



The Union Flag and Flags of the United Kingdom

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Proposals for changing the rules relating to flags in the United Kingdom were proposed in the Green Paper *The Governance of Britain* published on 3 July 2007, followed by a consultation process run by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Following the consultation, the White Paper *The Governance of Britain: Constitutional Renewal* was published on the 25 March 2008 which contains the proposed new changes to the rules on the guidance relating to the flying of flags in the United Kingdom. Briefly, UK Government buildings in England, Scotland and Wales have been given the freedom to fly the Union Flag when they wish.

The purpose of this Note is also to set out a brief history of the flags of the United Kingdom and to explain the current guidance issued by the DCMS; it also refers to the current guidance issued by the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government in respect of their premises and the rules relating to the Scottish Parliament building, the National Assembly for Wales (Senedd) building and the Northern Ireland Assembly building. Flag flying in Northern Ireland is governed by statute.

Contents

A.	Background	2
B.	The Governance of Britain green paper	2
C.	Guidance for local authorities, individuals and organisations	4
D.	Private Member's Bill the <i>Union Flag Bill 2007-08</i>	5
E.	Broader proposals in the <i>Governance of Britain: Constitutional Renewal</i>	5
F.	National flags of the United Kingdom	6
	1. The United Kingdom	6
	2. England	7
	3. Scotland	7
	4. Wales	8
	5. Northern Ireland	9
G.	Appendix A Days for Hoisting Flags on Government Buildings	10

A. Background

Currently, the Union Flag is flown on government buildings by command of Her Majesty the Queen. There is no formal definition of a Government building but 'it is generally accepted to mean a building owned or used by the Crown and predominately occupied or used by civil servants or Her Majesty's Armed Forces'.¹

The flying of flags is not the subject of statute law in England, Wales or Scotland. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has responsibility for issuing guidance on the flying of national flags on government buildings, apart from those which are the responsibility of a devolved administration. There are 15 appointed days each year and 4 additional saints day's when the Union Flag is flown in the respective units of the UK (see Appendix A). In England there are 16 days, including St George's Day. In addition, the Union Flag is flown for the State Opening of Parliament and the prorogation of Parliament but in the Greater London area only. Following new guidance, the Union Flag may be flown on all days of the year from government buildings (see below). The Union Flag is also flown for visiting Heads of State or the death of Heads of State.

When Parliament is sitting, the Union Flag is flown from the Victoria Tower of the Palace of Westminster. The Union Flag is not flown while Parliament is in recess and will only be hoisted on the appointed days set out in Appendix A. Other buildings on the parliamentary estate fly the Union Flag in accordance with the guidance issued by the DMCS, although they are not formally covered by the guidance.²

B. The Governance of Britain green paper

The green paper, *The Governance of Britain*, was published on 3 July 2007.³ The green paper contained a broad set of proposals for constitutional reform, including the need for consultation on altering the current guidance issued for the flying of the Union Flag from UK Government buildings:

Symbols can help to embody a national culture and citizenship. The Union Flag is one of the most recognisable symbols of the UK. But while in other countries, such as France and the United States, the national flag is regarded as source of pride, in recent years the Union Flag has all too often become the preserve of political extremists, a symbol of discord rather than harmony. It is critical that this symbol is not hijacked by those who seek to work against the fundamental British values of tolerance and mutual respect.

While there are a number of reasons why the Union Flag may not be as widely flown in the UK as other national flag abroad, regulations on the use of the flag may be playing a role.⁴

¹ DCMS – Flag Flying. Available at: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying/>

² HC Deb 10 January 2007 c582-3w

³ HM Government, *Governance of Britain*, 3 July 2007, Cm 7071. Available at: <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm71/7170/7170.pdf>

⁴ Ibid

The DCMS launched its consultation on 25 July 2007 on altering the guidance for flying the Union Flag from UK Government buildings.⁵ The Culture Secretary, James Purnell, said:

The union flag is a powerful symbol of both our heritage and modern, diverse Britain. It brings us together in solidarity and shared identity. We want to hear people's views about whether Government buildings should be allowed to fly it every day.⁶

The DCMS consultation document provided some background information on the current guidance it issues and the purpose of the consultation:

