



Somersham Parish Council

Drone/Model Aircraft Policy 2026

Adopted 21st November 2016
Reviewed 11th March 2026

Somersham Parish Council
The Norwood Building
Parkhall Road
Somersham
Cambridgeshire, PE28 3HE

Somersham Parish Council's Policy on Drone Usage

Somersham Parish Council has introduced a Drone Policy in response to an upsurge in public request and usage occurrences on council land including parks and public open spaces.

Drones may not be flown from or above parish council land without permission granted by Somersham Parish Council.

Permission will only be granted where usage of a drone device aids risk reduction in the work place such as working at height, land and building survey work or to undertake a professional service such as festivals & events media.

Somersham Parish Council Land Owner Stance – Drone Usage

Zero Tolerance OR permission will be enforced / granted by Somersham Parish Council to any request made to us for recreational or commercial purposes as land owner to fly Drones on Somersham Parish Council land.

Exemptions will only be granted, where usage of drone device aids risk reduction in the work place i.e. working at height, building survey work and or undertake a professional service, i.e. Festivals & Events Media,

Reasons behind our zero tolerance or permission policy for recreational or commercial requests.

- Somersham Parish Council granting permission could leave the local authority liable for subsequent actions brought about by drone activity when operated from land under our ownership.
- The close proximity of many of our sites to neighbouring residential and business properties and the potential risk of causing alarm, distress or harassment to occupants.
- Potential risk of accident, injury to other site users or property as a result of user or drone error.

Somersham Council Land Owner Stance – Model Aircraft

Zero Tolerance OR permission will be enforced / granted by Somersham Parish Council to any request made to us for recreational or commercial purposes as land owner to fly model aircrafts on Somersham Parish Council land.

Exemptions will only be considered, where users are part of a formalised model aircraft flying club that can demonstrate all health and safety and insurance measures are in place. A license agreement must be made with Somersham Parish Council and the formalised club before site usage can be established.

Reasons behind our zero tolerance or permission policy for recreational or commercial requests.

□ Somersham Parish Council granting permission could leave the local authority liable for subsequent actions brought about by drone activity when operated from land under our ownership.

□ The close proximity of many of our sites to neighbouring residential and business properties and the potential risk of causing alarm, distress or harassment to occupants.

□ Potential risk of accident, injury to other site users or property as a result of user or model aircraft error.

How to Request Permission

In writing or by email to:

The Executive Officer
The Norwood Building
Parkhall Road
Somersham
Cambridgeshire PE28 3HE

Email: executiveofficer@somersham-pc.gov.uk

Provide the following:

1. A description of the purpose of the flight (s)
2. A copy of your public liability insurance (minimum £5 million)
3. A copy of your flight plan including launch and landing points
4. A copy of the risk assessment

Upon receipt of these documents, consideration and approval / rejection will be given within 10 working days.

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the rules and responsibilities for the safe and lawful operation of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), including drones used for photography, inspection, surveying, or monitoring on behalf of the Parish Council. It ensures compliance with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulatory framework in force from 1 January 2026.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

All drone operations must comply with:

- UK Unmanned Aircraft Regulations (2026)
- Open, Specific, and Certified operational categories
- UK class marks (UK0–UK6) for drones placed on the market from 2026
- Remote ID requirements (mandatory for class-marked drones from 2026)
- Drone and Model Aircraft Code (updated 2026)
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- EC 785/2004 aviation insurance requirements

The former Articles 166 and 167 of the Air Navigation Order are no longer the governing framework.

3. Registration Requirements

- Flyer ID required for any drone over 100 g
- Operator ID required for:
 - Any drone 100 g+ with a camera, or
 - Any drone 250 g+, camera or not

These thresholds reflect the 2026 regulatory update.

Both IDs must be valid and displayed on the aircraft as required.

