

Overview

The Flag Institute was founded on 23rd April, 1971 and is the UK's leading research and documentation centre for flags and flag information and Europe's largest vexillological membership organisation, totalling 399 members.

The Flag Institute is legally managed by the trustees, elected by all members, who in turn appoint officers, as needs require, who in turn form a council to administer the Institute's activities.

The Flag Institute maintains and manages the national United Kingdom Flag Registry. This is to ensure there is a definitive record of those United Kingdom flags which exist, both nationally and regionally. The flags so listed then become exempt from planning permission as laid out in The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021.

Members receive the journal, Flagmaster, and are entitled to attend the meetings of the Institute. The Institute's Library is in the process of digitisation to allow all members an easier, wider and more accessible viewing of documentation for study planned to be viewable via the Members' Area of the web site.

The Institute provides vexillological services to HM Government in the UK and to many other organizations around the world, including the United Nations. These services include advising on the use of flags, designing new flags and collating information on flags of the world.

President

Captain Malcolm Farrow OBE FFI FCMI RN

Trustees

The constitution of the Flag Institute allows for a maximum of 10 Trustees, each elected for a 3 year period.

Lesley Ross	2022-2025
Philip Tibbetts	2023-2026
Roger Ourset	2023-2026
Graham Bartram	2024-2027
John Hall	2024-2027
Jonathan Jarret	2024-2027

Registered Information

The Flag Institute
84 Norwood Grove
Beverley
East Riding of Yorkshire
HU17 9HS

The Flag Institute is an active member of the international vexillological organization, FIAV (Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques).

Registered as an incorporated Charity (CIO) in England and Wales (No. 1152496)

Chief Executive: Leigh Wetherall

The past year has been one of steady progress and renewal for the Flag Institute, with developments across our digital systems, membership engagement, publications, and events all contributing to a stronger and more visible organisation.

Digital Systems and Communications

Our website continues to serve as the Institute's primary public platform, though the planned redevelopment project has been placed on hold while we await the availability of our contracted web developer. In the meantime, routine updates and maintenance ensure that the site remains functional and secure.

This year we began implementing Beacon CRM, which will streamline membership management, renewals, and communications, and ensure better integration with our online systems. We also completed our transition from X (Twitter) to Bluesky, where engagement is already growing, alongside regular updates via Facebook and Dispatch. Together, these channels have strengthened our connection with members and the wider public.

Events and Conferences

Our Spring 2025 Conference in York was a highlight of the year, bringing members together for a rich day of talks, fellowship, and celebration. Planning is well underway for the Winter 2025 online conference, which will continue our commitment to accessibility and international participation. Looking ahead, we have secured sponsorship for the Spring 2026 Conference in Bristol, ensuring a strong foundation for future events and demonstrating the value external partners place on our work.

Publications and Editorial Work

Flagmaster remains the flagship of the Institute's publications. Issue 170, published in June, was particularly well received for its depth of research and diverse range of topics, while Issue 171, scheduled for December, will continue that momentum. I am grateful to the editorial team for their dedication and to all contributors whose articles enrich the journal.

Membership and Engagement

Our membership has remained stable, with encouraging signs of renewal and international interest. This year saw the introduction of the Young Vex membership scheme, created to inspire and support a new generation of flag enthusiasts. We have also improved member access to resources, including the full Flagmaster archive, recorded conference presentations via Vimeo, and "What's New in the Library" updates.

External Engagement and Outreach

The Institute's visibility continues to grow through media contributions, partnerships, and outreach activity. Highlights include participation in national discussions about the symbolism and meaning of flags, as well as early exploration of professional PR support to help us reach a broader audience in the coming year..

Social Media Report: *Bernard Muscat*

On 27 July 2025 we shared our final post on X (formerly Twitter), directing followers to our new Bluesky account. Some people expressed disappointment about our decision to leave X. We decided not to close our account so nobody else can take over the username and impersonate us. We had 6,341 followers on X as of 29 October 2025.

We have 1.6k followers on Facebook, and 281 followers on BlueSky, with the latter closely resembling X in user experience and platform design.

Flagmaster: *Jos Poels*

Flagmaster, the biannual journal of the Flag Institute, was published according to schedule twice during the reporting year — in November 2024 and October 2025 — as Flagmaster No. 169 (Winter 2024, 56 pages) and Flagmaster No. 170 (Summer 2025, 52 pages). During January and June, Ian Sumner served as Interim Chief Editor. The print run was reduced from approximately 650 to 400 copies, reflecting the continued transition of Flag Institute members toward digital subscriptions. Membership of the Editorial Board changed during the reporting year. Ian Sumner and Sheila Collins stepped down, and the Board welcomed new members Peter Kelly, Neil McKenzie, and Jan Gyllenbok. The current Editorial Board comprises Malcolm Good, Andrew Kaley, Theun Okkerse (Design), Jos Poels (Chief Editor), and Leigh Wetherall. The Editorial Board operates independently of the Flag Institute Board. The views expressed in Flagmaster are those of individual contributors. For each issue, the Board holds two online meetings to discuss editorial policy, review proposed content, and plan future editions. The magazine's content consists of a combination of commissioned and unsolicited contributions, with the majority originating from commissioned work. No complaints regarding the content of Flagmaster were received from members or readers during the reporting year.

