

Thorn Depot
Unit 3, Thorn Business Park
Rotherwas, Hereford
Herefordshire HR2 6JT
01432 261800

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Summary of guidance in respect of signs placed within the highway boundary in Herefordshire

There has been a significant increase recently in the number of businesses placing illegal signage on the highway. This signage includes temporary advertising for events, directional signage and A-boards. The Highways Act 1980 specifies offences relating to activities on the highway, imposes duties on the Council and also gives the Council powers to enforce its responsibilities.

Herefordshire Council understands the need for local events and businesses to advertise and wish to support this as much as possible. However, it is important to maintain a balance between highway safety and supporting the local economy. Whilst the Council has tolerated some unauthorised signs in the past due to the benefits to local communities and tourists, it is imperative that any signage placed on the highway by businesses does not obstruct visibility or create a distraction to road users.

Whilst Herefordshire Council reserves the right to take legal action in connection with any unauthorised sign, it is unlikely to pursue matters where signage meets the following conditions:

1. The sign must not constitute an obstruction or a hazard to highway users including pedestrians.
2. The sign must not be erected in any area that constitutes a visibility splay for junctions or accesses, and it must not obstruct drivers' sight lines at bends.
3. The size, detail described, number, and/or positioning of the sign must not unduly distract drivers' attention.
4. The sign must not be erected at any site that has a significant collision history during the last 10 years as advised by the Council's transportation accident investigation team.
5. The sign must be constructed in such a way that it does not represent a danger to vehicles that might collide with it.
6. The sign face must be manufactured on a suitable lightweight material such as Correx, wood, or ply and must not exceed 10mm in thickness.
7. The sign face must be no larger than 0.27 sq m, such as 900mm by 300mm, and must be securely attached to a stake no larger than 50mm by 50mm in thickness and firmly placed in the ground. The top of the sign must not exceed 1 metre in height above ground level.
8. The sign must not be affixed to street furniture without obtaining prior written permission of the Council.
9. The sign must not be erected more than 21 days in advance of an event, and must be removed no later than 7 days after. Any damage to the highway or apparatus within it caused by the sign's presence must be made good to the satisfaction of the Council, who may seek to recover the costs of remedial works if any damage to the highway is not made good.

If these conditions are not met and it is deemed that signage placed on the highway is a potential safety risk, action will be taken by Balfour Beatty, on behalf of Herefordshire Council, to rectify this.

In the first instance, and where practically possible, contact will be attempted by a Locality Steward with a business owner or event organiser to advise of the concerns surrounding signage they have erected and to request the signage is altered, relocated or removed.

In instances where action is not taken to remedy concerns despite a request being made by the Locality Steward signage will be removed. Where a significant safety issue is identified or where a Locality Steward has not been able to contact the business owner or event organiser, the sign may be removed without prior notice. Signage removed from the highway by Balfour Beatty will be retained at one of our depots for collection by the owner. Any item not collected within one month will be disposed of.

Further information on signage can be found on Herefordshire Council's website at the following address:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/road-signs-and-markings#tourist>