

# BCP Council Corporate Flag Flying Policy

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## 1. Purpose Statement

- 1.1 This policy provides a corporate approach to the flying of flags at the Civic Centre and other key locations within the BCP Council area.
- 1.2 Flags have been flown at BCP Council and the previous sovereign councils and as such a precedent has been set that this will continue. It is expected that the relevant flags will be flown to commemorate and acknowledge specific occasions and at half-mast in respect of the fallen and recently deceased. There is pride in flying a local or civic flag and in respect of visiting dignitaries, which help fulfil the Council's civic responsibilities.

## 2. Who the policy applies to

- 2.1 The policy applies to those service areas responsible for ensuring that the relevant flags are flown to commemorate, celebrate and acknowledge specific occasions.

## 3. This policy replaces

- 3.1 This policy replaces the legacy policies, procedures and guidance of the three preceding authorities that now make up BCP Council.

## 4. Approval process

- 4.1 This policy will be approved by Cabinet.

## 5. Links to Council Strategies

- 5.1 This policy has been prepared taking account of relevant planning legislation and Government guidance.

## 6. The Policy

- 6.1 **Guidance for Local Authorities** – The flying of flags must be compliant with all appropriate Planning Regulations and advice should be sought from the Council's Planning Department to ensure consent is sought where required.
- 6.2 Planning Regulations in England that were introduced in 2007 to allow the EU flag to be flown on public buildings without acquiring planning permission will be removed following the UK's departure from the European Union. Instead, new 'deemed consent' will be granted for the NHS flags. This will allow for the NHS flags to be flown, without planning permission.
- 6.3 **Flying the Union Flag** – The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport issued new guidance on 24 March 2021 which will see the Union Flag flown on UK Government Buildings every day. The guidance asks that the Union Flag be flown all year round unless another flag is being flown such as another national flag of the UK, a county flag, or other flags to mark civic pride. All Councils in England have been contacted to raise awareness of the guidance and encourage local authorities to fly the union flag on their buildings. The policy therefore suggests that the Union flag is the default position.

6.4 It is now possible for two flags to be flown on one pole\*. Where organisations have two flag poles, they can fly the Union flag alongside another flag. This allows organisations to highlight their local identity alongside their national identities. Other flags may also be flown on non-designated days including a Saint’s Day or county day.

6.5 The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport advises of the designated dates for flying the Union Flag on UK government buildings which can be accessed using the following link and are published each year [Union Flag flying guidance for UK Government Buildings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

\*Note: The Government is updating the advertisement consent regulations in England to allow for two flags, including at least one national flag, to be flown from the same flagpole from June 2021.

6.6 **Flags and events respected by BCP Council** - In addition to the guidance relating to flying the Union Flag, and the designated dates referred to above, the following events will be respected by the Council and arrangements made to fly the appropriate flag at the relevant location.

6.7 It is acknowledged that the following is not an exhaustive list and therefore it is proposed that authority is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman to determine and identify other national and local events that should be marked by the Council during the Municipal Year.

Date	Occasion	Flag
27 January	Holocaust Memorial Day	Holocaust Memorial Day Flag
February (one week)	LGBT activities	The Rainbow Flag
Second Monday in March	Commonwealth Day	Commonwealth Flag or Union Flag*
23 April	St George’s Day	The Flag of St George of England or Union Flag*
June (dates vary annually – flown for a week)	Armed Forces Day	Armed Forces Day Flag
July	Remember Srebrenica	Srebrenica Flag
3 September	Merchant Navy Day	Red Ensign Flag
9 September	999 Emergency Services Day	Emergency Services Day Flag
October (for one week at beginning of the month)	To support black history month	The Black History Flag
Raise on the day of the launch of the Poppy Appeal until first thing on 12 November	Remembrance commemoration	The British Legion Poppy Flag
Second Sunday in November and 11 November	Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day	Union Flag
1 December	World Aids Day	The World Aids Day Flag

\* the same flag should be flown in each civic location

## Other events

Occasion	Flag
Official Visit by Member of the Royal Family, Head of State, Lord Lieutenant of the County	Union Flag, BCP Council
Visit by Member of Government High Commission of Country in which there is a twin town	Union Flag, National Flag
Council Meetings	BCP Flag

6.8 **Other Flags flown** - The Council will also make arrangements to fly flags for awards which are site specific as follows:

- Green Flags – Parks
- Blue Flags and Seaside Awards – Seafront
- Purple Flag – Town Centre

The above is normally seasonal, and flags flown for a short period as they are awarded. It should also be noted that red and yellow flags are flown for beach safety purposes.

