



BEST PRACTICE CODE

Framework

This Code is based upon the Law as applied to kite flying. It is also based upon common sense, risk assessment and good manners – taken together it should make the flying of kites an enjoyable pastime for the kite flyer and others with whom they come into contact through kite flying.

The Code is structured as an Objective and then Guidance to achieve that Objective.

The Law

Objective

Kite flyers must comply with any requirements of the law applicable to where they are flying.

Guidance

The European Communities Act 1972, Civil Aviation Act 1982 and the Airports Act 1986 allow the Civil Aviation Authority (working with the Ministry of Defence) to issue the Air Navigation Order ('the Order'), a Statutory Instrument, the latest of which is dated July 2016. Combined with other Regulations, CAP 393 (with amendments to June 2017) sets out the law and rules that kite flyers are required to comply with.

The key points are:

- Anyone flying a kite at a height greater than 60 metres above the surface requires a permission from the CAA. The permission must be available on site when kites are being flown.
- Any kite must not be flown -
 - In such a manner as to represent a hazard to other airspace users; or
 - Recklessly or negligently to endanger any person or property; or
 - Within controlled airspace or airspace notified as restricted by the CAA; or
 - Within the aerodrome traffic zone of a notified aerodrome during the notified operating hours of that aerodrome except during the day and in good visibility and with the permission of the person in charge of the aerodrome, the appropriate air traffic control unit or the CAA.
- A kite which is flown, launched, moored, tethered or towed must be operated in accordance with any guidance issued from time to time by the CAA.
- If it is intended to fly above 60m, guidance given on the CAA website must be followed on the marking of lines by day and at night.
- Any person who is exercising a power or performing a duty under the Order, under EU-OPS or under an EASA Regulation must not intentionally obstructed or impeded.

You should also be aware of local byelaws which may restrict kite flying or related activities.

These might say you must not fly a kite as to create a public nuisance which might include noise.

If you are flying a kite weighing more than 2kg there are many more parts of the Order that apply. You should consult the Order or see the guidance on the BKFA website.

The Personal Safety of the Kite Flyer

Objective

Kite flyers should act in such a way as to protect themselves from accident or injury.

Guidance

- **You must not fly your kite near overhead power cables**
- **You must never try and retrieve a kite from overhead power lines:** call the electricity company
- **You should** make an assessment of the flying site, looking for potential hazards
- **You must** avoid flying in severe weather including thunderstorms or heavy rain
- **You must** avoid flying in low cloud, fog or whenever the kite cannot be seen clearly
- **You must never attach yourself** to the kite or kite line in a way that cannot be released easily and with the kite powered up
- **You should** avoid flying near trees, masts, pylons or overhead wires
- **You should** be aware of the pull, lift and speed of some kites, whether flown by you or someone else and fly within your own capabilities
- **You should get appropriate training** for the type of kite you intend to fly
- **You should** be aware of what is around you, in the air and on the ground
 - You should check that you have enough space around you to launch and fly safely
 - You should not run with your kite and if you do you should see that the ground ahead is clear and fairly level
 - You should protect yourself from the effects of the weather, particularly the effect of the sun
- **You should** consider the use of appropriate protective equipment such as suitable gloves when handling a tight kite line

For kite traction activities, e.g.; buggying, kite jumping, kite water activities, kite skiing etc

- **You must** be aware of the increased, special risks involved in these activities to you and other people
- **You must** take appropriate training
- **You must never** attach yourself to the kite or kite line in a way that cannot be released easily and with the kite powered up
- **You must** take all reasonable precautions to ensure safety at all times
- **You must** make sure you have adequate space to launch, fly and land your kite safely
- **You must** wear appropriate protective equipment such as a helmet
- **You should** learn to fly small kites before attempting to fly larger and more powerful power kites
- **You should** fly with a buddy to take care of each other's safety

The Safety of Others

Objective

Kite flyers should act in such a way as to protect others from accident, injury or loss.

Guidance

- **You must** supervise any children under your care at all times
- **You should** choose an open, clear area for flying away from other people
- **You should** avoid flying near buildings, roads, footpaths, railways, canals and rivers
- **You should** avoid startling livestock and pets, particularly horses when being ridden
- **You should** follow more detailed guidance where available for any particular location or situation
- **You should** be aware of the dangers of tethering your kite and always see that your anchor is secure and clearly visible
- **You should never** leave a tethered kite unattended, always be ready to take control
- **You should** mark your flying line to make it easy to see
- **You should** be aware of the inherent dangers in the use of glass or aluminium oxide coated flying line (Manja, 'Chinese' or 'technical') for fighter kites
- **You should** seek instruction or advice before attempting to fly any kite with which you are unfamiliar
- **You should** beware of spectators, pedestrians and young children who might not be aware of the dangers of kites
- **You must never** let inexperienced flyers use your equipment except under close supervision and provided that you are certain that they can handle the equipment without risk of injury to themselves or others
- **You must** remember that the safety of others is your responsibility

The Correct Use of Equipment

Objective

Kite flyers should use appropriate and well-maintained equipment to reduce the risk of accident, injury or loss.

