

## WINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### FLAG FLYING POLICY

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). Government Guidance recognises that flags are a very British way of expressing joy and pride – they are emotive symbols which can boost local and national identities and strengthen community cohesion.

Flags are also symbols that are often open to interpretation and have the potential to create tension between community groups whose opinions may differ. Flags are also treated as advertisements for the purposes of the Planning Regime and, as a result, some require formal consent.

The following sets out Wingham Parish Council's Flag Flying Policy which, where possible, is based on Government guidance.

Standard Conditions 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 (this includes the Highway Authority if the sign is to be placed on highway land);
- Not obscure, or hinder the interpretation of official road, rail, waterway or aircraft signs, or otherwise make hazardous the use of these types of transport, and
- be removed carefully where so required by the planning authority.

Flag Categories There are three categories of flag:

1. Flags which can be flown without consent of the local planning authority;
2. Flags which do not need consent provided they comply with further restrictions;
3. Flags which require consent.

Wingham Parish Council will generally only fly flags that can be flown without consent of the local planning authority. The full list of flags that do not require consent is as follows:

1. Any country's national flag, civil ensign or civil air ensign;
2. The flag of the Commonwealth, the European Union, 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 George;
6. The flag of Saint David;
7. The flag of Saint Patrick;
8. The flag of any administrative area within any country outside the United Kingdom;
9. Any flag of Her Majesty's forces;
10. The Armed Forces Day flag.

Wingham Parish Council may also on occasion fly flags that comply with further restrictions, for example the horizontal striped rainbow flag.

The Union Flag There is no Flag Act in UK law and the Union Flag is the national flag by long established custom and practice, rather than by statute. Wingham Parish Council reserves the right to fly the Union Flag every day and it will be flown the correct way up:



The Union Flag at Half Mast Wingham Parish Council reserves the right to fly the Union Flag at half mast on the following occasions:

1. From the announcement of the death of The Sovereign, except on Proclamation Day, when they are flown at full mast from 11am until sunset;
2. The funeral of members of the Royal Family, subject to special commands from His Majesty in each case;
3. The funeral of foreign rulers, subject to special commands from His Majesty in each case;
4. The funeral of members of Prime Ministers and ex-Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, subject to special commands from His Majesty in each case;
5. Any other occasions where the Sovereign has given a special command.

Half mast means the flag is flown two-thirds up between the top and bottom of the flag staff.

Guest Flags Flags that are not specifically included in the above Flag Policy will not be flown without the prior approval of Wingham Parish Council.

Any application for the flying of a guest flag should be made in writing to Wingham Parish Council, who will consider any request for the flying of a guest flag as long as it does not contradict the principles of this Policy. Requests for the flying of guest flags may be granted provided:

1. They are made in the spirit of displaying universal allegiance, support or respect or are to celebrate an international, national or local occasion;
2. It is appropriate for Wingham Parish Council to display support on behalf of its community;
3. Flags are not used for the purposing of commercial advertising;
4. There are no conflicts with other flags or Guest Flag requests.

The Proper Disposal of Flags When a flag becomes tattered or defaced 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.

Policy Review Wingham Parish Council will review this Policy every two years or when there are changes in Government guidance.