6.9 **Position of Honour** - The Order of Precedence governs the ranking of flags, and the flagpole that they subsequently fly from. The order is detailed in Appendix A of the Policy. On occasions and where considered appropriate, the Council may decide to fly other flags, such as the Green Flag award, or flags to mark important dates or local events which support its agreed strategic ambition and priorities. The above Order of Precedence applies.

6.10 All flags will be an appropriate size to fit the flagpole, in good condition and without advertisements. At all times, flags will be treated with the dignity that they deserve. Facilities Management will make arrangements for all flags to be flown as detailed in the policy. The condition of the flags will be monitored by Facilities Management to ensure that they are replaced when they become wind damaged. On the death of the Sovereign or another member of the Royal Family, the Union Flags must be undamaged.

6.11 The Union Flag must always be flown the correct way up - in the half of the flag nearest the flagpole, the wider diagonal white stripe must be above the red diagonal stripe, as Scotland's St Andrew's Cross takes precedence over Ireland's St. Patrick's Cross as detailed in the diagram set out below. **The Union Flag must not be flown upside down.**



6.12 **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 always be guided by directions from Central Government. See the Flag Institute's website [www.flaginstitute.org](http://www.flaginstitute.org) for further details.

6.13 Set out below are those occasions when the appropriate flag should be flown at half-mast

Death of	Flag	Time period
Sovereign	Union Flag	This Policy should be read in conjunction with specific instructions in respect of how the Union Flag should be lowered and raised in the event of the death of the Sovereign and the required time-period.
Senior Member of the Royal Family	Union Flag	This Policy should be read in conjunction with the protocol for marking the death of a senior member of the Royal Family and the required time-period.
Prime Minister or former Prime Minister	Union Flag	On day of funeral
Member of the Council	BCP Flag	Day of death and on day of funeral
Chief Executive	BCP Flag	Day of death and on day of funeral
Member of Parliament	BCP Flag	Day of death and on day of funeral
Honorary Freeman	BCP Flag	On day of funeral
Honorary Alderman	BCP Flag	On day of funeral
Former Councillor	BCP Flag	On day of funeral

If the Protocol for Marking the Death of a National Figure has been implemented eg the death of the Sovereign, the Union Flag will take precedence over other flags.

6.14 **Role of Charter Trustees** - In Bournemouth and Poole (the areas formerly governed by Bournemouth Borough Council and The Borough of Poole), Charter Trustees have been formed and each area has a Mayor. It is a matter for the Charter Trustees of Bournemouth and Poole to adopt a Flag and to determine the events when the appropriate flag will be flown in accordance with their powers and roles. Details are set out in Appendix B to the Policy and are subject to consideration and approval by the Charter Trustees.

6.15 It is proposed that the Charter Trustees for Bournemouth and Poole make arrangements for separate flag poles to be located at the appropriate civic locations to enable flags to be flown for Charter Trustee events. This will avoid any potential issues when the BCP Council are flying flags as detailed in this policy.

Note – Following the governance review Christchurch Town Council was established and therefore does not fall under the rules for Charter Trustees.

- 6.16 Requests from Local Organisations to fly specific flags for other events** - It is acknowledged that local organisations in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area may make requests to fly specific flags for other events. Such requests should be submitted to the Chief Executive and the following criteria applied.
- the organisers of the event supply the flags concerned and pay the costs of raising and lowering the flag.
  - the flag will be in place of the Union Flag, since it would be inappropriate to fly such a flag under the Union Flag.
  - should an event requiring the flying of the Union Flag occur during the period, that event shall take precedence. This includes the implementation of the Protocol for Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure.

The decision on any such requests will be undertaken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Council.

- 6.17 Locations of flags flown on Council land** - Set out below are details of the flagpoles located at the three main office sites in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. The following sites are therefore listed as Council flagpoles and will observe the same standards until such time that the Poole and Christchurch sites cease to be in day to day use by BCP Council:

**Bournemouth:**

The Town Hall, St Stephen’s Road – fixed flagpole in front forecourt car park  
 Centre Tower of the main Town Hall roof – will only fly the Union Flag

**Christchurch:**

Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Christchurch – two flagpoles in front car park  
 Highcliffe Castle – one flagpole on top of the castle

**Poole:**

Civic Offices, Poole – one flagpole on top of the building  
 Guildhall, Poole – One flagpole on top of the building

Note the Guildhall and Highcliffe Castle are not under the control of Facilities Management

**7. How to use this policy**

- 7.1 Please refer to above and following Appendices

Appendix A – Order of Precedence for flying flags.  
 Appendix B – proposed Flag Flying arrangements for Charter Trustees (subject to approval by each of the Charter Trustees)  
 Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment Conversation Screening Tool

**8. Roles and responsibilities**

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Chief Executive</b>	To fulfil delegated authority as set out in the Policy in consultation with the Chairman of the Council.
<b>Appropriate Staff</b>	To fulfil the provisions of the policy in commemorating and recognising both national and local events ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and Government guidance.
<b>Cabinet</b>	To review the policy as appropriate.

