



# A guide to your citizenship ceremony

## **Congratulations**

You are on the verge of becoming a British Citizen. To celebrate this momentous occasion and to formally welcome you in to the community you are required to attend a citizenship ceremony. At the ceremony you will receive your certificate of naturalisation, which confirms you as a British Citizen with the right to apply for a British passport and vote in elections.

**Once you have received your Home Office Invitation letter you are given a three month period in which to attend a ceremony. If you do not attend a ceremony within this period your certificate and all papers relating to your application will be returned to the Home Office. You are not a British Citizen until you have been through a ceremony.**

## **What is the ceremony like?**

When you arrive at the ceremony you will be greeted by our friendly Registration Service staff. There is no dress code, but most people do dress formally.

Before the ceremony starts, the Superintendent Registrar or Registrar will interview applicants and:

- introduce themselves to you
- tell you about the ceremony
- confirm choices you have made
- discuss any other special needs you may have
- confirm your identity

**It is essential that you bring your Home Office invitation letter and one piece of photographic identification with you to your ceremony.**

You will not be able to collect your certificate if you do not bring your Home Office invitation letter or ID. A passport or driver's licence is an acceptable form of identification.

Once the booking-in process is complete you may join your guests and chat with other citizens until you are called for the start of the ceremony. Applicants will be seated together at the front of the room, and guests will be asked to take a seat in the rows behind.

***Please allow 1.5 hours as ceremony sizes vary and can sometimes take longer than expected.***

The ceremony starts with a welcome from the Superintendent Registrar and a short speech by a civic dignitary, often the Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council. A Deputy Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire is also in attendance and gives a speech of welcome on behalf of the Queen. You will be asked to swear or affirm your allegiance to the Queen and the United Kingdom. This is done in a group and you will be led through your chosen promise by the Superintendent Registrar. After the oaths and affirmations you will be called up to receive your certificate of naturalisation from the civic dignitary. You need to consider whether you wish to shake hands with the dignitary. The ceremony concludes with the playing of the National Anthem. There will be an opportunity for refreshments and photographs after the ceremony. If you wish to have your photograph taken you must bring your own camera.

## **What happens if I arrange a ceremony and do not attend?**

- If possible we will arrange for you to attend another group ceremony within the three month time limit.
- If no ceremonies are available during your three month time limit you will have to pay for an individual ceremony.
- You could get an extension of the three month time limit from the Home Office, but

these are only granted in exceptional circumstances.

***If you know you are not going to be able to attend the ceremony, please contact us on 0115 9772812 at the earliest opportunity and we will do all we can to re-arrange your ceremony.***

### **What happens if I am late for my ceremony?**

Your letter of confirmation from us will indicate a time of arrival for your ceremony and it is essential that you arrive at this time. If you are late for your ceremony you will not be able to take part and will have to re-arrange your ceremony.

### **What is the difference between an oath and an affirmation?**

During your citizenship ceremony you will be required to swear or affirm your allegiance to the Queen and the United Kingdom.

An oath is sworn to God and is a religious pledge, sometimes made on the holy book of the person making the oath. If you wish to swear on a holy book you must bring it with you. An affirmation is a more secular pledge for those without a strong religious commitment.

The affirmation and the oath are of equal value and you may choose either. To help you choose we have included the text of both the affirmation and the oath. You do not need to learn the text as you will be given a card with your chosen promise on it to help you at the ceremony. You will be lead through the oath or affirmation by the Superintendent Registrar, who conducts the ceremony.

### **The affirmation of allegiance**

I (name) do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that on becoming a British citizen, I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, her Heirs and Successors, according to law.

I will give my loyalty to the United Kingdom and respect its rights and freedoms. I will uphold its democratic values. I will observe its laws

faithfully and fulfil my duties and obligations as a British citizen.

### **The oath of allegiance**

I (name) swear by almighty God that on becoming a British citizen, I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, her Heirs and Successors, according to the law.

I will give my loyalty to the United Kingdom and respect its rights and freedoms. I will uphold its democratic values. I will observe its laws faithfully and fulfil my duties and obligations as a British citizen.

### **Do applicants under the age of 18 have to attend?**

Applicants under the age of 18 are considered minors and a parent may collect their certificate on their behalf. We welcome children at the ceremonies, so please feel free to allow your children to attend if you wish to collect your certificates as a family.

### **How many guests may I bring?**

You may bring two adult guests with you to the ceremony. If you would like to bring more please contact us on 0115 9772812 and we will try our best to accommodate you.

The ceremony closes with the playing of the British national anthem. The words are provided here for your information.

### **The National Anthem**

God save our gracious Queen  
Long live our noble Queen  
God Save the Queen  
Send her victorious  
Happy and glorious  
Long to reign over us  
God save the Queen

We hope that this factsheet has addressed any questions or concerns you might have had about your ceremony, but if not please feel free to telephone us on 0115 9772812.

We wish you all the very best for your ceremony.