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# Dorset Highways Community Signs policy

Ref. No.	
Category:	
People	
Place	Yes
Corporate	
In Constitution	

## Policy Details

What is this policy for?	<p>This policy describes how Dorset Council supports community facilities in Dorset by authorising the installation of suitable signs that guide those wishing to visit an approved facility via the most appropriate route. These signs are not advertisements.</p> <p>Approved facilities include schools which are also used for community purposes, doctor surgeries / medical centres, churches / places of worship, village halls, police and fire stations and other public buildings.</p> <p>The policy objectives outline how Dorset Council can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aid the journeys of those wishing to visit a facility by guiding them along the most appropriate route.</li> <li>• ensure that signing is of a scale and quality in keeping with the environment.</li> <li>• ensure that sign content is consistent and appropriate in line with national standards and other policies of the Council.</li> <li>• ensure that all costs associated with community sign applications are recovered.</li> <li>• minimise risk of discrimination against any equality group when signs are placed on the highway.</li> </ul>
Who does this policy affect?	Community facilities, residents, road users
Keywords	<p>Signs Communities Highway Community Visiting Environment</p>
Author	<p>Name: Michael Westwood Job title: Community Highway Manager Tel No: 01305228167 Email: michael.westwood@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</p>
Does this policy relate to any laws?	<p>Traffic Signs Regulations &amp; General Directions 2002</p> <p>Section 65 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984</p> <p>Traffic Sign Regulations and General Direction 2016</p>

Is this policy linked to any other Dorset Council policies?	
Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)	<b>Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)</b> Not required as no material changes to the policy
Other Impact Assessments	<b>Financial Implications</b> None identified as part of the changes  <b>Climate implications</b> None identified as part of the changes  <b>Risk Assessment</b> None identified as part of the changes  <b>Well-being and Health Implications</b> None identified as part of the changes

## Status and Approvals

Status	Live	Version	
Last review date	June 2021	Next review date	June 2023
Approved by (Director)	John Sellgren Executive Director of Place	Date approved	30 June 2021
Member/ Partnership Board Approval	Councillor Ray Bryan portfolio holder Highways Travel & Parking Environment & Wellbeing	Date approved	30 June 2021

# **Dorset Highways**

## **Community Signs Policy**



### **Policy Statement**

Dorset Council is supporting community facilities in Dorset by authorising the installation of suitable signs that guide those wishing to visit an approved facility via the most appropriate route. These signs are not advertisements.

Approved facilities include schools which are also used for community purposes, doctor surgeries / medical centres, churches / places of worship, village halls, police and fire stations and other public buildings.

**Policy Authorised by:** DCC EOC and Cabinet

**Date of Authorisation:** Oct 2014

**Policy update to Dorset Council authorised by portfolio holder.**  
**Date: 30/06/2021**

## **Community Signs Policy**

### **Policy Objectives**

- To aid the journeys of those wishing to visit a facility by guiding them along the most appropriate route.
- To ensure that signing is of a scale and quality in keeping with the environment.
- To ensure that sign content is consistent and appropriate in line with national standards and other policies of the County Council.
- To ensure that all costs associated with community sign applications are recovered.
- To minimise risk of discrimination against any equality group when signs are placed on the highway.

### **Key Influences**

- Community – to direct users to facilities offering services for the community.
- Environmental – to ensure that service signing is in keeping with the environment (especially in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Heritage Coast and conservation areas).
- Dorset Rural Roads Protocol – to ensure appropriate signs in rural locations.
- Traffic Management – to aid the smooth flow of traffic to facilities, particularly for infrequent users.
- Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002 and subsequent amendments.
- Equalities Act 2010.

### **Legal Basis**

There is no statutory duty for a highway authority to erect community signs.

Section 65 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives the County Council (as Highway Authority) the power to erect signs which are specified in the Traffic Sign Regulations and General Direction 2016 as amended. This power must be exercised in accordance with the Highway Authority's duty to protect the rights and safety of members of the public using the highway.

## **Community Signs Policy**

### **Definitions and Scope**

Community signs are traffic signs and their purpose is to guide those wishing to visit a community facility along the most appropriate route. The signs are **not** advertisements. For the purposes of this policy a community facility is defined as a permanently established destination or facility which provides a community function to an area and which is open to the public.

### **Inclusions**

- Schools – offering a community function, such as sports facilities available for public use.
- Doctor's surgeries/medical centres.
- Churches/places of worship.
- Village halls.
- Police and fire stations.
- Other public buildings.

