



# **CORFE MULLEN TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Flag Flying Policy**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Flags are a very British way of expressing joy and pride. They are emotive symbols which can boost local and national identities, strengthen community cohesion and mark civic pride.
- 1.2. HM Government are keen for local authorities and other local organisations to fly flags, particularly the Union Flag, the flag of the United Kingdom as it is a symbol of national unity and pride.
- 1.3. As a civic body, Corfe Mullen Town Council (the 'Council') wish to fly flags from its flagpole on the front of the Council Office as an appropriate mark of respect and civic pride.
- 1.4. 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 Dorset Council as the local planning authority, whereas others like the Union Flag do not.

## 2. Controls

2.1. The detailed controls over flag flying are set out below. All flags must:

- be maintained in a condition that does not impair the overall visual appearance of the site
- be kept in a safe condition
- have the permission of the owner of the site on which they are displayed
- not obscure, or hinder the interpretation of an official road, or otherwise make hazardous the use of types of transport
- be removed carefully

## 3. Types of Flags

3.1. There are 3 types of flags:

### **(a) Flags which can be flown without consent of Dorset Council as the local planning authority**

- Any country's national flag, civil ensign or civil air ensign
- The flag of the Commonwealth, the United Nations or any other international organisation of which the United Kingdom is a member
- A flag of the county, unitary, parish, town or village within Dorset
- The flag of Saint David
- The flag of Saint Patrick
- The flag of any administrative area within any country outside the United Kingdom
- Any flag of His Majesty's forces
- The Armed Forces Day flag

3.2. The above flags or their flagpoles must not display any advertisement or subject matter additional to the design of the flag.

3.3. The flags of St George and St Andrew are recognised as the national flags of England and Scotland; however, the flags of St David and St Patrick are listed separately as they do not necessarily fall into the category of a country's national flag.

**(b) flags which do not need consent provided they comply with further restrictions (referred to as 'deemed consent')**

3.4. A number of categories of flag may be flown without consent, subject to certain restrictions regarding the size of the flag, the size of characters on the flag, and the number and location of the flags.

3.5. Categories of flag that can be flown are:

- house flag – flag is allowed to display the name and emblem of the organisation occupying the building, or can refer to a specific event of limited duration that is taking place in the building from which the flag is flown
- any sports club (but cannot include sponsorship logos)
- the Rainbow flag (6 horizontal equal stripes of red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet).
- the NHS flag

**(c) flags which require consent ('express consent')**

3.6. Any flag not identified above requires express consent from Dorset Council as the local planning authority before it can be flown.

3.7. The regulations governing the flying of flags in England are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2012 and in 2021).

3.8. These regulations, including relevant amendments to flying of flags, can be viewed as follows:

- [Town and Country Planning \(Control of Advertisements\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Town and Country Planning \(Control of Advertisements\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2012](#)
- [The Town and Country Planning \(Control of Advertisements\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2021](#)

#### **4. Flag Protocol of the United Kingdom**

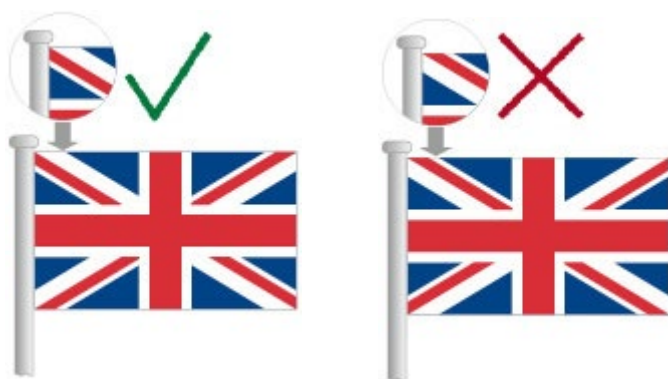
4.1. Flags may be flown every day of the year, day and night except on certain occasions when the Council may wish to fly other flags, including but not limited to, the national flags of the constituent nations of the United Kingdom, the Armed Forces Day flag, the Commonwealth flag, county and other local flags, and other flags which may promote civic pride.

4.2. The Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) may issue ad-hoc guidance encouraging UK government buildings and local authorities to fly such flags throughout the year, alongside the Union Flag.