The Green Paper states that we want to consult on giving departments more flexibility over when they fly the Union Flag. The purpose of this consultation is therefore to gather views on when it would be appropriate to fly the Union Flag. Although, the guidance only applies to Government buildings, the impact of the changes is likely to affect other public organisations, because many choose to follow the Government guidelines.⁷

The deadline for responses to specific questions in the paper was Friday 9 November 2007. The summary of the responses the DCMS received was published in the *Governance of Britain- Analysis of Consultations*, published on 25 March 2008.⁸

There were over 300 responses to the consultation and over 60 per cent of the respondents wanted the Union Flag flown on all UK Government buildings all of the time. During the consultation period, UK Government department buildings were given the freedom to fly the Union Flag whenever they wish. This has now been made permanent following the results of the consultation and new flag flying guidance referred to in the white paper, issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

366. The consultation responses provided general support for the Government's limited flag flying proposal, and also generated a wide range of other comments and suggestions about the use of the Union Flag. While considering some of these further, the flag flying guidance will be revised to

- make permanent the freedom for UK Government departments to fly the Union Flag on their buildings when they wish, and
- Allow Whitehall UK Government buildings with two or more flag poles to fly the flags of Scotland and Wales on their patron saints' days.⁹

⁵ The *Governance of Britain Flag Flying Consultation - Altering the current guidance on flying the Union Flag from UK Government buildings*. July 2007. Available at: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D4A22BF1-DEA6-46C7-BBE8-4C32DBB21FB4/0/TheGovernanceofBritainflagflying.pdf>

⁶ DMCS 087/07, *Fly the flag*, 25 July 2007. Available at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Press_notices/archive_2007/dcms087_07.htm?contextId={BA140B4F-1D2C-4D2F-98CF-A9B5E3C0E71A}

⁷ *Governance of Britain Flag Flying Consultation - Altering the current guidance on flying the Union Flag from UK Government buildings*, July 2007. Available at: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D4A22BF1-DEA6-46C7-BBE8-4C32DBB21FB4/0/TheGovernanceofBritainflagflying.pdf>

⁸ *Governance of Britain- Analysis of Consultations*, 25 March 2008. Available at: <http://www.justice.gov.uk/whatwedo/governance.htm>

⁹ Ibid page 95

The DCMS guidance can be found on the DCMS website and notes that departments or agencies may continue to use the 18 days used in previous guidance if they wish. The dates for 2008 are set out in an appendix to this Note.¹⁰

The consultation did not apply to buildings of the Scottish Executive, the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly Government and the National Assembly for Wales. These bodies have developed their own guidance for their own flags. The Scottish Executive revised its guidance in 2006 and now requires the flying of the saltire each day from Executive buildings, unless a building only has one flagpole and it is one of the 18 days where the Union Flag takes precedence.¹¹

Northern Ireland has specific legislation in the *Flags (NI) Order 2000* and the *Flags Regulations (NI) 2000* and the UK Government has no plans to alter these arrangements.¹²

It should be noted that, unlike, for example, the United States, burning or defacing the Union Flag in public is not a specific offence. However, such actions may be relevant in the context of a possible public order offence, under section 5 of the *Public Order Act 1986* or arson under the *Criminal Damage Act 1971*.

C. Guidance for local authorities, individuals and organisations

The following parliamentary answer sets out the current guidance to local authorities with regard to the flying of the Union Flag from municipal buildings:

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance has been given to local authorities to encourage them to fly the Union flag from municipal buildings. [153720]

Margaret Hodge: Local authorities are already able to fly the Union flag on a daily basis from municipal buildings; it is a matter for them to decide. However, as some choose to follow Government guidance, we have updated the flag flying section of the DCMS website (www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying) and informed the Local Government Association. This follows the announcement by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport allowing all UK Government Departments to have the freedom to fly the Union flag when they wish while the Department carry out a consultation on altering the flag flying guidance.¹³

Individuals and organizations may fly the Union Flag whenever they wish, subject to local planning requirements.¹⁴ These have been relaxed recently. The DCMS Flags Protocol website advises as follows:

¹⁰ Protocol for hoisting flags on government buildings DCMS <http://www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying/protocol.html>

¹¹ Days for hoisting flags on Buildings of the Scottish Executive 2006
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/923/0033582.pdf>

¹² Governance of Britain Flag Flying Consultation - Altering the current guidance on flying the Union Flag from UK Government buildings, July 2007. Available at: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D4A22BF1-DEA6-46C7-BBE8-4C32DBB21FB4/0/TheGovernanceofBritainflagflying.pdf>

¹³ HC Deb 3 September 2007 c1603W.