All applications for signing from trunk roads to facilities located on non-Trunk Roads should be submitted to the Council.

### **Exclusions**

- Retail establishments.
- Facilities covered by the Tourism Sign Policy.
- Community facilities located on trunk roads (i.e. the A31 and part of the A35) which should be referred onto the Highways England.
- Community facilities located on A and B class roads, except where there is a Traffic Management need.

All applications for signing from trunk roads to facilities located on trunk roads should be submitted to the Highways England.

Existing community signs that do not meet the current policy criteria may be retained for the duration of their useful life (normally 10 years from new).

## **Community Signs Policy**

### **Outline of Process**

Requests for community signing made to the Council will be managed in three stages:

#### **1. Assessment of Application and Detailed Design**

The County Council encourages potential applicants to initially discuss their case with the Traffic Engineering team verbally to assess the general viability of the application.

If the application appears to meet the broad criteria, prospective applicants will be required to submit a completed application form and supporting information for assessment. This will result in a definitive response, as well as an indication of a likely programme for implementation and probable costs.

A fixed, non-refundable charge will be made by the Council for processing the initial application, regardless of whether the application is accepted or rejected by the Council or whether the applicant chooses to proceed or not. This is made clear on the application form. The agreement should be signed by the applicant.

The time taken to process such applications may vary depending on the complexity of the application and the availability of resources. Every case is different and other work may take precedence over sign applications, so some applications can take months rather than weeks.

If an application is accepted, the response will include a detailed design of the scheme, an indication of a likely programme for implementation and an estimate of costs for the provision and erection of signs and production of necessary documents.

If an application for signing is rejected, in full or in part, the applicant will be given a detailed explanation of the reason for refusal.

Approval for signs will depend on whether the authority considers that they will be helpful for road safety or traffic management reasons. This in turn will depend on factors such as the amount of existing signing on the roads in question. The decision on signing is entirely at the discretion of the Council as highway authority, there is no automatic entitlement for signage to a community facility.

## **Community Signs Policy**

### **2. Provision of Signs**

Signs can be supplied and installed by the Council.

A fee will be charged by the Council for this work. The supply and installation of signs will not normally be undertaken until the associated costs have been received by the Council.

Alternatively, with the approval of the Council, applicants may arrange for signs to be supplied and installed by approved Contractors to the specifications and requirements laid down by the Council. Installation shall only be carried out under Council supervision and by an approved Contractor with public liability insurance cover of at least £5m.

A fee will be charged by the Council to supervise this work.

All applicants should identify a single person or body who will be responsible for signing the application and enter into any subsequent agreements on behalf of them.

Any such representative will be required to confirm that they have the authority of all the applicants when they sign the application or other agreement.

### **3. Maintenance and Replacement**

All future maintenance costs will be met by the applicant. These include cleaning, replacement and repair of fixings, replacement of signs following accidental damage, theft, general deterioration and removal of signs where the facility has ceased to meet the standards under which the signs were provided.

The cost of replacing any signs due to damage or theft, except where the Council can make claims against known third party insurance, will be met by the applicant.

Applicants are strongly urged to insure themselves against this eventuality.

The cost of amending existing signing to add new facilities will be met by the applicant for the new facility.

The useful life of a sign is in the region of 10 years. The applicant will be required to

### **Community Signs Policy**

meet the cost of replacement signs in due course. Applicants may choose not to meet the cost of replacement, in which case the sign will not be replaced. The applicant will still need to meet the cost of removal.

### **4. Ownership**

Regardless of who meets the initial cost of installation, all signs will become and remain the property of the Council. The Council may remove signs if the criteria for signing no longer apply, or relocated if changes in signing are required for road safety or traffic management reasons. The Council will be responsible for the cost of the relocation, although the original applicant will remain responsible for the on-going maintenance of the relocated sign in accordance with the provisions of section 3.

### **Related Documents**

Community Signing Agreement Form

Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002 as amended by:

Traffic Signs (Amendment No 2) Regulations and General Directions 2011

Traffic Signs Manual, Chapter 8

Equality Impact Assessment Screening Record

Dorset Rural Roads Protocol

### **Measures of Effectiveness**

Measures of effectiveness include:

- Number of complaints/comments associated with community signing.
- Number of enquiries relating to community rechargeable signs.
- Efficiency of cost recovery for administration, design and maintenance of community rechargeable signs.
- Records that demonstrate consistent application of this policy across the county