



Ruskington Parish Council

Flag Raising Protocol

Version 1:

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For review in September 2028.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 **Significance of Flags:** Flags are powerful symbols that can enhance local and national identities and foster community cohesion. They allow communities to express joy, pride, and loyalty.
- 1.2 **Importance of Protocol:** Adhering to protocol ensures the value of flag flying is maintained. This protocol provides clear guidance for flying relevant flags on designated days and times, ensuring consistency.
- 1.3 **Approach:** The protocol aligns with Central Government guidance, aiming to reflect contemporary society while maintaining the dignity of national flags and avoiding political controversy. It includes:
- 1.4 **Context and precedents:**
- Usual arrangements for displaying flags
 - Procedures for flying flags
 - Handling requests for guest flags
- 1.5 **Pre-arranged and Ad Hoc Requests:** The protocol identifies specific occasions for flag flying and clarifies the process for handling ad hoc requests, covering practical arrangements and responsibilities.

2. Context

- 2.1. **Planning Permissions:** Flags are treated as advertising under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007. Some flags require formal consent from the local planning authority. This protocol ensures compliance with these regulations, including amendments in 2012 and 2021.
- 2.2. **Flag Categories:** Subject to compliance with standard conditions set out in 'Flying Flags: A Plain English Guide', there are three categories of flag outlined below. These are outlined in more detail in Appendix 1.
- Flags that can be flown without consent
 - Flags with 'deemed consent' if they meet certain conditions
 - Flags requiring 'express consent'
- 2.3. **Consent Requirement:** Flags not listed above need express consent from the local planning authority.
- 2.4. **Union Flag Guidance:** The Union Flag may be flown on designated days on UK government buildings by command of His Majesty The King. Government buildings are encouraged to fly the Union Flag year-round. Local authorities are encouraged to follow this guidance voluntarily.
- 2.5. **Council Flagpoles:**
- Ruskington Parish Council does not have any flag poles at present.

3. Pre-Arranged Dates for Flying flags

- 3.1. Flags may be flown within Ruskington as follows:

- **7 – 9 High Street North (council offices):** On all ‘designated days’ for UK government buildings.
- Buildings within the village with the owners permission

The Union Flag must always be flown in accordance with guidance notes from the [Flag Institute](#).

3.2. Ruskington Parish Council may also choose to fly other flags on dates throughout the year, as set out below. These flags are selected as having particular significance to Ruskington.

3.3. On these occasions listed below, the relevant flag shall be flown in lieu of the default flags listed above. For timings see paragraph 8.

Date	Site / location	Flag	Comments
March: Commonwealth Day <i>(second Monday in March)</i>	Outside Parish Offices	Commonwealth Flag	A ‘designated day’ for the Union Flag, but R P C may fly the Commonwealth flag instead.
June: Armed Forces Day <i>(Monday before the last Saturday of the month)</i>	Outside Parish Offices	Armed Forces Day Flag	Recognising the significance of the armed forces community within Ruskington. <i>AFD occurs on the last Saturday of June and the flag is flown from the previous Monday until the following Monday morning.</i>
1 October: Lincolnshire Day	Outside Parish Offices	Lincolnshire Day Flag	Celebrating our county.
Ad hoc: During a Royal visit	As required	Royal Standard	Only applies when the Royal Person is specifically in the building – see national guidance.

4. Ad Hoc Occasions for flying flags

- 4.1. **Requests for Other Flags:** The Council will not meet requests to fly flags of other organisations, charities, or community groups due to planning consent requirements. However, support may be offered in other ways.
- 4.2. **Discretionary Flag Flying:** Flags can only be flown at half mast from a flag pole, therefore does not apply in Ruskington
- 4.3. **Restrictions:** Flags cannot be used for political purposes or commercial advertising.

5. Flag Specifications and Maintenance

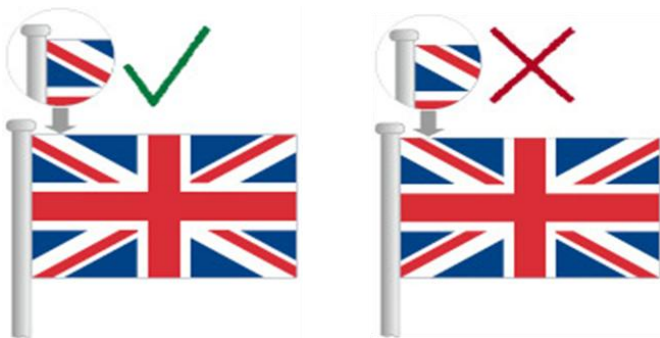
- 5.1. **Flag Size and Material:** Where possible, all flags flown should be consistent in size (10ft x 5ft for the Lafford Terrace flag pole) and should be made with a headband, rope and toggle. Hand woven flags are preferred over digitally printed flags.
- 5.2. **Condition and Monitoring:** All flags, regardless of category, must be maintained in a condition which does not impair the overall visual appearance of the site and should be kept in a safe condition. Flags can wear out, especially if they are flown in adverse conditions. Therefore, regular monitoring should be undertaken as to the condition of the flags. Guidance states *“National flags should never be flown in a worn or damaged condition, or when soiled. To do so is to show disrespect for the nations they represent.”*
- 5.3. **Guidance Compliance:** In arranging the flying of flags, officers must give due consideration to relevant Government guidance and the ‘Flying Flags in the United Kingdom – A Guide to Britain’s Flag Protocol’ issued by the Flag Institute and the Flags and Heraldry Committee.
- 5.4. **Funding** The purchase of flags will be funded by a yearly allowance from the budget.