¹⁴ DCMS – Flag Flying. Available at: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying/>

Under Schedule 1 Class H of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, national flags, the flags of the Commonwealth, European Union, the United Nations, English counties and certain saints can be flown without the express consent of local authorities as long as they satisfy the standard conditions for the display of advertisements generally and the conditions and limitations set out within Class H itself.

For saints' flags, the conditions are that they can only be flown in the county with which the saint is associated. This means that the St. Piran's flag may be flown freely in Cornwall, but express consent would be required for it to be flown elsewhere in England.

If any of these flags are to be flown no further planning permission is needed for the flagpole, however it may be required if other flags are to be flown.¹⁵

D. Private Member's Bill the *Union Flag Bill 2007-08*

A Private Member's Bill under the ten minute rule was presented by Andrew Rosindell MP on 5 February 2008, entitled *Union Flag Bill*.¹⁶ It sets out to define the Union Flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and to make provision for the free display and flying of the flag. The Bill is very unlikely to progress further as Private Members' Bills under the Ten-Minute Rule procedure rarely become legislation, due to lack of time for debate after introduction. Mr Rosindell explained the purpose of his bill as follows:

I seek to uphold the Union flag for everyone to honour and take pride in, and I want positively to encourage the flying of our flag from public buildings the length and breadth of these islands—not just on the rare days designated for the flying of the flag, but on every day throughout the year. It is time we discarded the outdated convention that the Union flag should fly only on certain days; we should follow the fine example of Her Majesty the Queen who displays the Union flag from Buckingham palace every day except when the royal standard is flown.¹⁷

E. Broader proposals in the *Governance of Britain: Constitutional Renewal*

As well as relaxing the guidance on the flying of the Union Flag on Government buildings, the white paper *The Governance of Britain: Constitutional Renewal* published March 2008, also stated:

233. The consultation also gave rise to some broader suggestions relating to the Union Flag. There were some interesting suggestions to increase the prominence of the Union Flag that the Government feels merit greater consideration. The Government therefore proposes to explore the greater use of the Union Flag on other public buildings and to consider whether the Union Flag, and explanatory information, should be included in material for new British citizens.

¹⁵ DCMS FAQs on Flags at <http://www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying/faqs.html#7>

¹⁶ Bill 65 of 2007-8

¹⁷ HC Deb 5 February 2008 c792

234. The consultation document only covered UK Government buildings in England, Scotland and Wales, and did not extend to devolved administration buildings in Scotland or Wales. We shall consult further with devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales about these wider Union Flag flying suggestions.¹⁸

F. National flags of the United Kingdom

1. The United Kingdom

The Union Flag, commonly known as the Union Jack (when flown at sea), is the national flag of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Variations of the Union Flag have existed since the beginning of the 17th century when the crowns of England and Scotland were joined together under King James I (James VI of Scotland) in 1603. The *Union with Scotland Act 1706* gave statutory force to the Treaty of Union between England and Scotland. Article 1 provided for the design of flags incorporating the symbols of both constituent kingdoms:

That the two Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland* shall upon the first Day of *May* which shall be in the Year one thousand seven hundred and seven, and for ever after, be united into one Kingdom by the Name of *Great Britain*; and that the Ensigns Armorial of the said united Kingdom be such as her Majesty shall appoint, and the crosses of *St. George* and *St. Andrew* be conjoined in such Manner as her Majesty shall think fit, and used in all Flags, Banners, Standards and Ensigns, both at Sea and Land.

The *Union with Ireland Act 1800* gave effect to the Articles of Union. Article 1 referred to flags and stated the following:-

...that the said Kingdoms of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* shall, upon the first Day of *January* which shall be in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and one, and for ever after, be united into one Kingdom, by the name of *The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland*; and that the Royal Stile and Titles appertaining to the Imperial Crown of the said United Kingdom and its Dependencies, and also the Ensigns, Armorial Flags and Banners thereof, shall be such as his Majesty, by his Royal Proclamation under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, shall be pleased to appoint.

