



# Tourist Signposting Research Final Report

Prepared for  
Scottish Road Research Board

April 2014

**CH2MHILL®**



# Document history

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This document has been issued and amended as follows:

| Version | Date     | Description                           | Created By | Verified by | Approved by |
|---------|----------|---------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1       | 14/03/14 | Draft for Issue                       | A Page     | N Vemmie    | E Crawford  |
| 2       | 25/03/14 | Draft Final for Issue                 | N Vemmie   | N Vemmie    | E Crawford  |
| 3       | 31/03/14 | Draft Final, emailed to Working Group | N Vemmie   | N Vemmie    | E Crawford  |
| 4       | 14/04/14 | Final                                 | N Vemmie   | N Vemmie    | E Crawford  |

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Introduction

Tourism is vital to Scotland, and is one of Scotland's key economic contributors, with overnight visitors generating £4.3 billion and day visitors contributing a further £4.7 billion in 2012, giving a total spend of around £9 billion in 2012 (figures from Scottish Government OCEA, 2014). Tourism annually attracts 15 million overseas visitors (*VisitScotland: Delivering for Scotland*), and accounts for around 181,500 jobs (SG OCEA 2014) many in rural areas, helping less populous communities to prosper across many thousands of different tourism-related businesses, predominately SMEs, while also feeding into other sectors such as food and drink, retail, transport and construction.

According to Transport Scotland's policy on tourist signposting (*Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy and Guidance*, 2006), the purpose of tourist signs, also known as brown signs, is to "provide clear and consistent directions for visitors enabling them to reach their destination safely and minimising the likelihood of drivers making dangerous manoeuvres". This is an important factor in road safety and reduces the problems that visitors may face when trying to find their way in an unfamiliar area. They can also provide directions to particular tourist routes and trails.

The current Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy and Guidance sets out how applications for tourist signposting on the trunk road and motorway network are dealt with and what signing is permitted. The guidance is commended to local authorities and most have adopted local policies that largely conform to its principles.

## 1.2 Objectives

The main objectives of this research were to:

- Respond to the questions/concerns raised by the Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism;
- Arrive at conclusions and recommendations based on the research carried out to improve tourist signposting in Scotland.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 Introduction

The scope of the research work was to look at all issues around tourist signposting (including the cost of providing signs) and compare Scotland's approach with that undertaken elsewhere in the UK, the Republic of Ireland and internationally. A key element of the research was to elicit the view of a diverse range of stakeholders within the tourism sector, including large and small operators, VisitScotland, Historic Scotland, Scottish Local Authorities' interests including transportation, planning and economic development, Transport Scotland, Trunk Road Operating Companies (OCs) and others as appropriate. The research picks up on the work carried out over the last 10 years by the National Tourist Signposting Working Group, chaired by VisitScotland with representation from all key stakeholders.

### 2.2 Methodology

The first step was to undertake desktop research, where a review was carried out of existing national and local Scottish policy and guidance documents, as well as policies and guidance documents from the rest of the UK and internationally. The key points from each document were entered into an evidence based database.

Out of all the Scottish policies received, or local authorities contacted:

- Twenty one Local Authorities have their own policy (with varying levels of information provided);
- Seven Local Authorities do not have their own policy, and rely on Transport Scotland's policy; (East Dunbartonshire, Edinburgh Council, Glasgow Council, Inverclyde Council, North Lanarkshire Council, West Dunbartonshire Council, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar or Western Isles Council)
- The remaining four Local Authorities were contacted but no information regarding their policy if they have one has been provided.

Based on the information received only seven of the local authorities' policies pre-date the 2006 Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy and Guidance.

A full list of documents reviewed is contained in Appendix A.

The next step was to elicit information from stakeholders within Scotland. This was done through a structured workshop day involving a diverse range of key stakeholders taking part in breakout sessions to identify key issues, areas for improvement and the viability of solutions/recommendations. A list of the stakeholders can be found in Appendix B.

At the end of this workshop, a working group was formed with six people from different organisations who would represent a cross-section of all the stakeholders, to hold more in-depth discussions at two follow-on meetings. The findings from the research and potential improvements were discussed at these working group meetings, and the conclusions incorporated into this report. Additional contribution from the working group came from their responses to a list of questions and potential improvements that arose out of the desktop research. Further details of the workshop and working group meetings are contained in Appendix C.

## 3 COST TO THE TOURIST OPERATOR

The costs involved in the manufacture and erection of brown tourist signs are the same as the costs that apply to all other types of traffic signs. Brown tourist signs are also regulated by the same Statutory Instruments and British and European standards that apply to traffic signs generally.

### 3.1 What elements combine to make up the total cost of signing?

The cost elements that make up tourist signposting are shown below in Figure 3.1. The variables for each element are shown in brackets.



