

## Gloucestershire

Wednesday, 16 April 2008

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The Gloucestershire flag, designed by Jeremy Bentall, was the winning entry in a competition held by the county's High Sheriff Jonathan Carr, to commemorate the 1000th anniversary of the county's existence. The competition was held in March 2008. In inviting entries, the Sheriff stated that "Several counties, especially in the West Country, now have their own flags and I think the Millennium presents a good opportunity for Gloucestershire to have one of its own."

The flag comprises a cross of mid-blue, outlined (fimbriated) in cream (also described as a pale yellow), against an apple green background. Jeremy Bentall is quoted as saying that the colours represent features typical of the landscape of Gloucestershire; "The green is representative of our rural county, the blue the River Severn and the yellow Cotswold Stone." No explanation is given for the choice of a cross design but this is a pattern that has been recently popular amongst flags chosen for England's counties, see Lincolnshire, Scilly Isles, Devon, Derbyshire, Dorset and Cornwall.

As with most English counties, Gloucestershire had no official flag, nor was there even a popularly flown, generally accepted one. A banner of the county arms was (and still is) available commercially from a number of flag vendors but as this design, in accordance with the rules of English heraldry, is the sole legal property of the county council rather than the county itself, it is not legal for any individual to fly it. The new flag therefore fills an obvious void.