

Advertising on the Highway



Advertising boards and vehicle advertising on the highway
A practical guide for businesses and highway users



SURREY

Introduction

The following guide has been produced to provide a reasonable balance between commercial needs and the needs of highway users, and to confirm the conditions where advertising boards on the highway will be permitted without compromising safety for highway users.

By introducing this approach it will not be necessary for traders to apply for licences to place an advertising board, but their co-operation in observing and abiding by the conditions of this guide will be essential.

It is important that the number, size and positioning of advertising boards are regulated. If not, then they can create hazards for the highway users particularly for those with impaired vision, mobility problems, the elderly or those with young children.

All advertising boards on the highway are obstructions, however those displayed in accordance with the conditions below will be acceptable to the Authority. Items placed in breach of these conditions may be viewed as unreasonable and could be subject to the procedures described in section 4.

Freestanding Advertisement Boards

The following conditions ('a to z') apply to the placing of freestanding advertising boards on the highway and must be met in all cases. For the purposes of this guidance, public highway includes carriageway, footway and grass verges maintained by Surrey County Council.

Any other structure not covered in this guide is not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, displays, newspapers stands and other shaped advertising features.

General conditions

- a) All other alternate ways of advertising the business should be considered first, including signage attached to the business premises, displayed in the shop window, or safely on private land.
- b) Only one advertising board will be permitted per premises, even where in multi-occupation.
- c) Any advertisement must relate only to the normal business of the trading establishment and placed outside the business being advertised.
- d) All advertising boards must be temporary in their nature so that they can be easily removed, that is, require no excavation to install or remove.
- e) All signs and boards must not cause a visual distraction or obstruction to vehicle sight lines or block visibility for highway users.
- f) Signs and boards must not have a detrimental effect on the fabric of the highway.
- g) All signs and boards must be removed when the premises to which they relate are closed.

- h) All signs and boards must not be displayed when there is snow or ice on the pavement¹, in order to prevent a hazard and to assist those clearing pavements.
- i) Any advertising boards will be the owner's responsibility when placed on the public highway and the Highway Authority will not be liable for any injury or damage caused to highway users.
- j) All businesses are responsible for dealing with claims for damage to property or personal injury caused by or arising from advertising boards that are displayed on the highway. If legal liability is established, businesses will be responsible for any compensation awarded in respect of a successful claim. Compliance with these guidelines will not relieve you of this responsibility and you are therefore required to have a policy of public liability insurance in place with a limit of indemnity of not less than £10 million in order to deal with any such claims that may arise.
- k) All District/Borough Council planning authority approvals and/or Building Regulation consents must be obtained.

Conditions about placement of the Advertising Board

- l) Advertising boards must be able to be easily detected by the visually impaired and negotiated by those with mobility difficulties or using wheelchairs.
- m) Advertising boards must not be fixed to lampposts, bollards, seats or other items of street furniture.
- n) All advertising boards must not be located within 2.0 metres of any other permanent or temporary sign, pillar, post, item of street furniture, other display or the edge of the carriageway.
- o) All boards must be located alongside the edge of the shop/business frontage (the local area highways team can in rare cases grant special permission for other locations on the highway).
- p) A clear pavement width of 2.0 metres is required (in some cases a minimum clear width of 1.2 metres may be permitted by the local area highways team). In pedestrianised areas² the minimum clear width is increased to 3.5 metres.
- q) All signs and boards must take into account the other needs of the area e.g. bus stops, pedestrian crossings, etc. in relation to their positioning.
- r) In areas of high volume pedestrian flow, e.g. near schools or in certain pedestrianised areas, the placing of advertising boards may not be allowed. The local area highway team or their representative will make this decision.
- s) On pavements, all advertising boards must not be placed within 2.0 metres of any tactile paving or within 2.5 metres in pedestrianised areas.

¹ For the purposes of this guidance the 'pavement' is the area of the highway reserved for pedestrians (also known as the 'footway').

² A pedestrianised area (for the purposes of this guidance) is an area where the entire width of the highway is reserved entirely for pedestrians – for example a pedestrian shopping precinct.

