

Eligibility criteria for business, education, leisure and parish signs

02 December 2024

The information provided as part of this eligibility criteria should be read together with our Guide for Applicants document.

Please note:

- Anyone making an application for signs will be required to complete the application form, supply supporting information as requested and pay a non-returnable fee for the application to be considered. This fee is retained whether the application is successful or not, to cover administration costs.
- Eligibility does not confer automatic entitlement for direction / tourist signs. Decisions on signing individual establishments will depend on local circumstances, including the number of other similar establishments in the area.

All applicants

Note: There is a presumption in favour of pedestrian and cycling signing unless there is overriding evidence of a need for highway signs.

Eligibility criteria

- Adequate on-site parking must normally be available. Where off-site parking is provided this must be within a reasonable distance of the facility.
- The applicant must not have erected any advertising signs at / near the location of the proposed signs and must remove any existing off-site signing (the applicant will be responsible for the cost of removing any advertising signs).

- Facilities must be adequately advertised by methods other than road signs, including location, opening times, facilities, etc. These advertisements should include clear details of the location of facilities and provide clear directions. Where there is appropriate public transport access, this must be adequately advertised.
- The facility must have necessary Planning Permission.
- Front of house staff must have undertaken adequate Customer Care training (either through a recognised training provider, or adequate in-house training programme).

Supporting evidence required

- If the car park is not owned by the applicant, written confirmation from the owner of the car park that this is acceptable is required.
- Details of target markets, evidence of publicity and details of distribution – such as copies of leaflets, adverts, website promotion, etc.
- Evidence of above promotional materials including location map.
- Proof of Planning Permission (only required if facilities have been established for less than 10 years).
- Evidence that Customer Care training has been undertaken – for example training certificates, details of courses undertaken, programme of in-house training, etc.
- Any road safety benefits of signing.

Category A: Visitor attractions

Including historic houses, museums, gardens and arboreta, craft and wildlife centres, etc.

Note: English Heritage and National Trust properties are already eligible for tourism signs and are therefore exempt from the need for recognition as a bona fide tourist attraction.

Eligibility criteria

The attraction:

- Must attract a minimum of 5,000 visitors per year unless the need can be clearly demonstrated on road safety and traffic management grounds.
- Must be able to demonstrate that a substantial proportion of visitors are attracted from outside the local area.
- Must be open for a minimum of 6 consecutive months between March and October every year, including 24 weekend days within that period.
- Must sign up to the VisitBritain Visitor Charter (a Code of Practice for visitor attractions throughout the UK. More details are available from the Regional Tourist Board, Southwest Tourism).

Supporting evidence required

- Evidence of annual visitor numbers.
- Evidence of the source of visitors. In the absence of visitor research or even a visitor's book it can be hard to demonstrate this. In these circumstances SGC will take a view on this, bearing in mind the information supplied in the rest of the Application.
- Details of annual opening times.
- Evidence that the attraction has signed up to the Visitor Charter through the Regional Tourist Board.

Category B: Serviced accommodation

Note: Serviced accommodation catering for long term residents which are therefore in effect hostel type houses in multiple occupation are NOT eligible.

Eligibility criteria

- Must be in a remote rural location or off the main tourist routes.
- Must participate in a nationally recognised Quality Assurance Scheme, such as VisitBritain, AA or RAC and preferably be listed as a country club and have conference facilities.
- Must have at least 10 separate rooms to therefore have sufficient vacancies for tourists passing through the area.
- Must comply with the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations and Food Safety Act 1990.

Supporting evidence required

- Written evidence of an up-to-date Quality Assurance Scheme grading.
- Up-to-date evidence that meets Food Safety Regulations, such as confirmation of Council Environmental Health Inspection.

Category C: Retail establishments

For example, garden centres, retail parks, business/industrial estates, etc.

Note: Business names will not be used as this constitutes advertising. Generic naming will be used, for example Retail Park.

