

**MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
TOURISM TRAFFIC SIGNING POLICY (DECEMBER 2001)**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Tourism and travel are leading contributors to Merthyr Tydfil's economy, both in terms of number employed and income generated. The overwhelming mode of travel is the private car and it is therefore essential that efficient and adequate guidance is given to visitors.
- 1.2 The 'white on brown' tourist type signs have now been in use for over ten years and are readily recognised both nationally and internationally. Although these signs are intended to direct (rather than attract) visitors, the National Assembly for Wales is keen to allow the interests of commercial activity as much consideration as is reasonably practicable given other factors e.g. road safety etc.
- 1.3 The Highway Authority must balance legitimate commercial interests with those of road safety, traffic management and environmental control when assessing applications for tourist signs. Roads which are overloaded with traffic signs competing for drivers attention cannot fulfil their primary objective of providing safe and efficient travel.
- 1.4 The Highway Authority remains the sole arbiter of determining which sign may be erected on Merthyr Tydfil's roads and may accept, reject or modify applications for such signs according to local conditions.

2. Definitions and General Requirements

- 2.1 Tourist signs are combined within the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 1994 (as amended) and are therefore subject to the same conditions as any other traffic sign. The Welsh Language Act 1993 also applies, therefore all text will be bilingual.
- 2.2 The criteria issued by The National Assembly for Wales (attached in Appendix A and B) apply to trunk roads, and it should be noted that the Assembly does not intend to overrule local criteria where an attraction is located on a local road network.
- 2.3 The application must relate to a permanently established facility, which attracts and is used by visitors to the area. There must be features for tourists and the facility must be open to the general public without prior booking during normal opening hours (defined as a minimum of four hours a day and 100 days a year) as tourists expect to find a signed attraction open for business at reasonable hours and times of the year.
- 2.4 In order to provide a consistent measure of quality control, all applicants shall provide evidence that they are recognised by the Wales Tourist Board and that the Wales Tourist Board supports the application.
- 2.5 Where required, the attraction shall conform to all relevant Planning, Health and Consumer safety legislation.
- 2.6 There shall be a significant proportion of visitors from outside the locality and hence a demonstrated need for directional information to the attraction. The applicant shall provide evidence to this effect in their application. This evidence will include an estimate of the number of non local visitors who frequent the facilities.
- 2.7 To qualify for signing, the Highway Authority must be satisfied that access routes are suitable for the increase in traffic that may be generated by these signs. The facility will normally be expected to have adequate and sufficient on site parking, and where off site parking is available as an alternative to dedicated facilities, the application for signs shall include written acceptance and authorisation from the relevant landowner(s).
- 2.8 Where an access route to an approved attraction is situated within more than one Highway Authority area, the Authority in which the attraction is situated shall act as the lead Authority. Liaison with neighbouring authorities on the applicant's behalf shall take place and each affected Authority's policies and conditions will be satisfied by the application.
- 2.9 The assessment will be carried out by the local Highway Authority in consultation with such other departments and organisations as it considers appropriate. The decision rests with the Authority and applicants will be advised of each decision and will be provided with a reason for any refusal.
- 2.10 It is generally accepted that drivers can only absorb four tourist destinations at an individual location. Therefore, a maximum of four destination symbols on one sign

will be normal. If the visibility or topography at any particular site are such that legibility is impaired, the number of destination symbols may be reduced accordingly.