6. Displaying Flags

- 6.1. British Flag Protocol dictates that flags should be raised briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

6.2. Union Flag

The Union flag should be displayed correctly as stated by the Flag Institute. The correct way to fly the Union Flag is with the wider diagonal white stripe above the red diagonal stripe in the half nearest to the flagpole.



[Flying-Flags-in-the-United-Kingdom.pdf \(flaginstitute.org\)](https://www.flaginstitute.org/flying-flags-in-the-united-kingdom.pdf)

7. Flags at Half Mast (Does not apply to Ruskington at present)

- 7.1. **Procedure:** When setting a flag at half-mast, it must be hoisted to the top of the pole with a pause once it reaches the top before then lowering it into half-mast position.
- 7.2. **Positioning:** Flags should be lowered to one-third from the top.
- 7.3. **Royal Standard:** Never flown at half-mast, representing the continuous nature of the Monarchy.
- 7.4. **Training:** Videos on flag flying are available on the [Flag Institute website](https://www.flaginstitute.org).

7.5. **Notification:** Central government will inform Ruskington when a national event occurs and based on the event, the Events Committee team will then confirm what is required with regards to flying a flag at half-mast, including a directive of which flag should be flown and for what duration. Additional half-mast considerations must be approved by full Council. Flags are not moved to half-mast until formal notification of a death or incident.

7.6. **Occasions for Half-Mast:**

- Death of the Sovereign - until the funeral, except on Proclamation Day (See Operation Bridge plans for further information).
- Death of a Royal Family member styled 'Royal Highness' - until the funeral, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- Death of other Royal Family members - on the day of death and funeral, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- Funerals of foreign Rulers, UK Prime Ministers, and ex-Prime Ministers - subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- Funeral day of local MPs, serving officers, and Members.

8. Timings

8.1. **General Timing:** Flags are normally flown from sunrise to sunset.

8.2. **Council Offices:**

- Flags are raised at 8:00 and lowered at sunset or 18:00, whichever is later.
- If not possible, flags should be lowered before 8:00 the next morning.
- For weekends, flags are raised at 8:00 on Friday and lowered at 8:00 on Monday.

9. Roles and responsibilities

1. **Events Committee:**

- Maintain and review the Flag Protocol.
- Advise on civic and procedural matters.
- Coordinate flag activities annually with Admin.

2. **Admin Team:**

Admin team to undertake periodic maintenance to ensure all flags are in a good condition, without tears or blemish.

- Dispose of flags according to Flag Institute guidance.
- Formulate external messages about flag status changes.

3. **Full Council:**

- Approve this Protocol and any significant amendments.

- Consider deviations or updates to support important events, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
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Appendix 1 - Recognised Flags

(a) Flags which do not need consent

The full list of flags that do not require consent are:

1. Any country's national flag, civil ensign or civil air ensign
2. The flag of the Commonwealth, the United Nations or any other international organisation of which the United Kingdom is a member
3. A flag of any island, county, district, borough, burgh, parish, city, town or village within the United Kingdom
4. The flag of the Black Country, East Anglia, Wessex, any Part of Lincolnshire, any Riding of Yorkshire or any historic county within the United Kingdom
5. The flag of Saint David
6. The flag of Saint Patrick
7. The flag of any administrative area within any country outside the United Kingdom
8. Any flag of His Majesty's forces
9. The Armed Forces Day flag

The above flags or their flagpoles must not display any advertisement or subject matter additional to the design of the flag, but the Regulations now highlight that you can attach a black mourning ribbon to either the flag or flagpole where the flag cannot be flown at half mast, for example, when flying a flag on a flagpole projecting at an angle from the side of a building.

The use of the word "country" in (1) and (7) of the list above, includes any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and any British Overseas Territory. The flags of St George and St Andrew are recognised as the national flags of England and Scotland, but 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 require consent provided they comply with certain restrictions

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.

Categories of flag that can now be flown:

1. House flag – flag is allowed to display the name, emblem, device or trademark of the company (or person) 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
2. any sports club (but cannot include sponsorship logos)
3. specified award schemes – Eco-Schools, Queen's Awards for Enterprise and Investors in People
4. the NHS flag
5. certain environmental awards

**The restrictions relate to where the flagpole is located on a building or within the grounds of a building.*

Appendix 2 – Flag Flying Days

a. Flags may also be flown on the following days:

- Commonwealth Day: 2nd Monday in March -Commonwealth/Union
- St George's Day: 23rd April - St George's/Union
- Coronation Day: 6th May - Union
- V.E. Day: 8th May - Union
- Armed Forces Week: 22nd June to 28th June - Armed forces/Union
- Queen's birthday: 17th July - Union
- V.J. Day: 15th August - Union
- Lincolnshire day: 1st October - Lincolnshire
- Remembrance: Week in November - Union/Tommies
- King's Actual birthday: 14th November - Union
- Christmas - Christmas Flag