



GUIDELINES FOR THE PROVISION OF SIGNING TO TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AND FACILITIES

Notes to the Applicant

If after reading these guidelines you feel that your establishment may qualify for signing, you can request an application form via contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk. Completed forms, with all supporting literature and appropriate certificates, can be returned to the address below:

St Helens Council
Highways Network Management - Traffic Engineering
4th Floor Wesley House, Corporation Street, St Helens, Merseyside WA10 1HF

Included with the form should be a non-returnable fee of £150 for the initial assessment. Payment should be in the form of a cheque made payable to St Helens Council. If you require further clarification in relation to this issue, contact Shaun Walker on 01744 673304.

All costs associated with the design, provision and erection of tourism signing will be charged to the applicant. As guidance, a typical example of signing to a venue consisting of two advance signs and a double-sided sign at the entrance is likely to cost in the region of £2,000 inclusive of design, manufacture and erection on site. This is in addition to the £150 non-returnable fee for the initial assessment.

Dependent upon the scale of the attraction/facility, signing will normally be considered from the nearest available Principal Route ('A' Road) only.

The signs will remain the property of the Highway Authority who reserves the right to remove, reposition or alter the design of the signs if it considers it necessary in the interest of road safety, traffic management or to accommodate other traffic signs in the vicinity of the locations.

Should the signs be stolen, damaged, vandalised or similar to the extent that repairs are not possible, or if they need to be replaced through normal wear and tear, it will be the responsibility of the applicant to meet the costs of such repairs or replacement if the applicant wishes for the signs to remain in situ. It should be noted that damaged signs that could constitute a danger will be removed from the highway immediately.

The final decision for the provision of any signs will be made by Mr Steven Walker, Head of Highways & Infrastructure.

Tourism amenities can be divided into attractions and facilities:

- An "attraction" includes those establishments which are covered by the original tourism definition, ie places of interest open to the public offering recreation, education or historical interest. These include theme parks, historic houses, museums, and leisure complexes. The category is now extended to include farm centres and craft centres to a greater extent than previous guidance permitted. Guidance suggests that cinemas, theatres, concert halls and sports venues also come under this heading.
- A "facility" covers places that provide a service, ie tourist information centres, accommodation, touring and camping parks, restaurants, cafes and public houses, etc.

Motorists who follow tourism signs expect a high standard of attraction/facility to be provided at the destination and the following requirements must be complied with to ensure that these standards are maintained.

To qualify for brown and white signs, an attraction/facility must where appropriate:

- Be accredited by the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Service or recognised national or regional scheme of this sort. Evidence of accreditation to be provided with the application.
- Have a minimum opening of 150 days per year, and for at least 4 hours per day. (It may be possible that there are some attractions/facilities which are not open for this period, i.e. regular weekend opening only that could also qualify due to their tourism value).
- Provide an appropriate level of car parking for the expected number of visitors, catering and toilet facilities.
- Be available for use by the public during opening hours without the need for pre-booking or membership.
- Attract visitors from outside the local area.
- Demonstrate that the destination is publicised as a tourism attraction/facility and advertises itself in tourism promotions. (Membership alone of a tourism agency or association will not confer eligibility in this respect. If, however, an attraction/facility fulfils the above criteria in terms of promotion, the appropriate membership will give added assurance).
- Comply with all appropriate statutory requirements such as:
 - Accommodation and Inspection Certificate
 - Visitor Charter
 - Liquor Licenses
 - Registration under Food Safety Act 1990
 - Environmental Health Issues
 - Planning permissions
 - Public Health Act 1936
 - Caravan Sites and Control Development Act 1960

In built up areas individual attractions cannot be signed, only comprehensive signing schemes will be implemented and applications for tourist signs will be considered in groups not individually.

In addition to the above, each signed destination will be expected to meet minimum quality thresholds. Each type of attraction/facility is now considered individually with the standards that will be applied.