Treasurer's Report: *Andrew Kayley*

This is my first year as Treasurer of the Flag Institute. During my first year I have implemented changes that have reduced the Administration costs of the charity and reduced the numbers of copies of Flagmaster magazine that are printed. I have registered the Flag Institute with HM Revenue & Customs to enable Gift Aid to be claimed on eligible membership subscriptions. Our claims boosted the charity's income by over £3,000.

The outcome of these changes is that, for the first time in 4 years, the Flag Institute had a £2,612 excess of income over expenditure. I will continue to look at ways to maximise the Flag Institute's income and to identify cost savings where possible.

A summary of the Financial statement is issued in the financial appendix to this document.

William Crampton Library Report: Ian Sumner

The indexing of the digitised files continues to progress. At 1 October 2025 this work is around 60 per cent complete, and the Library collection now includes over 62,000 catalogued items. These are listed in an online catalogue (.xls format), which is free to search, sort and download from the Flag Institute website. The increased discoverability that digitisation provides has resulted in the rapid satisfying of user enquiries from around the world. The next step, making items available to view and/or download within the limits of copyright and data protection legislation, is still under review, and will not be completed until indexing is complete.

Chairman's final word: *John Hall*

Behind the scenes of every organisation, no matter how serene it may seem from the surface is a hive of activity and hard work going on behind the scenes. The Trustees of the Institute would like to particularly thank Ian and Maggie Summer for their huge efforts in dealing with the digitalisation of the library and assistance with Flagmaster during Jos's illness. Mention should also be made of the sterling work of our Chief Executive, Leigh Wetherall in not just organising our splendid meetings, but also being the representative of the Institute on number of occasions and events requiring major negotiating skills. And a special mention to our Treasurer Andrew Kayley who has set the Institute on a sound financial footing. These are but some, the teamwork of the Institute is magnificent, and the institute is lucky to have a splendid set of members, to make it what it is!

As the events of the Summer have shown us, flags are never far from the public mind and the Institute through research and information sharing has done it's part to prove accurate and informed information on these occasions for the benefit of the general public and the advancement of Vexillology.

Presented to the AGM of the Institute

Held via zoom 15th November 2025



The Revd Canon John Hall FFI FF BA Hons

Chairman of the Trustees of the Flag Institute



THE FLAG INSTITUTE

Financial Summary

1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Opening Cash Balance on 1 April 2024 £13 063 20

INCOME

<u>Membership Income</u>		<u>2023-2024</u>
UK Classic	£ 4 289 00	
Digital	£ 1 606 00	
World Classic	£ 1 702 00	
Europe Classic	£ 1 476 00	
Individuals & Book Sales		£ 10 024 80
Trade & Groups	£ 915 00	£ 504 00
Registered Flagmakers	£ 500 00	£ 750 00
Total =	£ 10 488 00	£ 11 278 80
Gift Aid refund	£ 3 145 58	
Conference tickets	£ 495 00	£ 2 083 96
Book Sales & Shipping charges	£ 458 32	
Other Sales	£ 94 00	
Donations	£ 25 00	
Account correction	£ 17 50	
Library Rent refund		£ 252 00
Debit Card cashback	£ 0 31	£ 1 96
TOTAL=	£ 14 723 71	£ 13 616 72

EXPENDITURE

<u>Flagmaster Printing & distribution</u>		<u>2023-2024</u>
Edition No. 168	£ 3 163 91	
Edition No. 169	£ 2 488 54	
Total =	£ 5 652 45	£ 5 375 05
Library Archive	£ 2 112 00	£ 7 217 42
Administration	£ 1 964 69	£ 3 702 56
Member Conferences	£ 790 00	£ 3 060 50
I.T. Services	£ 568 68	£ 360 24
Postages	£ 386 31	£ 404 86
Liability Insurance	£ 240 07	£ 269 42
Card processing fees	£ 192 50	
Stationery	£ 144 77	£ 55 56
Society Membership	£ 60 00	
Travel costs		£ 307 57
FI Trademark renewal		£ 250 00
Other Costs		£ 158 17
Refunds		£ 27 00
TOTAL =	£ 12 111 47	£ 21 188 35

Difference between Income and Expenditure = £ 2 612 24 **-£7 571 63**

Closing Trade Balance at 31 March 2025 = £15 675 44

CASH STATEMENT

Bank Account	£ 15 574 16
Square receipts	£ 101 28

Total Cash balance at 31 March 2025 = £15 675 44

I certify that to the best of my knowledge these figures represent a true and accurate statement of the Flag Institute's financial accounts.

A. Kayley

Andrew Kayley (Treasurer)