

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PARISHES ON FLAG FLYING

The Earl Marshal of England in 1938 laid down that the flag proper to be flown on any church within the two Provinces of Canterbury and York is the Cross of St George with the arms of the see in the first quarter. Garter King of Arms gave more detail. The arms of the diocese are to be placed in the first quarter viz the top left-hand white space of the flag reading from the flag staff. The shield of the arms of the diocese should be made as large as possible. The arms should NOT be surmounted by a mitre. Several leading firms of flag makers and Church equipment suppliers are well experienced in providing such flags.

The Cross of St George may be flown on any suitable local occasion: there are no special diocesan days for this.

These rulings do not preclude the occasional flying of the Union Flag on occasions of national rejoicing or mourning, but no rules are laid down and parishes may decide when the Union Flag should be flown in preference to the Cross of St George. However, for guidance, Government buildings usually fly flags on Royal Anniversaries, Commonwealth Day, St George's and Remembrance Day (all given in most diaries,) as well as the opening and prorogation of Sessions of the Houses of Parliament by her Majesty.

In the Diocese of Bath and Wells the Chancellor has directed that the flying of flags, being essentially a temporary display, is something for which a faculty is not normally required. If a flag was flown which was incompatible with Christian teaching or the sacred character of the church, application (eg by the Archdeacon) might be made for a faculty preventing its display.

Apart from the faculty jurisdiction the Chancellor of Bath and Wells directs that it is appropriate for parishes to adhere to the directions given by the Earl Marshal in relation to any flag which has the Union Flag, or any of its constituent elements, as part of the design.

Some parishes may wish to have a flag of their own incorporating a badge or design which does not include any element of the national flag. The Chancellor of Bath and Wells says that this is permissible, a faculty is not needed and it is outside the supervision of the Earl Marshal. Parishes ought, however, to ensure that they do not infringe any personal rights, in relation to coats of arms or designs registered or protected by law.

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