

BROWN SIGNS CAN YOU FIND US?

Your attraction may be outstanding have all the right component parts for the ideal visitor experience but if people can find you then you could be losing visitors...but how do I get brown signs?

There is much confusion over Brown Signs and it is often thought that the local planning authority deals with Brown Signs, this is not the case, any proposal or application for Brown Signs is dealt with by the local highways authority on local roads (roads other than motorways and trunk roads). If you are wishing to place Brown Signs on motorways or national trunk roads then you will have to consult with the Highways Agency. Separate guidance is available for attractions within the M25.

How do I know if my attraction qualifies?

Firstly it is important to know that Brown Signs are regulated under the *“Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002”* Regulated by the Department for Transport.

The first step to qualifying is whether you fit the definition of a tourist destination and this is defined as *“A permanently established attraction or facility which attracts or is used by visitors to an area and is open to the public without prior booking during its normal hours”*

If you fit the above criteria then the next step would be to contact the Home Traffic Authority within the local highways agency if you require signs on local roads and request their local guidelines for signs. This document normally states that you are open for a minimum period throughout the year, you advertise in local tourist guides, your attraction is accredited and that you have adequate car parking and visitor facilities. Criteria will of course vary between counties and it is vital to contact your local authority in the first instance.

If you require signs off of a motorway or trunk road then the criteria states that the attraction should have a minimum of 250,000 visitors per annum or

100,000 per annum with further criteria stipulated on the number of signs and their location.

What Next?

If after the above has been considered or preferably you have met with either the highways agency or local authority then you will be required to make an application together with a fee (The fee and all associated costs if approved must be paid by the applicant). Simply put approval will depend on whether the authority agrees with your need and whether the signs will be helpful for road safety and traffic management. The number of signs will also be decided by the authority and it is important to note that you have no right of appeal.

Finally once a sign is installed and whilst you would have paid for it the sign once installed it will be the property of the Highways Authority!