

 <p>NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL www.nelincs.gov.uk</p>	Internal Ref:	NELC
	Review date	2027
	Version No.	V.06

Flag Flying Policy

Introduction

Flags are a very traditional way of expressing joy and pride – they are emotive symbols which can boost local and national identities and strengthen community cohesion. In 2012 and subsequent years, the Government made changes to regulations which widen the types of flags you may fly in England.

This policy sets out an agreed flag flying protocol and lists the flags that will be flown at the Council's main administrative centre, Grimsby Town Hall, along with the relevant dates for them being flown.

Local Arrangements

The flying of flags on Council buildings has been decided by North East Lincolnshire Council in accordance with the guidance issued by the UK Government and this policy aims to standardise current arrangements as of May 2026.

The national flag of the United Kingdom is the Union Flag. North East Lincolnshire Council has an established agreement, for many years, to fly the Union Flag from all Civic buildings in the Borough. This policy covers flag staffs at Grimsby and Cleethorpes Town Halls and the Armed Forces Remembrance Gate in Cleethorpes. The exception to this policy would be on occasions when the Royal Standard is required to fly. 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.

The Union Flag

The Union Flag will be flown at full mast on the flag staffs at Grimsby Town Hall, Cleethorpes Town Hall and the individual flag staff at the Armed Forces Remembrance gate. It will be flown on all days throughout the year except for dates when it is flown at half-mast.

Residents, businesses and other organisations who wish to fly the Union Flag on their own premises are requested to comply with local planning requirements.

The Union Flag will be flown at half-mast on the death / funeral of the Sovereign, a senior member of the Royal Family, the Prime Minister or any other dignitary as advised by the UK Government.

The Union Flag will also be flown at half-mast on the death / funeral of a resident who was a member of the Armed Forces in active service or the death / funeral of an individual who has made a significant contribution to the Borough as decided by the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members.

The Cross of St George (St George's Flag)

The Cross of St George will be flown at full mast on the second flag staff at Grimsby Town Hall. It will be flown on all days throughout the year.

The Armed Forces Flag

The Armed Forces Flag will fly one week every year in support of the nation's armed forces to coincide with Armed Forces Week, held in June of each year.

Grimsby Town Hall

There are two serviceable flag staffs, both attached at equal height on the roof of the Town Hall. Flag staff (1) can be seen, as you are facing the Town Hall, to the left; and flag staff (2) to the right. To achieve a consistent flag flying policy the Union Flag is to be flown from flag staff (1) at all times.

Flags are to be lowered to half-mast only on the death of a Freeman of the Borough, Mayor or Mayoress, serving member of the Council, local Member of Parliament or for a national day of mourning. With the exception of national mourning, where a period of more than five working days is likely to elapse before a funeral takes place, the flag be raised to full mast following the second day after death and then lowered to half-mast on the day of the funeral.

Cleethorpes Town Hall

There is one flag staff, sited in the ground outside Cleethorpes Town Hall. This will fly the Union Flag on all days throughout the year; at full or half-mast as appropriate.

Changes introduced in March 2021 now allow dual flagging – where two flags can be flown on one pole.

Armed Forces Remembrance Gate

The Remembrance Gate is a prominent location for celebrations and commemorations, mainly based on a military theme. There are four flag staffs lined up and a single flag staff set slightly back from the gate. For the purposes of this policy, the single flag staff will reflect the flags at Grimsby and Cleethorpes Town Halls.

The Armed Forces Major Engagement Team will utilise these flag staffs for relevant events and will provide the Civic Office with a diary of flag flying days on an annual basis. They will also advise the Civic Office of any ad-hoc flag flying and to which event it is linked to ensure all enquiries can be dealt with in a timely manner.

National Mourning

Flying of flags at half-mast:

'Half-mast' means that the flag is flown two-thirds up the flag staff. The occasions on which flags are to be flown at half-mast are:

- a) From the announcement of the death up to the funeral of the Sovereign; except on Proclamation Day, when they are hoisted to full mast from 11:00 am to sunset;
- b) The funerals of members of the Royal Family, subject to special commands in each case;
- c) The funerals of foreign rulers, subject to special commands in each case;
- d) The funerals of serving and former Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, and the funerals of serving and former Scottish First Ministers, subject to special commands in each case.

Rules when days for flying coincide with days for flying at half-mast:

Flags are to be flown at full mast all day:

- a) Although a member of the Royal Family, or a near relative of the Royal Family, may be lying dead, unless special commands are received from The Queen to the contrary;
- b) Although it may be the day of the funeral of a foreign ruler.

If it is a day which a flag would fly, but the body of a very distinguished subject is lying at a Government building, the flag may fly at half-mast on that office until the body has left, after which the flag is to be hoisted to full mast. On all other Government buildings the flag will fly as usual.

Acts of Terrorism and other Human Tragedies

The Death and Funeral of Serving and Former Serving Foreign Rulers

In the event of an act of terrorism or other human tragedy, flags should not be flown at half-mast unless a special command is issued to the contrary.

Proposed Diary of Flag Flying Days for Flag Staff (2) at Grimsby Town Hall

Date	Event	Flag
Second Monday in March	Fly the Flag for the Commonwealth	Commonwealth
To be flown from the Monday preceding Armed Forces Day and taken down on the Monday immediately after Armed Forces Day	Armed Forces Week	Armed Forces Flag

3 rd September	Merchant Navy Day	Red Ensign
1 st – 11 th November	Remembrance	Royal British Legion 'Poppy@ Flag
2 nd Sunday in November	Remembrance	'Poppy' Flag

Condition of Flags

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

Maintenance and Protocols

All flags must be maintained in a clean, serviceable condition and must be free from rips, fading or other visible damage. Any flag showing signs of deterioration must be replaced promptly.

Flags must be securely attached to the halyard, with regular checks to ensure all fixings, clips and ropes remain in good working order.

Flags must be hoisted and lowered safely and respectfully, using appropriate equipment and following all relevant health and safety procedures.

Flags must not be flown during severe weather conditions, particularly when wind speeds exceed 30 mph (48 km/h) or when guidance is issued by the Met Office or another relevant authority indicating unsafe conditions.

During periods of high winds or forecast adverse weather conditions, flags must be lowered or not hoisted to prevent damage to the flag, flagpole, buildings or surrounding areas.

The Designated Responsible Officers for monitoring weather conditions and taking appropriate action are:

- Head of Registration and Civic Services
- Civic and Mayoral Officer

Their responsibilities include:

- Monitoring weather conditions daily (and more frequently when adverse conditions are expected)
- Assessing risks to the safety and integrity of flag flying arrangements
- Ensuring flags are lowered, removed or reinstated as required
- Reporting any maintenance or safety concerns to the relevant team (Facilities Management)

Regular inspections of flagpoles, halyards and fixings must be carried out in line with regular building maintenance schedules to ensure ongoing safety and compliance.

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.

Policy Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets to ensure fitness for purpose and to ensure any ad-hoc days can be captured, noted and considered by the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Once approved each year, the revised policy will be published on the NELC Website ([Mayor of North East Lincolnshire | NELC](#)).

The next review will be conducted in May 2027.