# Lambeth council removes Progress Pride flag following legal threat



A London council has taken down the Progress Pride flag from the roof of its town hall following a threat of legal action by Maureen Martin, the Christian Peoples' Alliance candidate for Lewisham East. The incident occurred during an election period, triggering a contentious discussion about the flag's display.

Maureen Martin argued that the council did not have the necessary planning permission to fly the Progress Pride flag. The flag, differing from the traditional rainbow Pride flag, incorporates additional black and brown stripes to represent marginalised LGBTQ+ people of color, and pink, blue, and white stripes reminiscent of the transgender flag. Because these additions make it distinct from the original Pride flag, the Progress Pride flag is considered advertising, requiring special permission to be flown publicly.

In a formal letter sent to the council through her legal representatives, Martin contended that the area of transgender rights is a highly contentious political issue in the United Kingdom. She pointed out that the Equality Act 2010 does not include gender as a protected characteristic, and thus claimed that the flag's display was inappropriate and politically charged.

The council, aiming to avoid any possible legal repercussions, agreed to remove the flag. This move came amidst a broader debate about the flying of the Progress Pride flag by various councils and businesses, particularly in the month of June, traditionally celebrated as Pride Month.

In response to the council's decision, Martin stated that councils and businesses had been unlawfully flying the Progress Pride flag without proper permission or consultation, asserting that the ideology behind the flag was harmful, particularly to vulnerable children. She emphasised the need for greater awareness about what the flag stands for and called for public authorities to be held accountable for their actions.

Andrea Williams, chief executive of the Christian Legal Centre, which provided support to Martin, also weighed in, describing the flags as intimidating and exclusionary towards Christians and others who do not support the principles associated with Pride.