

ST NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL FLAG FLYING POLICY

Adopted by Full Council on 22 February 2022

Introduction

Following the publication of the White Paper, The Governance of Britain: Constitutional Renewal (CM 7342-1), and the Consultation Analysis Document (CM 7342-3) on 25 March 2008, the Government has decided to give UK Government Departments and Local Authorities the freedom to fly the Union Flag on their buildings whenever they choose to.

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. The detailed controls over flag flying can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flying-flags-a-plain-english-guide/flying-flags-a-plain-english-guide>.

Flag Flying Policy

1. Union Flag

will fly at full mast all year at any St Neots Town Council site within the town that has a designated flagpole. The Union Flag must always be flown in accordance with guidance notes from the <https://www.flaginstitute.org/wp/uk-flags/british-flag-protocol/>

Notes

Where a building has two or more flagpoles, the English National Flag, the St George's Cross, may be flown in addition to the Union Flag, but not in a superior position

2. Days on which St Neots Town Council flies other flags

Commonwealth Flag

Will fly on the second Monday of March each year in support of Commonwealth Day from the flagpole on the plaza outside the council offices

St Georges Day Flag

will fly on 23 April each year at any St Neots Town Council site that has a designated flagpole and at all other times will fly from the flagpole at the rear of the Priory Centre building.

Council House Flag

Will fly all year from the flagpole at the rear of the Priory Centre

Armed Forces Day Flag

Will fly for one week every year in support of the nation's armed forces from the flagpole on the plaza outside the council offices. The date each year to coincide with armed forces week.

Merchant Navy Day Flag

Will fly on the 3 September each year from the flagpole on the plaza outside the council offices

Progressive Pride Flag

Will fly on LGBTQIA+ History Month (February 1st), Pride Month (June 1st) and Trans Gender Day of Remembrance (November 20th) from one of the flagpoles located at the rear of the Priory Centre.

3. Flag flying standard conditions

All flags must be:

- be maintained in a condition that does not impair the overall visual appearance of the site
- be kept in a safe condition
- 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

Subject to compliance with the standard conditions, there are 3 categories of flag:

(a) flags which can be flown without consent of the local planning authority;

(i) national flag

(ii) Commonwealth flag (iii) parish/district/county

(iv) Black Country, East Anglia, Wessex, any part of Lincolnshire, any Riding of Yorkshire or any historic county within the UK

(v) Saint David flag

(vi) Saint Patrick flag

(vi) flag of any administrative area within any country outside of the UK (vii) Her Majesty's forces

(viii) Armed Forces Day flag

(b) flags which do not need consent provided they comply with further restrictions (referred to as "deemed consent" in the Regulations);

(i) house flag

(ii) sports club but without sponsorship logos

(iii) Rainbow flag (six horizontal equal stripes of red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet)

(iv) specified award schemes – Eco-Schools, Queen's Awards for Enterprise and Investors in People, the NHS flag

(v) green and blue flag award scheme

(c) flags which require consent (“express consent”) - Any flag not identified above requires express consent from the local planning authority before it can be flown.

(d) two flags can also be flown from the same flagpole without the need for consent if both flags are within (a) above or one is from (a) and the other is from (b)

4. Requests to fly flags

The Council from time to time may receive requests from organisations or individuals to fly a flag that is not listed under item 2 above.

Such requests in the first instance will be reviewed by the Clerk/Town Mayor inline with this flag flying policy and presented to full council for their consideration.

Any flags that do not fall under category 3 (a) and (b) above will require planning consent from our local planning authority Huntingdonshire District Council. Applicants should be made aware that they may be asked to reimburse the council for any costs incurred in submitting planning applications.

5. Death and Funeral Commemoration

The Union Flag will be flown at half mast on the following occasions:

- a. Death of a Sovereign – (see separate protocol for marking a death of a senior national figure)
- b. Death of a member or near relative of the Royal Family – subject to special command from Her Majesty
- c. Funeral of Prime Ministers and former Prime Ministers – subject to special command from Her Majesty
- d. Funeral of Foreign Rulers – subject to special command from Her Majesty
- e. Death of Lord Lieutenant or Deputy Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire – day of the funeral
- f. Death of serving Mayor, Mayoress, Consort, Deputy Mayor or Deputy Mayoress – day of death and day of funeral
- g. Death of a serving member of St Neots Town Council – day of death and day of funeral
- h. Death of an Honorary Freeman on the Town – day of funeral
- i. Death of a serving Town Clerk – day of death and day of funeral
- j. Death of armed forces personnel who were residents of the town killed on active service - day of the announcement of death and day of the funeral

The Union Flag may be flown at half-mast on other occasions at the discretion of the Town Clerk and Town Mayor.