

Lydford Parish Council

Flag Flying Protocol

Flag flying – a summary of national guidelines

In England, the flying of flags is treated as advertisements for the purposes of the planning regime to ensure the flags do not impact on safety or amenity. Some flags require formal consent (permission) from the local planning authority, whereas others like the Union Flag do not.

Currently there are 3 categories of flag:

(a) flags which can be flown without consent of the local planning authority – national flags and those of the Commonwealth, UN or other international organisation of which the United Kingdom is a member; flags of any island, county, district, borough or parish within the United Kingdom.

(b) flags which do not need consent provided they comply with further restrictions (referred to as “deemed consent”) – Rainbow flag, NHS flag, sports club flags and flags specifying certain awards (e.g. Investors in People, Blue Flag etc.)

(c) flags which require consent (“express consent”) any flag other than those in categories (a) and (b) above.

Two flags on the same vertical flagpole are permitted provided one of the flags is from category (a) (flags which do not need consent such as a national flag) and that flag is flown in the superior position. The second flag can be from categories (a) or (b). Where both flags are from category (a), the Union Flag will be flown in the superior position.

Further guidance on national policy and relevant planning laws can be found - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flying-flags-a-plain-english-guide/flying-flags-a-plain-english-guide>

Flag flying protocol - Lydford Parish Council

The Union Flag will be flown at full mast all year at any Council site within the parish that has a designated flagpole. The Union Flag must always be flown in accordance with guidance notes from the [Flag Institute](#).

A second flag may be flown inferior to the Union Flag at the discretion of the Council, provided the flag in question is from categories (a) or (b) above. The Chair may approve the flying of a second flag in circumstances where it would be inappropriate to delay, however that decision must be conveyed to the rest of the Council as soon as practicable.

No flag flying activity by, or on behalf of the Council, is to be undertaken without the approval of the Chair or the Council. Any flag flown without such approval is to be removed.

Devon Flag

It is expected that in normal circumstances the second flag flown will be the Devon County flag (St. Petroc's Cross).

Remembrance Day

The flags will fly at full mast on Remembrance Sunday.

Other flags

Other flags may be flown in place of the Devon Flag on occasions such as Armed Forces Day and as agreed by the Council or Chair.

Flying flags at half-mast

Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole, with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole. The Union Flag will be flown at half-mast on the following occasions:

- the death of a member of the monarchy, the prime ministers, or others in accordance with British flag protocol
- at the discretion of the Council or Chair when marking an important regional or local death.

When the Union Flag is at half-mast, other flags on the same pole(s) should also be at half-mast or should not be flown at all.

Proper disposal of flags

When a flag becomes tattered or faded and is no longer in a suitable condition for use, it should be destroyed in a dignified way, for example by burning, tearing or cutting into strips that no longer resemble the original flag.

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Reviewed November 2025

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