

Dr Nunzia Bertali Freedom of the Borough of Wirral

Dear Councillor,

Nunzia Bertali has lived in Wirral for nearly forty years. An Italian national by birth, she acquired joint British citizenship a number of years ago.

She served as Honorary Consul of Italy for the North West for more than twenty five years until she reached the compulsory age of retirement. Although officially retired from that role she still carries out consular responsibilities in support of the many Italian Nationals not just in Wirral and Merseyside but across the wider North West.

It is important to note that her work as Honorary Consul was entirely unremunerated and Nunzia funded her office in Birkenhead herself.

For those who know Nunzia this is entirely unsurprising as she is one of the most selfless people one could ever wish to meet, who is motivated solely by a desire to be of service to those who need her help and support.

Nunzia came to Wirral with her husband Alberto when he was appointed to manage the former Candy factory in Bromborough. Both Nunzia and Alberto have forged the strongest possible attachment to Wirral-a place where they have lived most happily for forty years, where they have brought up and educated their children and which they have both supported in a number of significant ways.

Perhaps, not surprisingly, Nunzia has been keen to promote the teaching of Italian and Italian culture in Wirral schools and she has supported those wishing to do so. She was a tireless supporter for many years of the Wirral Schools Modern Language competition run by the modern language team in the Children's Services Department and was, of course, a key supporter of the Council's Euro Wirral initiative during the 1990's and early 2000's which brought many resources and significant recognition and prestige to the Borough.

One of Nunzia's proudest achievements was the development of our twinning link with the Italian province of Latina and gave much of her valuable time freely and willingly to join Wirral trips to Latina and to help host visitors, including many children, from Italy.

She is very proud of the Borough and its civic heritage and in my thirteen years as Chief Executive I can think of no significant civic function which she has not graced with her presence. I would be very surprised if she has failed to attend a single Mayor-making ceremony or civic service of Remembrance over the past twenty five years.

In 2002 Nunzia was awarded the Wirral Award for her services as Honorary Italian Consul in the North West. She was Director of the National Youth Advocacy Service from 2004 to 2007. She has been President of The Honorary Consuls Association of the United Kingdom and Vice President of the European Federation of Honorary Consuls and President of the Consular Corps of Liverpool. She was one of the founding members of the Council's Independent Advisory Panel on Members' Allowances and continues to sit on it to this day.

Nunzia Bertali has performed outstanding service for the Borough of Wirral and would be a worthy recipient of this highly prestigious award.

If I can provide any further information in support of this nomination please do not hesitate to ask.

Steve Maddox