- 2.11 Where the Authority considers that signing to an additional destination would create unacceptable sign clutter or environmental damage or if there is difficulty siting the additional sign, it may refuse an application. If the applicant for the additional destination is prepared to finance the full cost of a composite new sign to overcome this, the application will be reconsidered.
- 2.12 The majority of tourist symbols are listed in Appendix D and although their use is not obligatory, they significantly reduce the size (and therefore cost) of sign assemblies and are beneficial in simplifying composite sign content. It is usual, especially in non-urban areas, to provide symbol continuity signing to keep environmental impact to a minimum.
- 2.13 Whilst The National Assembly for Wales may permit the use of commercial names on tourist signs there are obvious environmental disadvantages to this practice (e.g. a likely increase in the size of signs). Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council confines the legend to a description of the facility rather than by reference to commercial names, unless there is a clear case for their inclusion to distinguish between similar, closely adjacent attractions.
- 2.14 A tourist destination not situated adjacent to an "A" or "B" class road may be provided with signing from the nearest such road.
- 2.15 An undertaking will be required to ensure the applicant will not erect private commercial signs near or around the proposed tourist signs or seek to advertise his business in whole or part by the use of static vehicles or trailers parked in or adjacent to the highway.
- 2.16 Where a tourist attraction is associated with a particular town or village, etc. which is already signed, visitors are expected to follow those signs until the access route to the attraction diverts from that town or village unless a clear case for specific signing exists on traffic management grounds.

3.0 Additional Criteria Specific to Tourist Attractions

- 3.1 These signs are provided for the benefit of those drivers who are intent on visiting an attraction, which they have seen advertised in leaflets, local or national press, or other media.
- 3.2 The applicant must submit evidence of publicity material providing information, which shall include a sketch map and written directions.
- 3.3 The attraction shall have facilities for disabled visitors and families with children.
- 3.4 Within environmentally sensitive areas, the level of signing will be kept to an acceptable minimum to avoid detracting from the amenity of the surroundings. Where an adequate signing system cannot be attained without an unacceptable loss of amenity, the application will be refused.
- 3.5 "Follow on" signing will be used wherever possible. For example "for X follow Y" utilising existing signing legend rather than providing unnecessary continuity signs. The use of symbols is recommended where continuity signs are required.
- 3.6 Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, as Highway Authority, reserves the right to refuse any application is considers unsuitable or inappropriate, e.g. supermarkets or other major retail outlets.

4.0 Additional Criteria Specific to Urban Facilities

- 4.1 In certain circumstances these signs may be provided for the benefit of visitors to a town who require directions to hotels, bed and breakfast establishments, pubs, cafes, restaurants and shops which cater specifically for visitors.
- 4.2 Paragraph 3.3 applies.
- 4.3 Restaurants, cafes and public houses shall be open to customers without pre-booking and shall serve full meals as well as snacks at lunchtime and in the evening. They shall be open for a minimum of six hours a day, six days a week.
- 4.4 In urban areas there is a presumption against signing retail outlets. In order to be considered for signing there must be features specifically for tourists and the commercial aspect must not dominate any displays or service facilities.

5.0 Additional Criteria Specific to Rural Facilities

- 5.1 These signs are provided for the benefit of visitors and travellers in rural areas where the existence of facilities might not be apparent.
- 5.2 Paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5, and 4.3 apply.
- 5.3 In rural areas where there may be several small tourist operations in close proximity it may be more appropriate to provide a local signing scheme in the form of an information board and/or supplementary plates to the village name place sign.

6.0 **Financial Arrangements**

- 6.1 The provision of tourism signing shall normally be at no cost to the Highway Authority. The applicant shall finance the assessment, design, manufacture, erection and subsequent maintenance of any signs. This cost may include the renewal of any other sign where the tourism sign has to be incorporated into an existing sign assembly.
- 6.2 The formal application for tourist signs shall be accompanied by the submission payment shown in Appendix C to cover the cost of assessment by the Authority. This payment is non-refundable and subject to annual review.
- 6.3 Should the application for signs be approved, the Authority shall supply a quotation of the full cost of the works described in Paragraph 6.1 which shall include a sum equal to 10% of the total cost to cover future maintenance charges (i.e. sign cleaning). Alternatively, the applicant is free to engage the services of a private specialist to perform this function, subject to the Authority's approval. Given the implications upon future maintenance etc., however, this is not recommended.
- 6.4 If the applicant decides at any stage to withdraw their application they shall become liable for the cost of any abortive works undertaken by the Authority including, if necessary, the costs of removing any previously agreed and approved signs.
- 6.5 Should signs require amendment or replacing due to the provision of additional destinations, this cost shall be met by the new applicant.
- 6.6 If signs require repair or replacement due to damage, theft or when the original signs reach the end of their useful life, the applicant shall be liable for the costs.
- 6.7 If the attraction closes, ceases to qualify for signs or if the Wales Tourist Board withdraws its support from the operation, signs shall be removed and the applicant shall be liable for the costs.
- 6.8 Regardless of the identity of the body providing finance, all signs shall remain the property of the Highway Authority, who will reserve the right to amend or remove any sign as circumstances dictate.