Figure 3.1 Elements and variables that make up the cost of signposting

The various elements of tourist signposting are described in more detail below.

#### Design

##### Size and character of signs

Brown tourist signs are traffic signs and as such their size and character in Scotland as in the rest of the UK are regulated by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRDG). It is worth noting that TSRDG is due to be relaunched in 2015. Scottish Ministers have some powers under the TSRDG to prescribe additional signs of a different character, however these powers are limited and would not extend to new types of tourist signs. Power to amend the TSRDG is currently reserved to the UK government.

The size of the sign is governed by the amount of lettering to be shown, which in turn is governed by the speed of passing traffic. For example, traffic on a motorway passes at a higher speed and requires much larger lettering than a sign on a local road. This can have a significant effect on the size of the sign. Once the

height and width of the sign are established, the number and size of posts and their foundations can be designed. Larger signs require a greater number of posts and larger foundations than smaller signs.

### Content of the sign

The messages or symbols that can be included on brown tourist signs is likewise prescribed in the TSRGD. This extends to the number of destinations permitted on a single direction sign.

The use of symbols on Scottish signs is limited to the official thistle symbol and six other specific symbols in addition to twelve generic symbols from TSRGD Schedule 14.

There were discussions at the stakeholder workshop about whether more symbols could be used on tourist signs in Scotland, but the general consensus was that they did not feel there was a need to have more or different symbols compared to what is currently being used in Scotland.

The number of destinations on a sign is limited by the TSRGD. The maximum number of tourist attractions or facilities that can be on one sign is five on all purpose trunk roads and three on motorways. For non-trunk roads, most Scottish Local Authority policies state that a maximum of four tourist destinations are allowed on one sign.

## **Manufacture**

### Materials and construction

All traffic signs erected on roads in Scotland must comply with BS:EN 12899-1:2007, 'Fixed Vertical Road Traffic Signs' (BS:EN 12899) which specifies the requirements in respect of materials used, retro-reflectivity, performance limits and structural requirements for signs complete with posts under static and dynamic loading. Provision is made in BS:EN 12899 for the safety of sign assemblies in use, including vehicle impact.

### **Installation - Erection**

#### Poles and materials

The performance requirements of posts and materials used for supporting signs is covered in BS:EN 12899. Amongst other things, signs have to be able to withstand the maximum wind loading expected (dependent on their location) and must have a sufficient foundation, normally of mass concrete.

#### Traffic management

Any work on or beside live road carriageways carries inherent risk to both road users and the operatives undertaking the work. Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual (TSM) sets out the requirements for traffic management for different situations, taking account of factors such as road type, speed limits, traffic volumes and safe working areas.

Traffic management costs vary depending on the type of road, the level of traffic and how many locations require traffic management for the signs to be safely erected. If the signs are to be on a motorway, or dual carriageway, the traffic management costs can be significant, compared to a rural road.

#### Need for impact protection

Where signs to be erected on a high speed road and are of sufficient size to warrant their erection on posts over 89mm in diameter, impact protection needs to be considered either in the form of safety barriers or through the use of passive safe posts, which are designed to fail safely in the event of a vehicle impact. Both of these can add significant cost to the sign installation.

## Maintenance and Removal

Maintenance costs vary depending on how the roads authority arrange maintenance. Some roads authorities include tourist signs when they are maintaining other traffic signs and make no specific charge. Maintenance costs vary depending on the life of the sign. The costs for removal will vary depending on how the removal is organised. Some roads authorities indicate that they wait until other work is being carried out in the vicinity in order to keep costs down.

Because of the future nature of these costs and the many variables involved it is difficult to factor these into a one-off charge to the applicant, and it has been found that some roads authorities do not charge for these items for that reason.

## Cost Distribution

Figure 3.2 shows the approximate cost distribution of the elements that make up a typical medium sized signposting scheme. The size of the box surrounding each cost element indicates its proportion of the overall cost. As shown, traffic management and installation make up the majority of the costs associated with any signposting scheme.



Figure 3.2 Sign cost elements

## Costs in Scottish Policies

The Scottish Policies generally lack clarity on costs. Some do provide an indication of one of the cost elements, but not the total cost involved, while other policies remain silent on this issue. Most policies lack an explanation of the components making up the overall cost. Discussions at the working group concluded that this would be useful information to improve the tourist operators understanding.

## 3.2 Who is responsible for paying these costs?

Currently, Scottish policies state that individual tourist operators are responsible for the costs involved in the manufacture and erection of brown tourist signs to their premises on public roads in Scotland.

It was noted during the Stakeholder workshop, that some roads authorities will provide sign design services (i.e. the design of the signs to the level of detail needed for manufacture) free of charge, while some charge



the applicant for these services. Some roads authorities as part of their service can provide the applicant (i.e. if the applicant so wishes) with details of approved sign manufacturers who are competent in traffic sign design and provide design services at market rates. Some roads authorities charge an application fee while others do not.