- 4.3. UK government buildings and local authorities' flagpoles should not remain empty – the Union Flag should be flying if no other flag is being flown.
- 4.4. Sometimes two flags may be flown when only one flagpole is available, as long as both flags are British. The senior flag should fly at the top, with a gap of 30cm (12”), assuming there is enough vertical space on the pole. For example, the Union Flag can be flown over the flag of England, a county, city or house flag. When flags are at half-mast the lower flag must be removed.
- 4.5. Two flags can be flown from the same flagpole without the need for consent if:
- both flags are within the list above (a); or
  - one flag is within the list above (a) and the other is within the categories of flag set out under (b) above.
- 4.6. In either case, if one of the flags is the Union Flag, it must be flown in the senior position.
- 4.7. There are no restrictions on the size of the flag or the size of any character or symbol displayed on the flag. However, when British national flags are flown with other flags, both should be the same size.
- 4.8. Flags should be raised and lowered in a dignified manner.

## 5. Flying a flag on a vertical flagpole from the roof of a building

- 5.1. The Union Flag must be the correct way up – in the half of the flag nearest the flagpole, the wider diagonal white stripe must be above the red diagonal stripe, as Scotland's St Andrew's Cross takes precedence over Ireland's St Patrick's Cross.



This Flag is Upside Down!

## 6. Position of Honour

- 6.1. The order of precedence of flags in the United Kingdom is as follows:

- Royal Standards
- The Union Flag
- The flag of the host country (England), flags of other nations (in alphabetical order)
- The Commonwealth Flag
- County flags

- Flags of cities or towns
- House flags

## 7. Flags at Half-mast

7.1. 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. When a flag is to be flown at half-mast, it should first be raised all the way to the top of the mast, allowed to remain there for a second and then be lowered to the half-mast position. When it is being lowered from half-mast, it should again be raised to the top of the mast for a second before being fully lowered.

7.2. Flags should be flown at half-mast on the following occasions:

- from the announcement of the death until the funeral of the Sovereign, except on Proclamation Day when flags are flown at full mast following the proclamation.
- from the announcement of the death until the funeral of a member of the Royal Family styled 'Majesty' or 'Royal Highness', subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- on the day of the announcement of the death and on the day of the funeral of other members of the Royal Family, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- the funerals of Prime Ministers and ex-Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- any other occasions where the Sovereign has given a special command.
- flags fly at full mast on Remembrance Sunday.

## 8. Proper Disposal of Flags

8.1. 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 tearing or cutting into strips that no longer resemble the original flag.

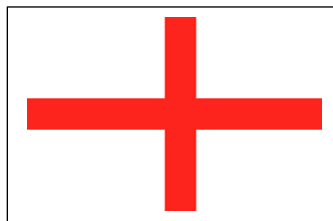
## 9. British Flags

9.1. The Union Flag is the national flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Crown Dependencies and the Overseas Territories.

The Union Flag



The St George Flag



## 10. Designated days for flying the Union Flag on UK government and local authority buildings

- Commonwealth Day (second Monday in March; the Commonwealth Flag is flown)
- 9 April: Wedding Anniversary of HM The King
- St George's Day (in England) (St George Flag to be flown for one week in April)

- 6 May: Coronation Day of HM The King
- Official Birthday of HM The King (announced annually)
- 21 June: Birthday of HRH The Prince of Wales
- 17 July: Birthday of HM The Queen
- 8 September: Accession Day of HM The King
- Remembrance Day (second Sunday in November)
- 14 November: Birthday of HM The King

In addition:

- 8 May: Victory in Europe (VE Day)
- 1 June: Dorset - St Wite's Day
- 29 June: Armed Forces Day

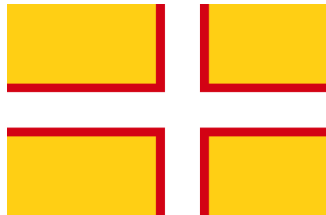
10.1. The Union flag shall be flown at half-mast on the death of a serving Mayor or Councillor, from the day of death until the day of the funeral.

10.2. Other flags may be flown with the agreement of the Council to show support during appropriate times or on nominated occasions.

Commonwealth Flag



Dorset Flag - St Wite's Cross is a community flag proclaiming the unique identity of this historic English county.



## 11. Flags to be held in stock:

- The Union Flag
- The St George Flag
- The Commonwealth Flag
- The Dorset Flag

## 12. Review

12.1. The Flag Flying Policy was presented to the Full Council, for approval and adoption on 28 January 2025, minute no. TC 24/321.

12.2. Future reviews will be carried out bi-annually or when any changes are made to related legislation, whichever is sooner.

## 13. References

- Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)
- <https://www.flaginstitute.org/wp/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/designated-days-for-union-flag-flying>