

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL – FLAG FLYING POLICY

LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

The national flag of the United Kingdom is the Union Flag. Since 2008, councils have had the discretion to fly the Union Flag at all times, if they wish. This has been North Lincolnshire Council's established policy for many years and the Union Flag flies from the prominent flagpole (the left flagpole when looking at the building from Church Square) at the council's Headquarters at Church Square House in Scunthorpe at all times. The exception to this policy would be on occasions where the Royal Standard is required to fly, which would then fly from the prominent flagpole, with the Union Flag flying from the second flagpole. During a Royal visit, the council would take advice from the Lord Chamberlain's Office, Lord Lieutenant's Office, or the Royal person's Private Secretary, as appropriate.

There is a second and third flagpole at Church Square House, which allows for the flying of other flags as and when appropriate and in accordance with the provisions of this protocol. Guidance on national events is often received from central government to mark certain important dates, sporting fixtures etc., although, in exceptional circumstances, the council does retain the ability to use local discretion. The council flies certain flags from the second and third flagpole to mark St. George's Day, Remembrance Sunday, Holocaust Memorial Day, Armed Forces Week, Pride Month, etc. for example. A timetable of these occasions is listed as 'Diary' later in this protocol. On occasions, there may be a requirement or desire to fly two additional flags. In these circumstances, the Position of Honour (see below) is followed. This allows the flexibility to fly the Union Flag and two additional flags, in the correct ranking, outside Church Square House. If there is no requirement or decision to fly an alternative flag, the council will fly the North Lincolnshire (NL) Civic Flag on the second flagpole, in order to mark and celebrate North Lincolnshire and its people. If there is one alternative flag being flown on the second flagpole, the NL Civic flag will be flown on the third flagpole.

The council operates in accordance with published practice, as informed by the Flag Institute's "Flying Flags in the United Kingdom: A Guide to Britain's Flag Protocol", standard guides on civic ceremonial matters, and guidance from central government and others. Where no guidance is available, or for local or regional events, the Director of Governance and Communities has the ultimate responsibility for decisions around the flying of flags. This will be in accordance with local protocol, available best practice, and what the Director considers most appropriate. The Director is also responsible for ensuring practical arrangements for hoisting or lowering flags is co-ordinated across the council.

The council has facilities to light the exterior of Church Square House in a range of colours, which can be used to mark certain dates or causes. Decisions on lighting the building will be taken by the Director of Governance and Communities and would not typically impact on the flying of flags.

During Citizenship Ceremonies, a Union Flag will be flown from a suitable internal flagpole. The Council also hosts two main annual flag raising ceremonies, one to mark Armed Forces Day and one to mark the start of North Lincolnshire Pride.

POSITION OF HONOUR

The Order of Precedence governs the ranking of flags, and the flagpole that they subsequently fly from. The order is as follows:

- Royal Standards
- The National Flag (The Union Flag)
- The flag of the host country (The St. George's Flag)
- The White Ensign of the Royal Navy,
- The Ensign of the Royal Air Force,
- The Blue and Red Ensigns,
- The Civil Air Ensign,
- The national flags of Scotland, Wales, the Crown Dependencies and the British Overseas Territories,
- Flags of other nations,
- The United Nations Flag,
- The Commonwealth Flag,
- The British Army Flag (Non-Ceremonial)
- County Flags and Flags of Metropolitan Cities,
- Flags of Other Cities or Towns,
- Banners of Arms,
- House Flags,
- Specific and Additional Flags to Mark Certain Events, Locations or Occasions.

The Royal Standard takes precedence over all other flags, and should be hoisted upon a Royal Person arriving, flown whilst they are on the premises, and lowered following their departure.

On occasions and only where considered appropriate, the council may decide to fly other flags, such as the Green Flag award, the Pride Flag, on Independence Days of local communities for example or flags to mark important dates or local events which support its agreed strategic ambition, priorities and community cohesion. The above Order of Precedence applies.

All flags will be of a standard size, in good condition and without advertisements. At all times, flags will be treated with the dignity that they deserve.

DIARY

The council agrees its annual schedule following the receipt of guidance from central government. North Lincolnshire Council will mark the following occasions in 2022 by flying the stated flag:

27 January – Holocaust Memorial Day	NLC Flag (Full- Mast)
March – Commonwealth Day (held on 2 nd Monday in March)	Commonwealth Flag
9 April - His Majesty's Wedding Day	Union Flag
23 April – St George's Day	St George's Cross
6 May – Coronation Day	Union Flag
June – Armed Forces Day (dates varies annually)	Armed Forces Day Flag
June (as appointed) – official celebration of his Majesty's birthday	Union Flag
21 June - Birthday of the Prince of Wales	Union Flag
July – Pride Month	Pride Flag
17 July – Birthday of the Queen Consort	Union Flag
3 September – Merchant Navy Day	Red Ensign Flag
8 September - His Majesty's Accession	Union Flag
1 October – Lincolnshire Day	Lincolnshire Flag
11 November + 2 nd Sunday in November – Remembrance Day	Remembrance Flag (Full Mast)
14 November – Birthday of His Majesty the King	Union Flag

In addition, the day of the opening of a Session of the Houses of Parliament by His Majesty; and the day of the prorogation of a Session of the Houses of Parliament by His Majesty. Flags should be flown on these days even if His Majesty does not perform the ceremony in person.

FLYING FLAGS AT HALF-MAST

On significant occasions, flags may be flown at Half-mast. This is a position two thirds of the way up the flagpole, and when hoisted, it is appropriate to raise the flag to the top, pausing for a moment, before lowering it to a suitable position. If the Union Flag is at Half-mast all other flags should be at the same position or should not be flown at all. Flags of other countries should not be flown unless that country is also in a period of mourning.

The exception to the above is the Royal Standard, which should never fly at Half-mast, representing the continuous nature of the Monarchy.

National events requiring flags to fly at Half-mast will usually be guided by directions from Central Government. However, there is local discretion to mark notable deaths, funerals or events by flying the North Lincolnshire Flag at Half-mast. (For example, the North Lincolnshire Flag may be flown at half-mast on the day of the funeral of former

Mayors of North Lincolnshire Council, former and current North Lincolnshire councillors, or other prominent local public figures). The above protocol applies.

PUBLICITY

The flying of certain flags, or occasions where flags are flown at Half-mast, will always be accompanied by an appropriate press release and/or statement on the council's website and social media channels.

REQUESTS FOR FLAG RAISING

Residents of North Lincolnshire can make requests to fly a flag to mark an occasion or date. This will typically be from the second or third flagpole at Church Square House, in line with the Order of Precedence (above). Residents can make requests by following the steps below:

1. The request must be submitted in writing/email to mayoral.services@northlincs.gov.uk, giving at least one month's notice. There is no charge for this service.
2. The request will be considered by the Director: Governance and Communities, applying all necessary considerations within the decision-making process below and the council will aim to respond to the applicant within ten working days.
3. If the request is approved, those requesting the flying of a flag will be obliged to provide a flag of the correct dimensions and in good order. Guidance will be given.
4. Flags will fly for a maximum of 24 hours.
5. Requests to fly flags shall be legal, non-political, non-divisive, and not intended to promote a private company, individual or organisation.

