:

- Have changed things, with an emphasis on practical achievement;
- Have delivered in a way that has brought distinction to British life and enhanced the UK’s reputation in the area or activity concerned or which has contributed in a distinctive way to improving the lot of those less able to help themselves;
- Are examples of the best sustained and selfless voluntary service;
- Have demonstrated innovation and entrepreneurship which is delivering results;
- Carry the respect of their peers and are role models in their field; and
- Have shown sustained achievement against the odds which has required moral courage in making tough choices and hard applications.

Level of Award

- **Companion of Honour**
A pre-eminent and sustained contribution in the arts, science, medicine, or government.
- **Knight/Dame**
A pre-eminent contribution in any field of activity, through achievement or service to the community usually, but not exclusively at national level, or in a capacity which will be recognised by peer groups as inspirational and significant nationally, and which demonstrates sustained commitment;
- **CBE**
A prominent national role of a lesser degree, or a conspicuous leading role in regional affairs through achievement or service to the community or making a highly distinguished, innovative contribution in his or her area of activity;

- **OBE**
A distinguished regional or country-wide role in any field, through achievement or service to the community including notable practitioners known nationally;
- **MBE**
Achievement or service in and to the community of a responsible kind which is outstanding in its field; or very local "hands-on" service which stands out as an example to others. In both cases awards illuminate areas of dedicated service which merit public recognition.

In terms of service the difference is determined by the extent of the person's influence. In terms of achievement the difference is determined by the significance of the person's impact in their chosen profession.