

# **Surrey Highways Signs Policy**

Updated: July 2022



**SURREY**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

**Contents**

1) Introduction and legal background ..... 3

2) Decluttering..... 4

3) Regulatory signs ..... 4

4) Warning signs ..... 4

5) Direction signs ..... 4

    Requests for Local direction signs..... 5

6) Boundary signs ..... 5

7) Brown tourist signs..... 6

    Tourist destinations ..... 6

    Leisure facilities ..... 6

    Minimum criteria for brown tourist signs ..... 7

    Costs ..... 7

    Sign locations ..... 7

8) Pedestrian signs ..... 8

9) Areas of Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas..... 8

10) Temporary Signs to special events ..... 9

11) How to make a request for new or replacement signs ..... 9

12) Further contact..... 10

13) Other related policies ..... 10

## 1) Introduction and legal background

Surrey County Council provides road signs necessary for safe and efficient navigation of the road system. This policy contains key principles for responding to requests for new signs, and reflects safety, environmental and business concerns together with the opportunities for local decision making.

The type of signs included in this policy include;

- Regulatory signs
- Warning signs
- Direction Signs
- Local direction signs
- Boundary signs
- Tourist signs
- Pedestrian signs
- Signs in Areas of Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas
- Temporary signs to special events



The Council recognises the importance of accurate, appropriate signing for safe navigation to a range of destinations. At the same time, we must also balance the genuine need for signs to assist highway users, alongside the aim to de-clutter the highway of unnecessary signs. Over-provision of signs can have a detrimental impact on the environment, can dilute important messages and can distract drivers.

The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 ([TSRGD](#)) is the current Department for Transport (DfT) document which prescribes which signs can lawfully be used on the public highway in England, Wales and Scotland.

This policy has been designed in accordance with the TSRGD, and is used by Highways Engineers, supported by guidance in the [Traffic Signs Manual](#), in deciding what signs should be provided in Surrey.

## 2) Decluttering

Surrey County Council supports decluttering, in line with the [DfT's traffic advice \(PDF\)](#) published in 2013, and the [2011 Traffic Signs Policy Paper, 'Signing the Way' \(PDF\)](#).

This is to ensure that road users are not distracted from important information by unnecessary signs, to reduce visual intrusion and to minimise maintenance costs.

## 3) Regulatory signs

Most regulatory signs are the means of putting into practical effect an order or regulation. For example, such orders may impose restrictions on speed, on the turning of traffic at a particular junction or on waiting. The purpose of regulatory signs is to ensure that drivers clearly understand what restrictions or prohibitions are in force.

Surrey County Council will provide signs where Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) are imposed in accordance with regulations and guidance from the Department for Transport. Replacement signs will also be funded by Surrey County Council.

Where replacement signs are required due to damage caused by a third party, the Council will carry out the repair and seek to recover costs from the third party (if known) under the 'Damage to County Property' (DCP) process. This also applies to warning signs and direction signs.

## 4) Warning signs

Warning signs are used to alert drivers to potential danger ahead. They indicate a need for special caution by road users and may require a reduction in speed or some other manoeuvre. An example of a warning sign is a bend sign.

Appropriate warning signs can greatly assist road safety. To be most effective, however, they should be used sparingly. Their frequent use to warn of conditions that are readily apparent tends to bring them into disrepute and detracts from their effectiveness.

Each request for new warning signs will be treated on its own merits, taking into account various factors including conditions at the particular site, the history of collisions involving personal injury and available funding.

## 5) Direction signs

**Direction signs can be categorised as follows:**

- Advance Direction Signs – those signs giving route information in respect of a junction ahead.
- Direction signs – those signs placed at a junction and pointing along specific routes

Colour coding is one of the most important aspects of direction signs. Blue backgrounds are used on motorway signs, green backgrounds on primary routes and white backgrounds on other roads.

### **Requests for Local direction signs**

Where traffic management and safety benefits can be demonstrated and funding allows, Surrey County Council may provide signs to:

- Transport Interchanges – e.g. bus stations, railway stations
- Hospitals
- Visitor facilities (e.g. car parks, tourist information centres)
- Concentrated areas of single land use (e.g. industrial estates, science parks, town centres, and out-of-town retail parks over 10,000m<sup>2</sup>)
- Community facilities, for example council offices
- Police and fire stations
- Preferred lorry route signing
- Cycle route signing

### **6) Boundary signs**

Boundary signs will only be allowed at:

- The County boundary
- District or Borough Council boundaries
- The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty boundary
- Village, Parish or town boundaries

## 7) Brown tourist signs

Surrey County Council may allow vehicle and/or pedestrian signs to defined tourist destinations or leisure facilities where traffic management and safety benefits can be demonstrated. Signs will not be provided where the primary purpose is to advertise the destination.

### Tourist destinations

TSRGD 2016 defines a “tourist destination” as a permanently established attraction or facility (other than a leisure facility) which:

- a) attracts or is used by visitors to an area;
- b) is open to the public without prior booking during its normal opening hours, and;
- c) is recognised as a tourist attraction or facility by the appropriate national promoter of tourism which for Surrey is [Visit England](#)

To be eligible for a new sign:

- all 3 of the above criteria need to apply;
- the engineers also need to be satisfied that there are traffic management and safety benefits;
- the applicant needs to bear the full costs of installation and maintenance

### Leisure facilities

Leisure facilities, unlike tourist destinations, do not require recognition by the appropriate National promoter of tourism. TSRGD lists the leisure facilities which are eligible to have a brown sign. Surrey County Council is unable to consider signs for all listed destinations, but the table below outlines which facilities may be, or will not be, considered.

