

SANDY TOWN COUNCIL

Flag Flying Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out Sandy Town Council's policy for flag flying.
- 1.2 Flags are traditionally flown by the Town Council for a variety of reasons; to show allegiance, support, or respect or to celebrate. The Town Council will always be sensitive to the views of all sectors of its community and will never use flags for political purposes.
- 1.3 As from Summer 2021 government guidance states that UK Government building flagpoles should not remain empty – the default should be flying the Union Flag if no other flag is being flown. This guidance is aimed at UK Government buildings, however they encourage local authorities and other local organisations to follow suit where they wish to fly flags.

2. Information

- 2.1 Sandy Town Council owns two flagpoles, one is situated at Faynes Corner near the roundabout in town, the other is situated to the rear of the Council offices overlooking the car park. The flagpole located at Faynes Corner was funded by the Sandy Chamber of Trade in 2018.
- 2.2 The Union flag will be flown at 10 Cambridge Road all year round unless another flag is being flown.
- 2.3 Other Flags will be flown from both flagpoles on recognised days and will be flown for one day unless agreed otherwise.
- 2.4 Officers will raise the appropriate flag at 10 Cambridge Road at 9:00am on a recognised flag flying day. The Flag will be flown until the following morning unless specified otherwise.
- 2.5 The outdoor team will raise the appropriate flag at Faynes Corner at 8:00am on a recognised flag flying day. The Flag will be flown until the following morning unless specified otherwise.
- 2.6 When a flag flying day falls on a weekend the flag will be raised at 4:00pm on a Friday and lowered at 8:00am on a Monday.

3. Union Flag Flying Days

- 3.1 The Union Flag will be flown at **10 Cambridge Road** all year round unless another flag is being flown.
- 3.2 At **Faynes Corner** the Union Flag, may be flown on the following occasions, in accordance with guidance from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport

Union Flag		
Date	Reason	Flag
21 April	Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen	Union
11 November (2 nd Sunday in November)	Remembrance Day	Union
14 November	Birthday of the Prince of Wales	Union

- 3.2 Dates need to be checked annually on www.gov.uk.
- 3.3 The Union Flag will be flown at **Faynes Corner** on the first working day following the birth of a new royal baby. The flag will be taken down on the morning of the following day.
- 3.4 The Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor has discretion to fly the union flag at **Faynes Corner** at other times:
- To celebrate & support sporting events of significance.
 - In recognition of a royal visit in consultation with the Lord Lieutenant.
 - In respect of a formal visit by another significant dignitary.
 - A special event of success in the town.
 - Formal Town Council Civic occasions.

4. Flying the Union Flag at Half Mast

- 4.1 According to the College of Arms website, the Union Flag shall be flown at half-mast in the following circumstances:
- From the announcement of the death of the sovereign until the funeral.

In the following cases, half mastings will be by special command from Her Majesty:

- On the death of a member or near relative of the Royal Family or the funeral of members of the Royal Family
- The funerals of Prime Ministers and ex-Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom
- Any other occasions as commanded

4.2 The Department of Culture, Media and Sport will inform Government departments of any other occasions when Her Majesty has given a special command. The College of Arms will publish details of half-masting instructions for the information of local and national government and any other interested bodies or individuals.

4.3 Local government bodies are permitted to fly the Union Flag at half-mast to mark local as well as national commemorations or losses, including the death of present councillors or past Mayors. In this case flags would be flown at half-mast for one day.

- On the death/funeral of a serving officer in the Armed Forces from the town.
- On Holocaust Day in January.
- On the death/funeral of a serving Town Councillor, local Unitary Councillor, or local Member of Parliament.
- At the discretion of the Mayor, to commemorate local civic and community dignitaries who have recently passed away.

Note: Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole. (The Flag Institutes Flag Flying Protocol)

5. How should flags be flown at half-mast?

5.1 When flags are to be flown at half-mast, they should be two-thirds up between the top and bottom of the flagstaff with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole.

5.2 When raising the flag, it should always be hoisted right up and then lowered back down to half-mast. Likewise, before it is lowered, it should first be hoisted right up and then lowered back down.

5.3 When flag flying days coincide with days for flying flags at half-mast, flags should be flown right up, unless special commands are received from Her Majesty to the contrary.

6. Other Flags

6.1 On the second Monday in March the Council will fly the Commonwealth Flag in recognition of Commonwealth Day.

6.2 On St George's Day, **23 April**, the Flag of St George may be flown. At the Mayor's discretion, the Flag of St George may be flown to celebrate or support sporting events of significance of an England Team.

6.3 On the **28 November** the Council will fly the Bedfordshire County Flag in recognition of Bedfordshire Day.

6.4 Other flags can be flown at the discretion of the Town Clerk and the Mayor.

7. Twinning Flags

7.1 According to the Department for Communities & Local Government's Plain English Guide to Flying Flags, the Council does not need consent to fly any country's national flag.

7.2 Sandy Town Council is twinned with Malaunay in France and has a long partnership with Skarszewy in Poland. The relevant national flag will be flown when Sandy receives visitors from these countries.

8. How should the Union Flag be flown?

8.1 The flag must be flown the correct way up, see www.flaginstitute.org/wp/ for further details. The correct way up for the Union Flag when flying is with the broader diagonal white stripe at the top left-hand side of the flag nearest the flagpole;