The design of the new flag, incorporating the crosses of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick, was set out in a Royal Proclamation, dated 1 January 1801. The Union Flag is thus 'made up of the crosses of St George, St Andrew, and St Patrick, respectively the patron saints of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and it was first flown on 1 January 1801'.¹⁹

Following the *Anglo-Irish Treaty* of 1922, the Irish Free State came into being, which had the status of a self-governing dominion within the British Empire. It adopted the tricolour flag

¹⁸ *The Governance of Britain: Constitutional Renewal*, March 2008
<http://www.justice.gov.uk/whatwedo/governance.htm>

¹⁹ N Groom, *The Union Jack – The story of the British Flag*, 2006, p xiii

(green, white and orange). In 1949, the Irish Free State became The Republic of Ireland and kept the tricolour flag. Northern Ireland remained part of the United Kingdom and continued to use the Union Flag. The *Royal and Parliamentary Titles Act 1927* officially changed the name of the United Kingdom Parliament to reflect the change that had occurred with the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922. The *Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* changed to the *Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*. The United Kingdom had therefore officially changed its name but there was no change to the Union Flag.

2. England

The national flag of England is the cross of St George. St George has been the patron saint of England since the 13th century but prior to this, St Edward the Confessor, King of England from 1042-1066 was widely regarded as the patron saint of England. Edward III established the Order of the Garter in 1348, which was dedicated to St Edward the Confessor and St George. St George is also the patron saint of soldiers and the cross of St George was worn by Knights of the Garter and soldiers alike as they went into battle. The cross of St George thus became widely used as a patriotic symbol and consists of a red cross on a white background. St George's Day takes place on 23 April each year, and under the current guidance, the cross of St George may be flown from UK Government buildings in England where a building has two or more flagstaffs, but it cannot be flown in a superior position to the Union Flag.²⁰ Only if a UK Government building has more than one flag pole, can the cross of St George be flown. The Union Flag takes precedence over all national flags and the cross of St George is not flown on any other days.

3. Scotland

The national flag of Scotland is the cross saltire of St Andrew (also known as the Saltire). St Andrew has been the patron saint of Scotland since the early part of the 12th century. The cross saltire of St Andrew consists of a white cross on a blue background. St Andrew's Day takes place on 30 November each year and under the current guidance, the cross of St Andrew may be flown from UK Government buildings in Scotland on St Andrew's Day where a building has two or more flagstaffs but it cannot be flown in a superior position to the Union Flag.²¹

Flag flying policy is a devolved matter for the Scottish Executive. It can draw up its own guidance to be issued for the flying of flags on Scottish Executive buildings. The current guidance issued by the Scottish Executive in January 2007 is that:

The Saltire should now where possible be flown every day. Other flags are to be flown only on the dates named on the accompanying Schedule [Appendix A]. The Protocol Unit, Strategy and Ministerial Support Directorate, Office of the Permanent Secretary will inform the relevant authorities of any other occasions on which The

²⁰ DCMS – Days for hoisting flags on government buildings. Available at: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying/dates.htm>

²¹ Ibid

Queen has given a special command to fly flags. Only on exceptional occasions would a flag (other than the Saltire) be flown on a day other than a listed day. Any requests to fly flags on exceptional occasions must be cleared in advance with the First Minister.²²

The SNP has been in favour of greater use of the Saltire in Scotland for some years. The Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) is responsible for the administration of the Scottish Parliament. The Corporate Body reviewed its flag flying policy and adopted the following guidance at a meeting held on 23 November 2004:

The SPCB reviewed the current policy on flag flying in light of the move to Holyrood. It was noted that the flag poles were demountable so the number of flags being flown could be varied. It was proposed that 3 flags would be flown daily - the Union flag, the Saltire and the EU flag. The 4th flag pole would be used on occasions of visiting dignitaries e.g. Heads of State, heads of Government and officially invited guests. The 4th flag pole would also be used on certain international days that are officially recognised by the Parliament e.g. Commonwealth Day, United Nations Day. The 5th flag pole would only be required for the Royal Standard during a visit by Her Majesty The Queen or during a State visit i.e. when a Head of State visits and is accompanied by a member of the Royal Family.²³

4. Wales

The national flag of Wales is the Red Dragon (Y Ddraig Goch). This flag was officially adopted in 1959 and consists of two equal horizontal stripes, white above green, and a large red dragon passant. The dragon standard was traditionally associated with the Tudors.