Eligibility criteria

- The facility must be able to demonstrate that a substantial proportion of visitors are attracted from outside the local area.
- Individual businesses will not be signed unless in a remote rural location with access NOT off a main road.
- The facility should have adequate toilet facilities and be able to offer light refreshments where appropriate.

Supporting evidence required

Evidence of the source of visitors.

Category D: Recreation/sports centres

For example, golf courses, racecourses, swimming pools, etc.

Eligibility criteria

The facility:

- Should be open for at least 100 days per year for at least 400 hours during that period.
- Should be open to non-members within normal opening hours and, where necessary, equipment should be available for hire.
- Should have adequate toilet facilities and be able to offer light refreshments where appropriate.

Supporting evidence required

- Evidence of major events held and number of visitors attending.

Category E: Youth hostels

Eligibility criteria

- Facilities must be open without the need for prior booking during normal opening hours.
- Hostels managed by the Youth Hostel Association may be granted tourism signs with the YHA symbol. Other hostels may be signed, but not with the YHA symbol.

Supporting evidence required

- Evidence that it is managed by the YHA, if appropriate.

Category F: Camping and caravan sites

Note: Facilities which require booking will not be eligible for signing.

Eligibility criteria

The site must:

- Either participate in a nationally approved Quality Assurance Scheme, such as VisitBritain or AA.
- Or be under the membership of the Caravan Club or Camping and Caravanning Club.

Also, the site:

- Should have at least 20 pitches for casual overnight use by touring caravans.
- Must be open to non-members without the need to pre-book.
- Must be licensed under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and/or the Public Health Act 1936.

Supporting evidence required

- Evidence of up-to-date Quality Assurance Scheme grading or membership of the Caravan Club/ Camping and Caravanning Club.
- Details of facilities offered on-site, including number of pitches.
- Evidence of up-to-date licensing.

Category G: Tourist information centres

Eligibility criteria

- The tourist facility must be recognised by the Regional Tourist Board in order to be signed with the recognised symbol.

Note: Tourism signs for recognised strategic Tourist Information Points and Centres will normally be provided by the local authorities.

Supporting evidence required

- Up to date evidence of recognition by Regional Tourist Board.

Category H: Bypassed communities – local services

Note: Bypassed Community Tourism Signs will NOT be eligible if the destination is already signed as a primary destination using standard directional signing.

Eligibility criteria

The community:

- Must usually be a small town or village with a population of less than 10,000.
- Must offer a variety of services to visitors from outside of the local area. These might include adequate parking and public toilets (both must be clearly signed within the community), public telephones, shops and/or refreshments.
- Must be within 3 miles of the road from which the services are to be signed and be the first community reached after leaving that road.

Please note:

Adequate confirmatory and return signing must be provided.

Supporting evidence required

- Up to date evidence of the population of the community.
- Details of the services offered within the community.
- Map detailing location of the community in relation to the road from which the services are to be signed.
- Details of existing or proposed confirmatory and return signing.

Category I: Educational establishment

Including colleges, further education facilities, and training centres, etc.

Eligibility criteria

- The facility must be able to demonstrate that a substantial proportion of visitors are attracted from outside the local area.

Supporting evidence required

- Evidence of the source of visitors.
- Evidence of Modeshift STARS accreditation

Category J: Public buildings

Including village halls, community centres, etc.

Eligibility criteria

- The applicant must be able to demonstrate that a substantial proportion of visitors are attracted from outside the local area.

Supporting evidence required

- Evidence of the source of visitors.

Category K: Places of worship

Including Churches, Chapels, Mosques, etc.

Eligibility criteria

The place of worship:

- Must be of recognised historical importance.
- Must be able to demonstrate that a substantial proportion of visitors are attracted from outside the local area.

Supporting evidence required

- Evidence of the source of visitors.
- Evidence of historical importance

Category L: Village / Town / Parish

Eligibility Criteria

- All Town and Parishes are eligible

Supporting Evidence required

- Map detailing location of the signage
- Photo of any logos or icons required
- Photos of existing Village / Town / Parish Signs of which you wish your signage to be like.