

## **Dersingham Parish Council**

### **Statement re Union Flag and War Memorial**

Dersingham Parish Council is writing to the local branch of the Royal British Legion about the Union Flag which is hung on a pole sited within the War Memorial Garden.

The Union flag was deliberately hung upside down by members of the Dersingham & Sandringham branch of the Royal British Legion, which led to a deluge of complaints from angry and distressed parishioners and visitors to the area. This is most improper and disrespects The Queen, and those who have given their lives in the service of this country and their families.

Although the War Memorial and garden area surrounding it are owned by the Parish Council, the flag and pole are the property of the British Legion Branch.

Despite numerous requests to the local branch members they declined to provide an explanation for the flag being hung upside down.

They told the Lynn News that they were upset at the way they had been treated over an event, which they held on the Parish Council owned Recreation Ground. They had been asked several times to provide insurance details and a risk assessment, which is normal practice for anyone wishing to use the area for an event.

The situation was discussed at a meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, May 10th.

Members agreed that the Council should write to the Dersingham and Sandringham Branch of the Royal British Legion asking if they would like to donate the flag and pole to the Parish Council to manage and, if this is refused, will inform the Branch that they will have to remove their flag and pole and the Council will install its own.

One of the reasons for this is that having the flag and pole managed by local branch members is not sustainable in the long term whereas there will always be a Parish Council and Clerk, or similar body, managing the War Memorial.

The Parish Council wishes to avoid a similar situation occurring in the future, where a monument to those who gave their lives for our country is the subject of such discourse.

The Council is drafting a policy on third party use of the Recreation Ground, which includes the War Memorial Garden. This is to formalise the procedure for organisations wishing to use the area for events and includes submitting a request, or notification for regular events such as the Annual Remembrance Ceremony, to use the Recreation Ground, or part of it, together with details of the event.