Conditions about the board – dimensions and design

- t) Advertising boards must be no wider than 800mm and no higher than 1000mm above ground level (see Figure 1).

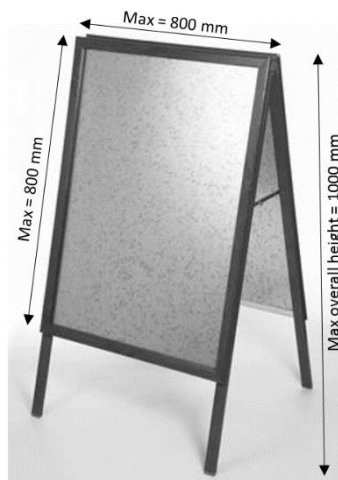


Figure 1: A-Board showing maximum dimensions

- u) No single advertisement on the advertising board may exceed the area, 800mm by 800mm.
- v) No character or symbol on the advert may be more than 0.75m in height or 0.3m in an area of special control.
- w) Rotating or swinging signs will not be permitted.
- x) All items must be presented in an attractive, professional manner, and the content of the advertisement must not be offensive.
- y) Signs and boards must be stable and not represent a potential danger to any highway users.
- z) Advertising boards must not have anything attached to them – for example, balloons or flags.

Events, markets and filming on the highway

This guide may be temporarily suspended at any time when an authorised event or authorised special activity is taking place (or due to take place) and an ‘Advertising Board curfew’ introduced. Every attempt will be made to provide notice to those businesses affected. The notice to businesses should include the start and end time of the curfew.

Summary

The County Council or its agents as the Highway Authority may require the immediate removal of any feature if requested by a Police Officer or with other reasonable cause including the need for access to maintain the highway. In addition, nothing within this guide limits the powers or duties of the Highway Authority under the Highways Act 1980 and other legislation.

Vehicle Advertising

The parking of a vehicle on the public highway primarily for advertising purposes is not permitted. For the purposes of this guidance, public highway constitutes, carriageway, footway and grass verges maintained by Surrey County Council or its agents.

This guidance applies to any vehicle displaying an advertisement of a product or service whether adapted for advertising or not (for example, this may just be a single vehicle advertising 'cash for cars' or similar parked by the side of the road or sometimes the vehicle may have advertising signs attached to the roof or have a trailer attached to the back).

Such use of the highway is considered an unreasonable obstruction and these vehicles (and/or a trailer) may be removed by the County Council if not removed by their owners having been requested to do so.

Any vehicle, (including all vehicles deemed to be used primarily for advertising purposes which encompasses caravans and trailers) if not removed following a polite request will be removed by Surrey County Council Highways by means of a third-party contractor and will be securely stored pending recovery or disposal.

All costs associated with the removal and storage of such vehicles must be paid by the owners of the vehicle.

Except in an emergency when the County may act without prior notice one warning notification will be given to offending parties before the recovery is undertaken.

Process for the removal of advertising boards

Following complaints, or as part of a routine inspection, we will check to see if advertising boards comply with this guidance.

We want to keep the pavements safe, accessible and attractive to all road users and will make reasonable requests wherever we feel the guidance is not being adhered to. The owner may be requested to remove or reposition the board in accordance with this guide.

Any advertising board which does not comply with this guide may be removed from the highway and retained. We will remove items under common law powers, and this may be done without notice.

If the problem persists, the Highway Authority may serve notice that the objects be removed before eventually seeking a Magistrate's removal and disposal order in respect of the items.

Any advertising boards removed from the highway will be taken to the nearest Surrey Highways depot and stored outside.

Owners of advertising boards which have been removed can reclaim their property, using our [online reclaim form](#). Surrey Highways will recharge for expenses incurred by storing such items. If the items are not collected within a period of one month they may be disposed of.

Further information

For further information, please contact us using one of the following methods:

- Phone: 0300 200 1003
- [Online form](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/report-a-highway-problem): <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/report-a-highway-problem>
- SMS: 07527 182861

Modifications, alterations or amendments

The procedures and requirements specified within this guide may be modified, altered or amended at any time.