Guidance

- **You must not** fly in winds that are too strong for those recommended for your kite
- **You must** make sure that all knots, clips, and spars are secure
- **You must** make sure that your line is suitable for the wind conditions
- **You should** always check your equipment for wear and tear before flying
- **You must** not fly with worn or damaged equipment or flying lines
- **You must** stake your handles safely and visibly and disable your kite when not in use
- **You must** leave the flying site clean, tidy and free of discarded line or equipment

The Environment

Objective

Kite flyers should be socially responsible, seeking to reduce their impact on the environment.

Guidance

- **You should** respect the environment including wildlife and livestock
- **You should** respect other users of the flying site and those living nearby
- **You must** avoid flying in nature reserves or when breeding birds and nestlings may be disturbed.
- **You must** pick up broken spars, clips, line etc and you must pick up manja and other coated line in particular
- **You should** recycle rubbish and waste whenever possible
- **You should** keep the use of engines, generators etc., to a minimum
- **You should** respect the quiet of the countryside

Good manners

Objective

Kite flyers should always act as good ambassadors for kite flying, promoting our sport through good manners and consideration for others.

Guidance

- **You should** avoid flying too close to other kites
- **You should** be aware that if you cause an accident you may be liable to compensate a third party for their loss
- **You should** make a record of all details following an accident or incident
- **You must** act with courtesy and consideration to other kite flyers and others at all times
- **You should** have insurance that is suitable for the activities you are undertaking
- **You must** obtain the permission of the landowner if flying on private land

Rules of the Road

Objective

Traction kite flyers always fly such as to protect themselves and others from the risk of accident or injury.

Guidance

- **You must** always follow the 'Rules of the Road' for buggiers, boarders and water born kite traction
 - If you are on a head-on collision course turn right and the other pilot should do the same, remember to leave sufficient space between you and them.
 - In all other situations, watch for pilots coming from your right and avoid them.
 - Stand your course to pilots coming from your left as they will avoid you.

- Look before you gybe or tack and if need be, call out the manoeuvre that you are about to make.
- When passing each other, the downwind pilot must lower his/her kite and the upwind pilot must raise their kite in order to avoid a tangle.
- Look before you gybe/tack and if necessary call a warning before making the manoeuvre

Kite Flying and Horses

Objective

When horses, whether mounted or not come close to kite flyers, flyers should always fly so as to protect themselves and others from the risk of accident or injury and to reduce the risk of frightening the horses.

Guidance

- **You must** always be aware of your environment – and keep a lookout for horses approaching
- **You must** try to avoid horses, but if you can't do that, then give them plenty of room.
 - 50 Metres is a good guide as a minimum safety distance to avoid any problems, but if your kite is flying on a long line bear this in mind – it may land very close if the wind suddenly drops
 - If room is limited and it is practical, ground the kite and secure from flapping until any horse has passed
 - Remember, horse riders want to avoid trouble, but they must also avoid soft sand or uneven ground. The safest pace for a rider to pass you is at walk or trot
- **Be aware**, horses may suddenly come upon you –
 - Ridden horses rarely travel faster than 15 – 20 mph (in canter)
 - Horses ridden at a gallop on the beach/downs may approach at up to 30mph
 - Loose horses who have been frightened by your kite and deposited their rider are much faster and therefore more dangerous!
- **You must** avoid sudden movements of your kite, buggy or similar, and or sudden changes of direction within 50 metres of any horse
 - Sudden bangs, loud rustling noises, line whistle or a kite being stalled or luffed can frighten the horse
 - Avoid stalling, luffing or bringing a kite to low level or ground within 50 metres of any horse
 - Try and reduce the sound of the kite by reducing load on the line/s and holding in a gentle hover/static flight mode
- **Be aware**, riders generally know their horse well, they know what will spook them and how to keep them calm.
 - Listen to what a rider requests of you and do what they ask if you can, or advise them if you can't.
 - Stay calm yourself and don't run about or panic
 - Remember that inanimate objects can always be repaired or replaced – humans or animals can't.