



POLICY ON THE USE OF UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS (DRONES)

POLICY INFORMATION

Lichfield Cathedral does not permit the use of any unmanned aircraft system or drone within its grounds without prior approval. The Cathedral precinct is a privately owned Close that is open to the public and in constant use by visitors, Cathedral staff and volunteers, school children and local residents. Most of the properties, including the Cathedral, are listed and the fabric of these historic buildings are precarious and fragile.

Lichfield Cathedral UAS policy primarily adheres to the Civil Aviation Authority (or CAA) regulations regarding operating drones above or around people and buildings. Lichfield Cathedral and its precinct is a publicly accessible space and in constant use, therefore unauthorised drone flying within this area potentially puts people at risk.

In line with CAA regulations, anyone given permission to fly a drone must observe CAA policy regulations for flying in towns or cities:

- You must keep a least 150m horizontally away from congested spaces including parks, residential and industrial or built-up areas.
- You must not fly within 50m of people or properties/objects that are not under your control.
- You must not fly over 120m/400ft above the ground. (Lichfield Cathedral Central Spire is 77m high, therefore flying 50m above the property would take the unmanned aircraft above the legal limit of 120m from the ground)
- You must always maintain Visual Line of Sight (VLOS) i.e. keep the drone in direct line of sight.

While there are no specific distances set down for separation from structures or buildings, it is still an offence to endanger property with an unmanned aircraft or drone.

Anyone wishing to ask permission to use any drone or UAS weighing between 250g and 20kg, within the Cathedral precinct, will need to meet the following criteria:

- Must have a Drone Registration ID number as proof of passing the DMARES (Drone and Model Aircraft Registration and Education Service) theory test. It is against the law to fly a drone or model aircraft without having the required IDs.
- Relevant and up to date CAA certification.
- Evidence that you have adequate insurances and indemnities if the unmanned aircraft or drone causes damage or harm to persons or property.
- A Risk Assessment of the proposed flight.

We acknowledge that there are some non-commercial users who have the correct training or permission from the Civil Aviation Authority (or CAA) to operate unmanned aircraft or drones legally. However, even if you are fully certificated, you will still need to obtain permission to fly within the Cathedral precinct as it is private property.

UAS' BELOW 250g

Most of the same regulations remain in place for UAS' weighing under 250g, with a few differences.

- Any UAS under 250g with a camera must still be registered with the CAA, and proof of this registration will need to be provided to the Cathedral before any permission is considered by Lichfield Cathedral.
- It is permitted to fly closer than 50m to people, but it is still not permitted to fly over crowds.
- The Cathedral Close is private property and it is not permitted to pilot unmanned aircraft without prior consent from Lichfield Cathedral.

COMMERCIAL FILMING

Lichfield Cathedral is willing to grant permission for the use of drones and UAS' if there is a benefit in doing so.

- Any commercial filming granted will be subject to agreeing the following criteria:
- The Cathedral is made fully aware of the flight path and the project.
- Any pilot must be a registered commercial operator with the CAA and is prepared to be vetted.
- The level and type of insurance/indemnity fully satisfies the Cathedral insurers.
- The Cathedral reserves the right to specify times when flights may not take place.
- A member of the Cathedral team is present at all times during the flight activity.
- A full risk assessment is submitted.
- All commercial filming projects are subject to a fee.

Permission is assessed on a case by case basis and the production company must follow the same competency and insurance rules as those required for contractors. Anyone applying for permission to film must come from a recognised production company and will need to provide a synopsis of the project involved for consideration. Contractually the footage can only be used for the named project and further use, including image libraries, is prohibited. Please email marketing@lichfield-cathedral.org if you would like further information.

OTHER FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS

Historically, Lichfield Cathedral has been home to Peregrine Falcons. Peregrines and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Under this Act it is a criminal offence disturb any Schedule I wild bird whilst it is building a nest or is in, on or near, a nest containing eggs or young or to disturb dependent young of such a bird which are protected by Special Penalties. It is also worth noting that Peregrines are noisy, aggressive birds when threatened and will attack anything near the nest site or which they see as a potential danger.

As a result, Lichfield Cathedral are particularly cautious about UAS filming or drone photography during the nesting period of March to August, which may result in additional restrictions being imposed.

The conditions in the Cathedral Close are not ideal for UAS flight, fragile, listed buildings are located close together and the nature of the Close create the potential for high and unpredictable winds, that could result in issues of public safety or damage property.

TRESPASS, PRIVACY & DAMAGE

The presence of unmanned aircraft can interrupt the quiet enjoyment of visitors and residents and therefore potentially presents a public nuisance. The residents within the Close have the right to report anything they consider a public nuisance to the local authorities.

The CAA give some guidance on trespass and privacy considerations as follows:

- UAS operators must be aware of their responsibilities regarding operations from private land and any requirements to obtain the appropriate permission before operating from a particular site. They must ensure that they observe the relevant trespass laws and do not unwittingly commit a trespass whilst conducting a flight.
- UAS operators and remote pilots should be aware that the collection of images of identifiable individuals, even inadvertently, when using surveillance cameras mounted on an unmanned aircraft, may be subject to the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. Further information about these regulations and the circumstances in which they apply can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office and website: <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/drones/>.
- Additionally, the overall security and privacy situation must also be considered. There may be buildings in the area where it would be inadvisable, from a security or privacy standpoint, to be flying close to without first obtaining permission to do so.

More information can be found on CAA website: <https://www.caa.co.uk/drones/rules-and-categories-of-drone-flying/introduction-to-drone-flying-and-the-uk-rules/>

ALL The regulations and guidance outlined in this document apply to all users of UAS including professionals who have been contracted by Lichfield Cathedral on specialist projects requiring the use of a drone.

If you are interested in flying a drone for filming, photography or surveying purposes please contact us to discuss your project on 01543 306100.

Vicky Osborn

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