Catering Establishments - *Public Houses, Restaurants, Cafes, etc*

It is proposed that these can be signed if the following is complied with:

- Food is served both a lunchtime and during the evening.
- Facilities are provided inside to allow children to accompany parents.
- Adequate parking is provided.
- No traffic management problems will be created.
- Signing is required due to locational problems.
- Advertising should take place to the tourist industry and not just in the local press.

In urban areas it is logical to assume that members of the public in search of food will assume the existence of catering establishments. It will be impossible to sign all establishments except where generic signing is used.

In rural areas signing will be restricted to point of entry signs or where the venue is located away from main through routes.

Public houses and licensed restaurants will not normally be considered for tourist signs unless other factors, e.g. substantial conference facilities can be shown to attract clientele from regional or wider catchment.

Sport & Leisure

It is proposed that the following may be signed:

- Football, rugby, racing and cricket clubs.
- Fisheries, golf driving ranges, leisure centres, tennis, squash, badminton and golf clubs. (These clubs can be signed only where non-members can play without prior booking).

Accommodation - *Hotels, Guest Houses and B & B Facilities*

All establishments must be members of Quality Assurance schemes that require independent inspection of members' premises. The three largest of these are the ETB Crown Scheme (National Accommodation Grading and Classification Scheme), AA and RAC Star Rating Schemes.

In urban areas it is logical to assume that members of the public in search of a bed will assume the existence of accommodation establishments. It will be impossible to sign all establishments, although a generic or zone signing scheme may be adopted for those large concentrations of accommodation.

In rural areas only accommodation that is not visible to passing trade will be signed. Large hotels in rural areas that may generate a significant amount of traffic will be signed from the nearest main road.

Self-Catering Accommodation - *Camping & Caravan Sites*

Facilities that require booking **will not** be eligible for signing.

Caravan and camping sites must be licensed under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and/or the Public Health Act 1936 and have at least 20 pitches for caravans/tents (combined if necessary) for casual overnight use.

Some static sites may qualify (where they are available without pre-booking) but the use of the caravan symbol **will not** be allowed, as this could be confusing to touring caravans requiring an overnight pitch.

Attractions recognised by Visit Britain

The destinations eligible for signing under the original rules were those recognised by the English Tourist Board and these will continue to be signed as at present. They include:

- Craft centres
- Museums
- Historical or architectural buildings or sites
- Natural attractions such as forests or country parks
- Tourist Information Centres
- Youth hostels

- Picnic sites
- Leisure complexes
- Leisure drives
- Cycle routes
- Large garden centres
- Theme parks

Signing will be permitted for any new destinations of these types.

The guidance recommends that the provision of tourist signs be conditional on the permanent removal of any advertisement signs relating to that destination from private land adjacent to the highway.

Privacy Notice

The Council as the data controller has to collect personal data in order to assess an application for tourism signage. To process an application, your data will be collected, processed, and retained in order to carry out the performance of a contract between the Council and the Applicant to process the application for Tourism Signage.

The Council will use the personal data it collects to assist in the assessment of an application for tourism signage and to issue any other related correspondence, including notification of removal of signage or information pertaining to signage.

Personal information in relation to the application for Tourism Signage will be used by the Council's Traffic Engineering Section.

Any personal data held, will be retained for as long as necessary in compliance with St Helens Council's retention policy, albeit this will be indefinitely for the duration of the installation of the signage.

Your Data Rights

In relation to the personal data that the Council may hold about you, you have the right to request to:

- Be **informed**, have **access** or **rectify** incorrect information. You also have the right to object to or restrict the processing of your data.
- Under Data Protection law, verification of your identity is required and an explanation will be provided giving reasons as to why a request is not to be carried out.

Contact and Further Information

If you are concerned about how the Council is using the information provided, and you wish to receive a copy of your data, or believe the information we hold is inaccurate please contact us at: dataprotection@sthelens.gov.uk, or via the Information Commissioner's Office (www.ico.gov.uk).