St David is the patron saint of Wales and St David's flag consists of a gold cross on a black background. Unlike the other parts of the United Kingdom, Wales does not use the flag of its patron saint as its national flag. St David's Day takes place on 1 March each year and under the current guidance, the Red Dragon may be flown from UK Government buildings in Wales on St David's Day where a building has two or more flagstaffs but it cannot be flown in a superior position to the Union Flag.²⁴

Wales has no direct representation on the Union Flag. After the successful military campaigns in Wales by King Edward I of England in 1282, Edward conferred upon his eldest son and heir the title Prince of Wales, making Wales a principality, not a kingdom. The union of England and Wales was brought about by the *Wales Act 1536* during the reign of Henry VIII and there was no statute similar to the *Union with Scotland Act 1706* where the flags of two kingdoms formed the new flag of the Kingdom of Great Britain.

The National Assembly for Wales building or Senedd, has 4 flag poles for the purpose of flying flags. Three flag poles are used on a daily basis which fly, the Union Flag, the Red Dragon and the European Flag. The fourth pole is used for the Royal Standard, if the Queen

²² The Protocol Unit, the Scottish Executive – Flag flying guidance. January 2007 Available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/royal-ceremonial/flag-guidance>

²³ Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body. Minutes of meeting held on 23 November 2004. Available at: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/corporate/spcb/minutes/mops-04/mops04-1123.htm>

²⁴ Ibid

visits the building, the national flag of visiting foreign dignitaries and St David's flag on St David's Day.

5. Northern Ireland

The flying of flags in Northern Ireland has remained a highly contentious issue; St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland and the origins of St Patrick's flag are unclear but it came to be used widely from the late 18th century. The cross saltire of St Patrick consists of a red cross on a white background. St Patrick's flag was superimposed upon the flags of St George and St Andrew to create the Union Flag in 1801. St Patrick's Day takes place on 17 March each year but St Patrick's flag is not commonly used throughout Ireland. The Union Flag only is flown from UK Government buildings in Northern Ireland.²⁵ Northern Ireland is the only part of the United Kingdom where specific legislation regulates the flying of flags on Government buildings. The Ulster flag and the Cross of St. Patrick have no official status and under the Flags Regulations are not permitted to be flown from Government Buildings.²⁶

Following the *Northern Ireland Act 1998*, devolution to the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive occurred on 2 December 1999. The responsibility for regulating the flying of flags, being a prerogative power, became a devolved matter. During this short period of devolution, two Sinn Féin ministers – Martin McGuinness and Bairbre de Brun – directed that the Union Flag would not be flown from their respective departmental buildings. The decision not to fly the Union Flag on government buildings was attacked by Unionists. The Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive were suspended on 11 February 2000 and direct rule from Westminster was re-imposed. Several Unionist representatives indicated that they would not support the return to power-sharing without an assurance that the Union Flag would be flown from government buildings.²⁷

On 16 May 2000, a draft Order was laid under the *Northern Ireland Act 2000*, which provided for the suspension of devolved government in Northern Ireland. Paragraph 1(1) of that Act allows for the UK Parliament, during the suspension of the Assembly, to make provision, by Order in Council, for any matter within the legislative competence of the Assembly.²⁸ The Order gave the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland the power to decide whether the Union Flag would fly on government buildings. The Order was approved by each House of Parliament and came into force on 17 May 2000. The *Flags (Northern Ireland) Order 2000* gave the Secretary of State the power under Article 3(1) 'to make regulations regulating the flying of flags at government buildings' which would remain in force for as long as the Order was in force.²⁹ Article 3(2) defines a "government building" as a building wholly or mainly occupied by members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.³⁰

The *Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000* came into force on 11 November 2000. Article 2(1) of the regulations state that 'the Union Flag shall be flown at the government

