

Donate a flag: Guidance for event organisers

Barking and Dagenham is a young, rapidly growing and increasingly diverse borough and we want to support and celebrate our diverse and changing population.

We are inviting individuals and community groups to donate their national or other significant commemorative flag for it to be flown outside the Barking Town Hall as part of community-led events to celebrate days of significance such as independence days or days of remembrance.

The Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader, Ceremonial Mayor, and the Cabinet Member responsible for Equality and Diversity, will be invited to flag raising events to celebrate with the community; other local Councillors will also be invited to attend.

This guide has been prepared for residents who wish to organise a flag raising event. It is essential that organisers read this guide and complete the online event request form.

Contents

Who can organise a flag raising event?	2
How are flag raising events organised?	2
Where are flag raising events held?.....	2
When are flag raising events held?.....	3
How many people can attend?	3
Is it possible to give speeches?	3
Does the Council help organisers to promote the event?	3
What type of flag needs to be donated?	3
Can entertainment and cultural activities be arranged?	4
Can rooms that are booked for the event be decorated?.....	4
Can VIPs and dignitaries be invited?	4
Is it possible to serve food and drink?	4
Who can I speak to about any of the above?	5

‘Donate a flag’ event request form

Who can organise a flag raising event?

Anyone who lives or works in the borough is welcome to volunteer to organise a flag raising event for their chosen country, community, or group. Likewise, any local voluntary and community sector group can organise an event.

How are flag raising events organised?

To organise a flag raising event you need to complete the online request form at least four weeks before the date of the event.¹

Once your plans have been approved by us you will be responsible for:

- Delivering the event according to the agreed itinerary as set out on your event request form
- Costs of the event, including the flag, necessary equipment and additional staff that may be required for extended opening hours, and any catering or hospitality you wish to provide
- Invitations to members of the community
- Event management on the day of the event

The Council will support you in making the arrangements by providing rooms, promoting the event, and making facilities staff available on the day to support the smooth running of your event. The Council may be able to provide additional support on request but may charge for any such services.

Where are flag raising events held?

You and your guests will have freedom to use the Town Square for the flag to be raised at the agreed time. While using the Town Square we ask that your group does not block access to the Town Hall or Barking Learning Centre.

After the flag has been raised you and your guests can use the public space inside the Town Hall for further activities and hospitality if available. This must be booked in advance and specified on the booking form.

If you would like to organise further activities in the Town Square, either before or after the flag raising ceremony, you will need to complete the separate Town Square Booking Form (this will be sent to you after your request is made). Depending on the nature of the activities, e.g. if you are providing entertainment, you may also need to apply for a [Temporary Events Notice](#).

¹ Any requests for flag raising events received with less than four weeks' notice will not be granted permission to use the Town Square or Town Hall.

‘Donate a flag’ event request form

When are flag raising events held?

Events can be held at any time during usual business hours (Monday to Friday, between 9am to 5pm). Once the flag has been raised it will remain there until the following morning unless alternative arrangements have been made.

Due to other Council business, please note that we may not be able to meet your original time request. .

How many people can attend?

For events in the Town Square there is no limit, within reason, to how many people can attend. For planning purposes please indicate on the booking form how many people you think will be there. We need to make special considerations – for example where there are more than 100 guests, the event will need to be reviewed by the Safety Advisory Group. Events for over 50 people may require a risk assessment.

If you wish to use the Chamber or other space inside the Town Hall, please let us know. If the rooms are available, you and your guests can use them and there is no charge for the room bookings.

Please be aware that spaces in the Town Hall have capacity limits that cannot be exceeded. If parts of the building are over capacity, our facilities staff will be obliged to eject people from the building to meet fire and health and safety regulations.

Is it possible to give speeches?

Yes. Please notify us on the booking form if you intend to give speeches. The facilities staff at the Town Hall will provide PA equipment (speaker and microphone) free of charge. They will also set up the equipment and help you to use it on the day.

If the equipment is lost, stolen or damaged during use then as the organiser you may be liable for repairing or replacing it.

Does the Council help organisers to promote the event?

The Council expects the organiser of the event to be responsible for promoting the event to the community, but we will provide help once we know the details. Our Marketing and Communications team will publicise it to both the local community and media and on the Council’s social media. Depending on availability, they will also be able to take photographs for posting on social media platforms. All councillors will also be notified of the event.

What type of flag needs to be donated?

The flag must fit our flagpole. This means that it can be no larger than 180cm x 90cm. If you need help sourcing a flag, we recommend our supplier www.flyingcolours.org .

The product that is suitable for the flagpole at the Town Hall is:

1 off sewn national flag, 2 yard (180cm x 90cm), Rope, Toggle and Spine

‘Donate a flag’ event request form

The flag, including ropes and toggles, should be made available to Facilities staff at the Town Hall one week before the event so that it can be checked and prepared for raising.

As the flag is being donated, the Council will keep the flag after the event and use it for future flag raising events.

Can entertainment and cultural activities be arranged?

Yes. The organiser is responsible for arranging such entertainment or activities. These should be described in full on your event request form. Entertainment and activities should take place on the Town Square. In special circumstances we may allow use of the Town Hall provided there is no disruption to Council business or staff.

We reserve the right to refuse entertainment or activities if we feel they are inappropriate or do not meet health and safety requirements.

Depending on the nature of the event you may need to apply for a [Temporary Events Notice](#) through our Licensing Team. Someone from the Council may contact you to discuss in more detail your plans and to begin the application process. A Temporary Events Notice requires a minimum of 10 working days’ notice to be given.

Can rooms that are booked for the event be decorated?

The Council Chamber cannot be decorated. Small exhibitions or decorations can be displayed in other rooms or spaces in the Town Hall. All decorations and exhibitions must be cleared away at the end of the event.

Decorations must not damage the fabric of the building. Our Facilities staff will help with decorations to ensure correct fixings and adhesives are used, and that any decorations meet fire and health and safety regulations.

Can VIPs and dignitaries be invited?

Yes. Please tell us if you have invited any ambassadors or dignitaries as we will need to ensure they are greeted appropriately and that there is nearby parking for their vehicles.

Is it possible to serve food and drink?

All refreshments must be supplied by the organisers at their own cost. All food must be prepared off-site and arrive ready to serve². Hot food is not permitted, nor is alcohol. Please note, food and drink are not permitted in the Council Chamber.

Please describe the types of food and drink you will be serving on your booking form as you may need a [Temporary Events Notice](#) to meet licensing laws.

² To meet food safety regulations all chilled high-risk food must be held at 8 degrees and below. Ice packs should be used where there is no refrigeration appliance available.

‘Donate a flag’ event request form

Who can I speak to about any of the above?

If you have any queries or would like advice about arranging a flag raising event then please contact Lynn Carr, Principal Facilities Officer (lynn.carr@lbbd.gov.uk, 020 8227 3251) or the Leader’s Office (leadersoffice@lbbd.gov.uk, 020 8227 2101)

Request a flag raising event online form

The online form must complete and submitted no later than four weeks before the date of the flag raising event. A paper version of this form is available on request from the leadersoffice@lbbd.gov.uk.

We will contact you to confirm your plans and give permission for the event to go ahead within five working days of receiving the completed booking form.

The Council reserves the right to refuse requests for flag raising events on grounds that:

- the Town Square and/or Town Hall is otherwise engaged;
- the event would be disruptive to Council or Barking Learning Centre business as usual;
- the event would affect community cohesion or relations.

Please give as much detail as possible about your plans as this will help us to support your event. Failure to provide sufficient information may result in your request being denied.