

# TMBC Flag Protocol

August 2022

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# 01 Scope

This protocol includes the flag poles at the Council Offices at Kings Hill and Tonbridge Castle. At Tonbridge Castle the flagpole is located on one of the turrets of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Gatehouse. At Gibson Building, the flagpole is located at the front of Gibson Building West.

Flag poles at other Council owned sites are not included (including sports grounds, country parks and sportsgrounds).

The protocol also includes the external floodlights at Tonbridge Castle and when requests are made for the lights to be used in support of a particular event or cause.

# 02 National Position

In preparing this protocol, guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities has been considered.

# 03 TMBC Approach

## FLAGS

At Tonbridge Castle, it has been tradition that the DeClare family flag (who owned Tonbridge Castle between 1072-1314) is flown at most times, which will continue.

At Gibson Building, traditionally a flag has not been flown (other than for commemorative occasions) due to the fact the flagpole is not viewable from the road, which will continue.

## Commemorative Dates

At both locations the Union Flag will be flown on the designated dates as set out on the gov.uk website [Union Flag flying guidance for UK government buildings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/union-flag-flyng-guidance-for-uk-government-buildings) with the exception of St George's Day, when the Cross of St George will be flown.

## Death and Funeral Commemoration

At both locations the Union Flag will be flown at half-mast for the day on the following occasions:

- 1) On the announcement of the death of Sovereign until the day of the funeral, with the exception of Proclamation Day when the flag will be hoisted to full mast from 11am to 1pm
- 2) On the announcement of the death of a senior member of the Royal family until the day of the funeral, subject to any instructions received from the Sovereign
- 3) On the announcement of the death and on the day of the funeral of other members of the Royal family or other non-royal dignitaries, subject to any instructions received from the Sovereign
- 4) On the announcement of the death and on the day of the funeral of a serving Member of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- 5) The day of the funeral of a former Member of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- 6) The day of the funeral of an Honorary Freeman or Honorary Alderman of the Borough
- 7) The day of the funeral of a serving member of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council staff
- 8) The day of the funeral of a serving Lord Lieutenant of Kent

- 9) On any other occasion where the Sovereign has given a special command
- 10) On any other occasion at the discretion of the Cabinet Member for Community Services

### Special Flag Flying Days

- 1) On St George's Day (23<sup>rd</sup> April) the Cross of St George will be flown at Tonbridge Castle
- 2) On Armed Forces Day the Armed Forces Day flag will be flown at Tonbridge Castle
- 3) On Kent Day the Kent flag will be flown at Tonbridge Castle

### Requests to Fly Flags

Requests can be made by others (including, but not limited to, members of the public, businesses, charitable organisations, other public bodies, serving Members of the Council) to fly specific flags on specific dates.

Requests should be made in writing and sent to [property.services@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:property.services@tmbc.gov.uk) and should contain the following information:

- What flag is being requested to be flown (if possible provide an image of the flag)
- The day or period the flag is being requested to be flown
- The reason why the requestor believes the flag should be flown

Generally speaking, the Council will not accept requests for a flag to be flown in instances where the reason for the request does not align with the Council's values, priorities or events.

Upon receipt, the request will be sent to the Cabinet Member for Community Services for a decision as to whether the request should be accepted. If the request is accepted, the individual or organisation who made the request will be contacted and asked to provide the flag in question if the Council does not already possess it so that it can be checked to ensure it can be flown from the flagpole at either Tonbridge Castle or Gibson Building.

If the flag does not have the correct fixings or is considered to be an inappropriate size then the flag will not be flown and the requestor will be asked to collect it. If the flag is considered suitable to fly then the requestor will need to collect the flag from the relevant location once the flying period has concluded.

The decision of the Cabinet Member for Community Services is final.

### FLOODLIGHTS

A number of external floodlights illuminate Tonbridge Castle, both the Gatehouse itself and the curtain wall which runs alongside the River Medway.

Requests have previously been made to change the colour of these floodlights so that the Gatehouse and curtain walls appear to be 'coloured'. However, due to the yellow colouring of the sandstone it presents challenges when trying to apply filters to the existing lights in that the change in colour is not very noticeable.

Since attempting to apply coloured filters to these lights has not previously been successful and would involve costs installing additional capability, the Council will not generally consider requests to 'light up' the Castle or walls.

This excludes instances where an application has been made to the Council to host an event within the Castle grounds, where the applicant may provide separate lights as part of their event.

## **APPROVAL AND REVIEW**

This protocol will be approved by the Cabinet Member for Community Services and will be reviewed every 2 years.

Last reviewed – August 2022

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