7.0 **Application Procedures**

- 7.1 The applicant may make a verbal or informal enquiry to the Authority who shall respond within 10 working days with an indication of whether the application is likely to be approved. This indication will not bind the Authority to any subsequent decision.
- 7.2 The applicant may proceed to make a formal written application which must include the assessment fee, along with evidence of his/her Welsh Tourist Board endorsements.

- 7.3 Formal written applications for Tourist Signs shall be submitted to the address indicated below using the model application form shown in Appendix E:

Head of Engineering
Traffic Management Section
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Ty Keir Hardie
Riverside Court
Avenue De Clichy
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8XF

- 7.4 If all proposed signs are to be sited on roads other than Trunk Roads, the Authority will respond to the applicant within one calendar month of receipt of the application and this response will include a quotation of the costs of any approved signs.
- 7.5 If any signs are proposed to be sited on Trunk Roads, the Authority will respond to the applicant within one calendar month of receipt of agreement from The National Assembly for Wales and this response will include a quotation of the costs of any approved signs.
- 7.6 The applicant, should they wish to proceed, will confirm acceptance to the Highway Authority and shall arrange the transfer of funds to the Authority for the agreed cost of works before any further works commence.
- 7.7 Signs should normally be erected by the Highway Authority within three months of receipt of finance from the applicant.

SUPPLEMENTARY TRUNK ROAD CRITERIA DETERMINED BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES

ALL PURPOSE SINGLE CARRIAGEWAYS AND DUAL CARRIAGEWAYS WITH SPEED LIMITS OF LESS THAN 50MPH

1. A tourist attraction must be recognised by the Wales Tourist Board;
2. It should only be signed from a Trunk Road if it is also signed on the adjacent local road network under the criteria set by the Local Highway Authority;
3. The route onto which traffic is being directed must be the most suitable link between the attraction and the Trunk Road;
4. Adequate parking should be provided at the attraction or in the vicinity;
5. Signing may be refused because of siting difficulties or where the number of destinations signed at a single junction would be excessive;

APPENDIX B

SUPPLEMENTARY TRUNK ROAD CRITERIA DETERMINED BY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES

ALL PURPOSE DUAL CARRIAGEWAYS WITH A SPEED LIMIT OF 50MPH OR ABOVE

1. As Appendix A, but additionally;
2. The attraction should normally be within 20 miles of the junction from which it is to be signed;
3. The attraction should have at least 20,000 visitors per year;
4. The criteria may be relaxed if traffic conditions permit, especially in rural areas where there is less demand for signs.

APPENDIX C

1. The non-refundable submission fee which must accompany all formal applications for tourist signs is £75.00 plus VAT. This sum will be subject to annual review.

APPENDIX D

Symbol No.	Old No.	Type of Attraction	Description
T1		Tourist Information Point	'I' symbol
T2		Castle of historic or architectural interest	Castle
T3		House of historic or architectural interest	Mansion
T4		Picnic area	Person sat at a bench below fir tree
T5		Youth Hostel	Fir tree alongside small building
T6		Caravan site	Caravan (towbar always faces left)
T7		Camping site	Tent
T8		Woodland recreation area	Deciduous and fir tree
T9		Viewpoint	Semi-circle of 5 segments
T10	S46 sh2	Refreshments (hot drinks)	Cup
T11	S46 sh2	Refreshments (food)	Spoon and fork
T12	S46 sh1	Accommodation	Bed
T101		National Trust property	Oak leaves and acorns
T102		Flower garden	Flower
T103		Preserved or tourist railway or railway museum	Steam train
T104		Water sports activities	Yacht
T105		Church of historic or architectural interest	Church with spire
T106		Cathedral of historic or architectural interest	Twin-towered Cathedral
T107		Wildlife park	Deer's head with antlers
T108		Windmill of historic or architectural interest	Windmill
T109		Zoo	Elephant
T110		Agricultural museum	Farm cart
T111		Equestrian centre	Horseshoe
T112		Country Park – recognised by the Countryside Commission	3 people – symbolic
T113		Bird garden	Cockatoo
T114		Pleasure or Theme Park	Carousel horse with trees
T115		Nature reserve	Duck
T116		Historic dockyard or attraction of maritime interest	Anchor
T117		Air museum	Propeller