Signs which may be provided	Signs which will not be provided
Public Sports centre	Public Houses
Cricket / Football / Rugby ground	Light refreshment facilities
Race course	Restaurant
Viewpoint	Hotel or other overnight accommodation
	Youth hostel
	Camping site
	Caravan site
	Golf course
	Cinema
	Garden Centres

All requests for signs not listed above will be assessed on its own merits and must also meet the minimum criteria.

### **Minimum criteria for brown tourist signs**

Tourist destinations meeting all 3 criteria, or leisure facilities, must also meet Surrey County Council's minimum criteria.

- Tourist signs are not to advertise a facility but to help safe navigation to it
- The cost of providing, maintaining and removing these signs will be met wholly by the promoter/funder
- The proposed sign should direct visitors to the parking facilities rather than the destination
- On-site parking must be available to meet peak demand
- If parking is not available, pedestrian signing from the nearest public transport link or public car park will be considered. The cost of this must be met by the applicant. (Note: Surrey County Council are not obliged to provide such signs if they are not already in existence)
- Must be open to the public without prior booking during its normal opening hours
- The provision of a sign under this policy does not guarantee the provision of the sign in perpetuity.
- Signs installed under previous policies will only be maintained or replaced if they meet the criteria in this policy. The cost of this must be met by the applicant.
- If this policy changes in the future, we cannot guarantee to maintain signs provided under the terms of this policy.

### **Costs**

The cost of assessing, designing, making and erecting signs must be met by the applicant.

There is a non-refundable charge to cover the cost of the initial assessment of this application. Please see our website, and application form, for the current charge. If your application is successful, the Highways Engineer will advise you of the further costs.

The cost will vary depending on numbers, size and location. Typical costs range from £100 for a sign on a rural lane to £6,000 on a dual carriageway, where a large part of the cost is for traffic management, for example a lane closure to ensure the safety of the operatives putting up the sign.

Where a sign requires replacement through wear, damage or theft, the full cost must be met by the attraction/facility operator. Cost estimates will be provided.

If a request for a sign meets all criteria, the applicant will be expected to provide funding in advance of the County Council ordering the sign.

### **Sign locations**

Sign locations will be considered on a case by case basis; this is likely to be from the nearest major road. In line with our support of decluttering, the number of signs will kept to a minimum.

## **8) Pedestrian signs**

Surrey County Council works with local District and Borough councils to provide pedestrian signing where required. Pedestrian signs may be provided for the following;

- Public toilets
- Sites of interest
- Walks i.e. river walk
- Police stations
- Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Tourist information Centres
- Public parks

This is not an exhaustive list, nor does it confirm automatic provision of a sign.

## **9) Areas of Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas**

Surrey County Council will encourage the use of locally sensitive materials for the construction of directional road signs within special landscape areas (conservation areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), provided that the overall cost to the council for installation and maintenance does not exceed the cost of providing equivalent standard road signs.

Surrey County Council will not fund special signing over and above the cost of provision and maintenance of standard traffic signing.

More information relating to the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty can be found on the [Surrey Hills AONB guidance on protecting and enhancing the rural character of country lanes \(PDF\)](#).



## 10) Temporary Signs to special events

We may permit temporary traffic signs to events where substantial extra traffic is generated, causing congestion or a possible road safety hazard.

A substantial amount is considered to be more than 400 vehicles per day attending the event. We may consider a lower number in exceptional circumstances. This does not confirm automatic provision of a sign.

Full details can be found on the separate policy on our website:

[Temporary Signing /Signs for special events](#)

## 11) How to make a request for new or replacement signs

If you would like to request a new **tourist sign**, please fill out and return our application form, along with the application fee.

The current application fee can be found on the following page: [Highway fees and charges](#)

The application form is available upon request; please [contact us](#) for a copy.

If you would like to make a request for **any other type of sign**, whether it is new or a replacement, please submit an enquiry to us through the online forms on our website:

[Tell us about a highway issue](#) (for requesting a new sign)

Highways Engineers will use this policy to determine if any requests can be granted, and the provision of the sign is subject to available funding.

## 12) Further contact

For any further queries, please contact us at the following:

🖥️ Web: [www.surreycc.gov.uk/highways](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/highways)

☎️ Phone: 0300 200 1003

✍️ Address: Surrey County Council  
Hazel House  
Merrow Lane  
Merrow  
Surrey  
GU4 7BQ

## 13) Other related policies

Surrey Highways have a number of separate policies to cover other signs which are not covered under the DfT guidance in TSRGD. Details of the other policies can all be found on our website using the following links:

- [Roundabout Sponsorship opportunities for local businesses](#)
- [Temporary Signing /Signs for special events](#)
- [Bunting and banners \(Road permits and licences\)](#)
- [Advertising boards \("A-Boards"\)](#)
- [Illegal Signing on the Public Highway / Fly Posting](#) (Gov.uk website)