

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

TOURISM AND TEMPORARY EVENT SIGNAGE POLICY

Introduction

The focus of this policy and guidance notes is to support local businesses, especially those in rural areas, and empower local communities to have a greater say in the signage within their areas.

Well-designed tourism and temporary event signage can support the local economy and improve the customer experience for highway users and local communities. Poorly designed signage, whether it is located within the highway boundary or on private land adjacent to a highway can cause problems for highway users and detract from the local environment. In many cases the difference between good and bad design is a matter of balance and perception. Herefordshire Council's role is to ensure the right balance is made between highway safety, environmental damage and supporting local businesses. We must also operate within regulations, such as exist for planning and highways. This policy is aimed at ensuring the right balance is achieved through solutions that comply with the law.

Key Aims

- Support tourism and local businesses;
- Promote community engagement;
- Improve road safety;
- Reduce environmental damage.

Tourism and local businesses

Tourism is a key industry within the county and Herefordshire Council will support the use of signs to raise awareness of the location of facilities and attractions that promote the economic health and cultural wellbeing of our County. New guidance will be introduced to support rural business and activities who do not meet the criteria for brown signs but need to guide customers to their premises

Local communities

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/hfdscouncil>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/HfdsCouncil>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/hfdscouncil/>

The benefits and impact of signs is felt most at a local level. Local communities will therefore have a key role in the approval, design and location of signs within their locality. Local communities will also be encouraged to work with providers to ensure the detrimental environmental impact that signage can have is reduced as much as possible.

Road safety

Signs play an important role in ensuring road users arrive at their intended destination efficiently and safely. Road signs are also a distraction, therefore signs will need to be kept to a minimum and the information contained within a sign will provide only the detail required to allow the driver to find their destination. Road signage is not the only guide to travellers, and should work with street name plates, the destinations own publicity media, and other readily available information to direct the travelling public firstly to the right locality, and then on to their final destination. No sign should impede forward visibility, cause obstruction, confuse or distract drivers to the extent that it will cause undue risk to highway users to an unacceptable level.

Environment

Herefordshire Council will seek to enhance our environment and reduce environmental damage. Signs can have both a positive and negative impact on the environment. If located correctly they can ensure visitors arrive at their destination by the most direct route. However, too many signs cause environmental clutter and can threaten one of the attractions of our county, its beauty.

Eligibility criteria

Applicants for Brown or Tourist signs should be able to demonstrate they have met certain basic criteria to ensure that visitors expectations are met on arrival at their destination.

Process

Herefordshire Council's aim is to reduce 'red tape' and ensure the process of applying for signage is open, engaging and efficient and achieves its objective.

Costs

There are inevitably costs associated with the approval and installations of signs. Whilst Herefordshire Council must ensure all their costs are met to eliminate any unnecessary burden on tax payers, they will not seek to profit. Costs will be clearly set out, along with the standard of service applicants can expect. These costs will take account of the whole life of the sign, so that they can remain as effective guidance to the travelling public now and in the future.

Clutter

Signage clutter can come about as the result of redundant signs not being removed, badly thought out procedures, incremental development and the installation of unauthorised signs. The impact of such clutter can lead to safety issues and detract from the visual beauty of the county. Local communities and providers will therefore be invited to play an active role in helping reduce signage clutter along in partnership with Herefordshire Council.

Highways Agency and neighbouring authorities

Trunk Roads such, as the A49, and Motorways, as the M50 are managed by the Highways Agency who have their own criteria for signs. Neighbouring authorities also have their own approach to signage. Herefordshire Council will continue to work with the Highways Agency and its neighbours to ensure compatibility between the policies of respective organisations, recognising that many journeys to destinations within the County will have started from elsewhere in the World.