Symbol No.	Old No.	Type of Attraction	Description
T118		Beach	Sand castle
T119		Farm park	Sheep
T120		Pottery of craft centre	Earthenware pot
T121		Prehistoric site or monument	Standing stones
T122		Butterfly farm	Butterfly
T123		Canal-side attraction	Narrow boat
T124		Industrial heritage museum or attraction	Factory with chimney
T125		Watermill of historic or architectural interest	Water wheel
T126		Aquarium or Oceanarium	Fish
T127		Site with Roman remains	Roman helmet
T128		Shire horse centre	Shire horse
T129		Motor museum	Vintage car
T130		Craft centre or forge	Anvil
T131		Spa, spring or fountain of particular interest	Fountain
T132		Farm trail	Wheat sheaf
T133		Vineyard	Bunch of grapes
T134	T139	Sports centre – England only	Sport for all symbol
T135		Golf course	Golf flag
T136		Motor sport	Chequered flag
T137		Horse racing course	Horse & hockey
T138	NT156	Football ground	Football
T139	T142	Canoeing	Man and canoe
T140	T143	Fishing	Fish on a line
T141	T144	Boat hire	Motor launch
T142	T145	Cycle hire	Man on a bicycle
T143	T154pt	Woodland walk (coniferous)	Walking man and fir tree
T144	T154pt	Woodland walk (deciduous)	Walking man and deciduous tree
T145	T141	Outdoor pursuits centre	Walking man climbing rocks
T146	NT161	Roller skating	Roller skate

Symbol No.	Old No.	Type of Attraction	Description
T147	T138	Skating	Ice skate
T148	T140	Dry ski slope	Downhill skier
T149	NT159	Ten pin bowling	2 bowling pins
T150	NT160	Birds of prey	Owl in flight
T151	T148	RSPB bird reserve	RSPB bird symbol
T152	T147	Centre recognised by the 'Rare Breeds Survival Trust'	Cattle head
T153	T146	Safari Park	Lion
T154	T149	Battlefield site	Crossed swords
T155	T150	Brass rubbing centre	Armoured person
T156	T155	Pier	Pier
T157	T153	Museum of historic buildings	Half-timbered house
T158	NT158	Garden centre	Potted plant
T159	NT162	Cinema	Film projector
T160	T134	Arts theatre	Comedy mask
T161	T151	Tram museum	Vintage tram
T162	T152	Bus museum	Vintage bus
T163		Cricket ground	Cricket stumps
T164		Tower or folly	Tower
T165		Lighthouse open to the public	Lighthouse
TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN WALES ONLY			
T401		Tourist attraction recognised by Wales Tourist Board	Dragon – always faces left
T402		Museum or art gallery	Building with pillars
T403		Property in the care of CADW	CADW symbol

<p>TOURISM SIGNING APPLICATION FORM</p>
--

1. APPLICANT		
1.1	Name	
1.2	Address Postcode
1.3	Tel No.	
1.4	Fax No.	
1.5	Is the facility recognised by the Wales Tourist Board	Yes/No If yes, please enclose evidence to this effect

2. APPLICANT		
2.1 Name of destination		
2.2	Address of destination <i>(if different from 1.2 above)</i> Postcode
2.3	Please describe your attraction/facility/operation	
2.4	If a facility please state type <i>(accommodation, pub, hotel, sports etc)</i>	
2.5	Dates and times of opening	
2.6	Current visitor numbers per annum.	