## **9. Enforcement and sanctions**

- 9.1 Compliance with the Policy is required to avoid any reputational damage for the Council and ensure that the Council is able to demonstrate its commitment to commemorate and celebrate national and local events.

## **10. Further information and evidence**

- 10.1 Further information and guidance is available from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

## Appendix A

### Order of Precedence for flying flags

- Royal Standards
- The National Flag (The Union Flag)
- The flag of the host country (The St. George's Flag)
- Ensigns: 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.



## Appendix B

### Flag Flying Arrangements for the Charter Trustees for Bournemouth and Charter Trustees for Poole

It is a matter for the Charter Trustees to adopt its own flag. The Coat of Arms for the former Bournemouth Borough Council and Borough of Poole is in the ownership of each of the Charter Trustees. There is an opportunity for the Charter Trustees to adopt the Coat of Arms as their flag. Set out below are the proposed events that will be respected by the Charter Trustees

Occasion	Flag
Mayor Making	adopted flag of the Charter Trustees
Formal Meeting of the Charter Trustees	adopted flag of the Charter Trustees
Civic Service	adopted flag of the Charter Trustees

The following notes should be considered

1. Flags will also be flown on other occasions on the instructions of the Honorary Clerk who will consult with the Mayor (or in the Mayor's absence with the Deputy Mayor) in appropriate circumstances.
2. The death of a serving civic dignitary will be observed by flying the appropriate flag at half-mast. The death of a former civic dignitary or former Charter Trustee will be observed by flying the adopted flag of the Charter Trustees at half-mast.
- 3 Remembrance Day events are arranged by both Charter Trustees whilst the flying of appropriate flags in accordance with national guidance is reflected in the BCP Council flag flying policy.

### Provision of Flagpoles for The Charter Trustees for Bournemouth and Poole

The Charter Trustees currently do not have dedicated flagpoles which allow the flying of their adopted flag for relevant events. It is suggested that options be explored to allow for such a provision subject to necessary approvals.

Note – it is proposed that the detail of the above Appendix will be considered by both Charter Trustees at their meetings in June 2021.

### Equality Impact Assessment: Conversation Screening Tool

<b>What is being reviewed?</b>	Flag Flying Policy
<b>What changes are being made?</b>	Creating a single harmonised Flag Flying Policy for BCP Council
<b>Service Unit:</b>	Law and Governance
<b>Participants in the conversation:</b>	Karen Tompkins – Deputy Head of Democratic Services Bridget West – Head of Policy & Research
<b>Conversation date/s:</b>	29/4/21
<b>Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders?</b>	Everyone who lives, works or visits the BCP council area
<b>Do different groups have different needs or experiences?</b>	Different people do have different needs, but this policy is not about changing service delivery, it is about the Council using flags, appropriately, in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance, to commemorate or celebrate events both nationally and locally.
<b>Will this change affect any service users?</b>	No, it is not expected that this will affect any service users the Policy provides an opportunity for consistency, and the flexibility to recognise other commemoration events and celebrations as appropriate.
<b>If the answer to any of the questions above is 'don't know' then you need to gather more evidence and do a full EIA. The best way to do this is to use the Capturing Evidence form</b>	
<b>What are the benefits or positive impacts of the change on current or potential users?</b>	To harmonise the current arrangements and provide a framework in which to recognise appropriate events across the BCP area.
<b>What are the negative impacts of the change on current or potential users?</b>	It is not expected that there would be any negative impacts.
<b>Will the change affect employees?</b>	There are arrangements in place for raising and lowering of flags undertaken by relevant service areas it is not expected that these operational issues will change.
<b>Will the change affect the wider community?</b>	The Policy will provide consistency across the BCP Area and ensure that events are recognised as appropriate.

<p><b>What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by this change?</b></p>	<p>None required at this stage.</p>
<p><b>Summary of Equality Implications:</b></p>	<p>It is recognised that the Council will not have a flag for every commemoration event or celebration, but it will use a range of other means or communication channels to recognise, celebrate and remember events across the diversity calendar. This will be set out in an equality &amp; diversity communication plan.</p>

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