4. Drone Types and Class Marks

From 2026, drones sold in the UK carry UK class marks (UK0–UK6), which determine where they may fly. Examples:

- UK0 / UK1 – permitted for A1 (Over People) operations
- UK2 – A2 (Near People) or A3 (Far from People)
- UK3 / UK4 – A3 only
- UK5 / UK6 – Specific Category only

EU C-class drones remain recognised until 31 December 2027.

Legacy drones (no class mark) follow weight-based restrictions and may require authorisation.

5. Remote ID Requirements

Remote ID must broadcast the drone's identity and location.

- Mandatory from 1 January 2026 for UK1, UK2, UK3, UK5, UK6 drones
- Mandatory from 1 January 2028 for all legacy or UK0 drones ≥100 g with a camera

Remote ID is not required for indoor flights or drones under 100 g.

6. Operational Categories

6.1 Open Category (Low-Risk Operations)

Most Parish Council flights will fall under the Open Category. Requirements include:

- Maintain visual line of sight
- Do not fly over crowds
- Respect minimum distances based on class mark
- Use a flashing green light for night operations (2026 requirement)

Subcategories:

- A1 – Over People
- A2 – Near People
- A3 – Far from People

6.2 Specific Category (Higher-Risk Operations)

A CAA Operational Authorisation is required when:

- Flying closer to people than Open Category rules allow
- Operating heavier drones near built-up areas
- Conducting infrastructure inspections in populated areas
- Using legacy drones that cannot meet Open Category limits

The Parish Council must ensure:

- A valid Operational Authorisation (e.g., PDRA-01)
- A GVC-qualified remote pilot
- A documented Operations Manual
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6.3 Certified Category

Not applicable to typical Parish Council operations.

7. Privacy, Data Protection, and Public Engagement

Any drone equipped for imaging or data acquisition must comply with:

- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Parish Council privacy policies

Requirements:

- Avoid capturing identifiable individuals unless necessary and lawful
- Use signage or public notification where appropriate
- Store and delete data in line with council retention policies

8. Airspace, Land Use, and Local Restrictions

Operators must ensure:

- No flight occurs within restricted or prohibited airspace
- No flight occurs within aerodrome flight restriction zones without ATC permission
- Landowner permission is obtained for take-off and landing
- Parish Council by-laws regarding parks, cemeteries, or recreation grounds are followed

Where the Parish Council is the landowner, permission must be granted by the Executive Officer.

All drone operations must be covered by EC 785/2004-compliant aviation insurance, including:

- Third-party liability
- Commercial use
- Specific Category operations (if applicable)
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Contractors must provide proof of insurance before flying.

9. Risk Assessment

A written risk assessment must be completed for all flights, covering:

- Airspace considerations
- Weather
- Take-off and landing zones
- Bystander management
- Emergency procedures

- Remote ID functionality
- Data-protection implications

10. Incident Reporting

The following must be reported immediately to the executive officer:

- Loss of control or fly-away
- Injury or property damage
- Near-miss with an aircraft
- Remote ID malfunction
- Breach of privacy or data-protection rules

Where required, incidents must also be reported to the CAA or AAIB.

11. Prohibited Activities

The Parish Council prohibits:

- Flying over crowds
- Flying without required IDs or authorisation
- Flying beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) unless authorised
- Dropping items from drones
- Flying under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Reckless or unsafe flying

12. Training Requirements

Depending on the operation:

- Flyer ID (mandatory for >100 g)
- A2 CofC for A2 operations
- GVC for Specific Category operations

Training records must be maintained by the Parish Council.

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- CAA regulations change
- New risks emerge
- New equipment or operational needs arise

For a full copy of the CAA policy CAP 3939 Air Navigation: The Order and Regulations please visit www.caa.co.uk alongside further information and guidance on operation, safety, formal permission request etc.

as well as the Unmanned Aircraft (Amendment) Regulations 2025

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2025/1106/pdfs/uksiem_20251106_en_001.pdf?utm_source=copilot.com

Ends.