2.7	If available, please show the breakdown of the visitor numbers into the following categories: (i) UK holiday visitors (ii) Visits from home (day trips) (iii) Overseas visitors
2.8	Please indicate how visitor numbers are recorded or, if not, basis of estimation
2.9	Are any official signs or unauthorised signs already erected Yes/No

3. PARKING	
3.1	Does the destination have parking? Yes/No
3.2	If yes is it On Site <input type="checkbox"/> Off Site <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity <input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	Is the off site parking owned by you? Yes/No
3.4	If no is it: Private <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	If the off site parking is not a public car park or is not owned by you, does the operator have any objection to your visitors being signed to their car park? (Please enclose written confirmation from landowner) Yes/No
3.6	Approximately how far is the off site parking from the property?
3.7	Is the parking (on or off site) suitable for use by coaches?

4. PROMOTION AND MARKETING	
4.1	How do you promote your establishment to the tourist market? <i>(Please tick box as appropriate)</i> Local Guides <input type="checkbox"/> Local Tourist Information Centre <input type="checkbox"/> National Newspapers <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brochures/Leaflets <input type="checkbox"/> • Direct Mail <input type="checkbox"/> • WTB/LA Marketing Campaign <input type="checkbox"/> • Exhibitions <input type="checkbox"/> National Journals <input type="checkbox"/> Local TV/Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>

4.2	Are you a member of a tourist association or other professional or regulatory body?	Yes/No
4.3	If yes, please specify	
4.4	Does your attraction participate in the scheme or equivalent 'Star Attraction'?	Yes/No
4.5	Please enclose copies of any promotional material	

5 GENERAL FACILITIES

5.1	If not provided as an integral part of the main function of the business, please indicate which of the following additional facilities are also available and give details		
	A	Facilities for people with disabilities.	Yes/No
	B	Toilets	Yes/No
	C	Café/Restaurant	Yes/No
	D	Accommodation	Yes/No
	E	Educational or Information	Yes/No
	F	Retail outlet	Yes/No
	G	Sporting facilities	Yes/No
	H	Picnic Areas or Tables	Yes/No
	I	Other	Yes/No

6 SYMBOLS

6.1	If you consider that more than one of the approved symbols indicated in Appendix D of the guidance notes may apply to your destination please indicate the reference number	
-----	---	--

7 ACCOMMODATION

7.1	Is your accommodation approved by WTB, AA or RAC. Please supply details.	Yes/No
-----	--	--------

8 PUBLIC HOUSES		
8.1	Do you serve meals, other than just bar snacks at lunchtime?	Yes/No
8.2	Do you serve meals, other than just bar snacks, in the evenings.	Yes/No
8.3	Can you cater for children indoors?	Yes/No
8.4	Do you provide accommodation?	Yes/No
8.5	If yes, do you have an Inspection Certificate from WTB, AA or RAC?	Yes/No

9 RESTAURANTS		
9.1	Can customers obtain a meal without pre-booking	Yes/No
9.2	Do you have a full A La Carte or other menu arrangements in place	Yes/No
9.3	Do you provide waiter/waitress service?	Yes/No
9.4	Do you have an inspection certificate from WTB, AA or RAC	Yes/No

10 RETAIL OUTLETS		
10.1	Do you depend predominantly on tourists for your revenue	Yes/No
10.2	In addition to the main retail side of your business do you provide additional facilities of interest to visitors	Yes/No
10.3	If yes, please specify	Yes/No

11 DECLARATION

1. I wish to apply for the consideration of tourism signing at
and confirm that all the information given above is correct to the best of my knowledge.
2. I enclose a cheque for the amount detailed in Appendix C, made payable to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council as a non-refundable charge to cover the cost of the initial processing of this application.
3. I understand that even if my application initially qualifies, the Highway Authority may refuse signs at the detailed design stage for road safety, traffic management or environmental reasons.
4. I understand that if I withdraw my application after I have accepted a written quotation, I will become liable for the full costs of any abortive works.

Name..... Signature

Date

Return to: Head of Engineering
Traffic Management Section
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Ty Keir Hardie
Riverside Court
Avenue De Clichy
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8XF