²⁵ DCMS – Days for hoisting flags on government buildings. Available at: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying/dates.htm>

²⁶ HC Deb 14 May 2007 c292-4w

²⁷ "Assembly rap for flag row minister" 18 January 2000 *Newsletter*

²⁸ Further information can be found using the House of Commons Information Office Factsheet L8 – Northern Ireland Legislation. Available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/upload/L08.pdf>

²⁹ The Flags (Northern Ireland) Order 2000. Available at: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2000/20001347.htm>

³⁰ Ibid

buildings specified in Part I of the Schedule to these Regulations on the days specified in Part II of the Schedule'.³¹ Part I of the Schedule is a list of specified government buildings on which the Union Flag must be flown and Part II of the Schedule refers to the days on which the Union Flag must be flown (see Appendix A). The flying of flags at government buildings, otherwise stated in the Regulations, is prohibited (Article 9).³²

The *Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002* contains a provision to include court-houses in the definition of government buildings within the Regulations:

67 Flying of flags at court-houses

(1) In Article 3(1) of the *Flags (Northern Ireland) Order 2000* (SI 2000/1347 (NI 3)) (power to make regulations about the flying of flags at government buildings), insert at the end "and court-houses".

(2) The *Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000* (S.R.2000 No 347) (which were made in the exercise of that power) apply in relation to court-houses as they apply in relation to the government buildings specified in Part 1 of the Schedule to the Regulations (but subject to any amendment which may be made to the Regulations in the further exercise of that power).

This provision has yet to be implemented.

On 8 May 2007, devolution was restored to Northern Ireland with the formation of an Executive. Since devolution, the issue of flags has been jointly dealt with by the Northern Ireland Office and the devolved administration, and the 2000 Order and Regulations remain in force.

The Parliament Building on the Stormont Estate, which houses the Northern Ireland Assembly, is not classified as a Government building, but currently complies with the Regulations and only the Union Flag is flown from the Parliament Building in accordance with Part I (Appendix A) of the Regulations.³³

G. Appendix A Days for Hoisting Flags on Government Buildings

Days for Hoisting Flags on Government Buildings 2008

From 8am till sunset

20 January	Birthday of the Countess of Wessex
6 February	Her Majesty's Accession

³¹ The Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000. Available at: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/sr/sr2000/nisr_20000347_en.pdf

³² Ibid

³³ HC Deb 9 May 2007 c199w

19 February	Birthday of the Duke of York
1 March	St David's Day (in Wales only, see note 1)
10 March	Birthday of The Earl of Wessex
10 March	Commonwealth Day (second Monday in March)
17 March	St. Patrick's Day (in Northern Ireland only, see note 6)
21 April	Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen
23 April	St George's Day (in England only, see note 1)
9 May	Europe Day (see note 4)
2 June	Coronation Day
10 June	Birthday of The Duke of Edinburgh
14 June	Official Celebration of Her Majesty's Birthday
17 July	Birthday of The Duchess of Cornwall
15 August	Birthday of The Princess Royal
11 November	Remembrance Day (second Sunday, see note 2)
14 November	Birthday of The Prince of Wales
20 November	Her Majesty's Wedding Day
30 November	St Andrew's Day (in Scotland only, see note 1)

Also The day of the opening of a Session of the Houses of Parliament by Her Majesty (see note 3)

 The day of the prorogation of a Session of the Houses of Parliament by Her Majesty (see note 3)

Notes

1. Where a building has two or more flagstaffs the appropriate National flag may be flown in addition to the Union flag but not in a superior position.
2. Flags should be flown at full mast all day.
3. Flags should be flown on this day even if Her Majesty does not perform the ceremony in person. Flags should only be flown in the Greater London area.
4. The Union flag should fly alongside the European flag. On Government buildings that only have one flagpole; the Union flag should take precedence.
5. The Union flag only should be flown.
6. If The Queen is to be present in a building, you should get in touch with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Architecture and Historic Environment Division, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH. Telephone 020 7211 2381; facsimile 020 7211 6130.

18 May 2008³⁴

³⁴ DMCS - Days for Hoisting Flags on Government Buildings 2008. Available at: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/flagflying/dates.htm>