



AUDLEY RURAL PARISH COUNCIL FLAG FLYING PROTOCOL



Adopted December 2025, reviewed March 2026

Purpose:

To provide clear, practical guidance for the correct and respectful flying of flags on the Audley Rural Parish Council flagpole.

This council notes:

The Union Flag is the national flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Crown Dependencies and the Overseas Territories. It is a symbol of national unity and pride. The first Union Flag was created in 1606 and combined the flags of England and Scotland; the present Union Flag dates from 1801.

There are designated days when the Union Flag must be flown on UK government buildings by command of His Majesty the King. However, UK government buildings are encouraged to fly the Union Flag all year around.

Local authorities and other local organisations are encouraged to follow suit where they wish to fly flags.

The Union Flag currently flies daily from the Parish Council's flagpole in Margarets Garden, Church Street, Audley.

The Government defines specific days that the Union Flag should be flown in precedence <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/designated-days-for-union-flag-flying> - see attached schedule

There are other specific days that the Parish Council may decide to fly an alternative flag, for example St George's Day (23rd April).

1. Default Flag

- The Union Flag should normally be flown when no other specific occasion or instruction applies.

2. Correct Orientation

- Ensure the Union Flag is the right way up: the broader white diagonal stripe must be uppermost nearest the flagpole.

3. Continuous Flying

- The flag will fly 24 hours a day.
- As illumination is not possible, ARPC will ensure the flag remains in good condition and is replaced when weathering occurs more quickly due to constant exposure.

4. Government Designated Days
 - **The Union Flag should be flown on official UK designated days (e.g., royal birthdays, Commonwealth Day, Remembrance Sunday – see attached schedule).**
 - ARPC should review and update the list annually.
5. Flag Procurement, Storage & Disposal
 - Use weatherproof, UV-stable materials sized proportionately to the pole (flags with a 2:3 aspect ratio are commonly used).
 - Keep at least one **spare flag** on hand so a soiled or damaged flag can be replaced immediately.
 - Store spare and retired flags cleanly and dry, folded respectfully in a designated container.
 - Dispose of irreparably damaged flags respectfully — by recycling where practical or by secure, discreet destruction — and record disposal in council logs.
6. Order of Precedence (If Multiple Flags Are Used Elsewhere)
 - Union Flag
 - National flags (England/Scotland/Wales)
 - Other national or international flags
 - County, civic, or organisational flags
7. Half-Mast Protocol
 - Used only for official mourning or local tragedies, when appropriate.
 - Raise the flag to the top of the pole briefly, then lower to the half-mast position (approx. two-thirds up).
 - When concluding mourning, raise to the top briefly before fully lowering.
8. Conditions and Respect
 - Flags must be clean, presentable, and not allowed to touch the ground.
 - Replace worn or damaged flags promptly.
 - The flag/s and pole should be inspected on a monthly basis.
9. Safety and Handling
 - Only approved councillors should raise/lower the flag when required.
 - Avoid lowering or raising in dangerous wind conditions.
10. Annual Review
 - ARPC will review this protocol each year and update the flag-flying calendar accordingly.

Based on guidance from:

- UK Government flag flying instructions
- The Flag Institute's British Flag Protocol
- College of Arms guidance on correct display of the Union Flag

Designated days for flying the Union Flag on UK government buildings 2026

- 1 March: St David's Day (in Wales)
- 9 March: Commonwealth Day (second Monday in March)
- 17 March: St Patrick's Day (in Northern Ireland)
- 9 April: His Majesty The King's Wedding Anniversary
- 23 April: St George's Day (in England)
- 6 May: Coronation Day
- 13 June: Official Birthday of His Majesty The King
- 21 June: Birthday of HRH The Prince of Wales
- 17 July: Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen
- 8 September: His Majesty The King's Accession
- 8 November: Remembrance Day (second Sunday in November)
- 14 November: Birthday of His Majesty The King
- 30 November: St Andrew's Day (in Scotland)