The erection of tourist signs is usually carried out by the local authorities' in-house contractors, or on trunk roads by the Operating Company; however it is not uncommon for the applicant to be provided with details of approved private contractors who can carry out the work to the proper standard at the market rate.

### **3.3 What are the total costs and benefits of tourist signing per annum?**

The benefits to the Scottish economy of all aspects of tourism are well documented and undisputed. As part of this research, consideration was given to quantifying the total cost of tourist signing in Scotland in an average year as well as the possibility of estimating the economic value derived by tourist operators from having tourist signing in place.

The intended purpose of this was to establish a very basic economic basis for considering different funding models and to inform decision makers on new possibilities for funding tourist signing.

However, due to the lack of information on the costs of tourist signing held or available from authorities across Scotland, quantifying the total costs in an average year proved to be beyond this research. In future, if the roads authorities collect cost data over time, it should be possible to ensure that this information is readily available, in which case consideration should be given to quantifying costs and benefits associated with tourist signing across Scotland.

### **3.4 Are there ways to reduce the costs to tourist operators?**

Stakeholder discussion during this project has provided anecdotal evidence of costs varying widely. In many cases, the overall cost of tourist signing is dependent on the number of signs requested by the applicant. These costs can often be reduced significantly if the tourist operator is prepared to make use in their PR literature of existing signing to nearby towns or villages (such as, "follow signs to...") with the brown signs picking up drivers from that point onwards. The research found that most local authorities will suggest such strategies to operators when discussing their application.

In the course of the research it has been suggested that the costs involved in the design, manufacture and erection of tourist signs could be significantly reduced if tourist operators were able to make their own arrangements for the design, manufacture and erection of signs. However, current policies already allow tourist operators to make their own arrangements (indeed some local authorities and particularly trunk road operating companies actively encourage it) and no evidence has been found to suggest that significant cost savings can be made either way.

The manufacture and installation of tourist signs are required to meet minimum standards (as detailed in Section 3.1) for reasons mostly related to safety and also to meet the quality expected for businesses who meet VisitScotland standards. Even if roads authorities were able to accept a relaxation of these standards, it is likely to have consequences for road safety and may in some cases, negatively affect durability (whole life costs increase when materials of a lesser quality require replacement more often).

Recognising that this would represent a fundamental change in policy at both national and local level, stakeholders nevertheless suggested exploring whether there were circumstances which merited that the costs of providing tourist signs be met from public funds rather than by individual tourist operators.

## 4 ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION PROCESSES

### 4.1 Who is eligible for tourist signs?

Transport Scotland's and the local authorities' policies note that the current eligibility criteria for tourist attractions and facilities in Scotland to obtain a tourist sign are that it shall be a permanently established tourist attraction or facility which:

- Attracts or is used by visitors to an area;
- Is open to the public without prior booking;
- Is a recognised attraction / facility by VisitScotland;
- Is part of a recognised quality assurance scheme.

The policies note that tourist signposting is not a substitute for marketing and require that attractions have a current brochure with opening times and other key information including a map and directions.

A list of types of attractions and facilities are provided in the various policy documents which give an indication of the types of attractions/facilities eligible for tourist signposting.

Even if an attraction or facility is eligible for tourist signposting its application may not be successful for a variety of reasons, some of which are listed below:

- The purpose of the signs is for advertising and not to guide tourists to the destination;
- It is not safe to put up tourist signs at the specified location;
- Existing tourist sign already holds the maximum permitted number of tourist destinations, therefore leaving no space for an additional destination (see section 3.1).

### 4.2 How and to whom do they make an application?

In Scotland the application for tourist signs is made to the Home Traffic Authority (HTA). The HTA is the roads authority responsible for the main access route to the tourist destination. The HTA provides a single point of contact and liaises with other roads authorities if required. The HTA is either a local authority for local roads, or the Trunk Road Authority (Transport Scotland) for trunk roads or motorways. Transport Scotland has delegated the responsibility for dealing with each application to the OCs through the Trunk Road Operating Contracts. Where applications are for both local roads and trunk routes, the resident local authority acts as the HTA.

Where the most appropriate route involves more than one roads authority then approval is required from each authority where signs will be placed. Acceptance by one authority does not guarantee acceptance by other authorities.

A number of the Scottish Local Authorities' policies, as well as Transport Scotland's policy, provide a flow chart illustrating the application process, which is useful for tourist applicants.

Figure 4.1 shows the typical steps involved during the application process for tourist signposting. It demonstrates, among other things, that if more than one roads authority is involved, the process for signposting takes longer.

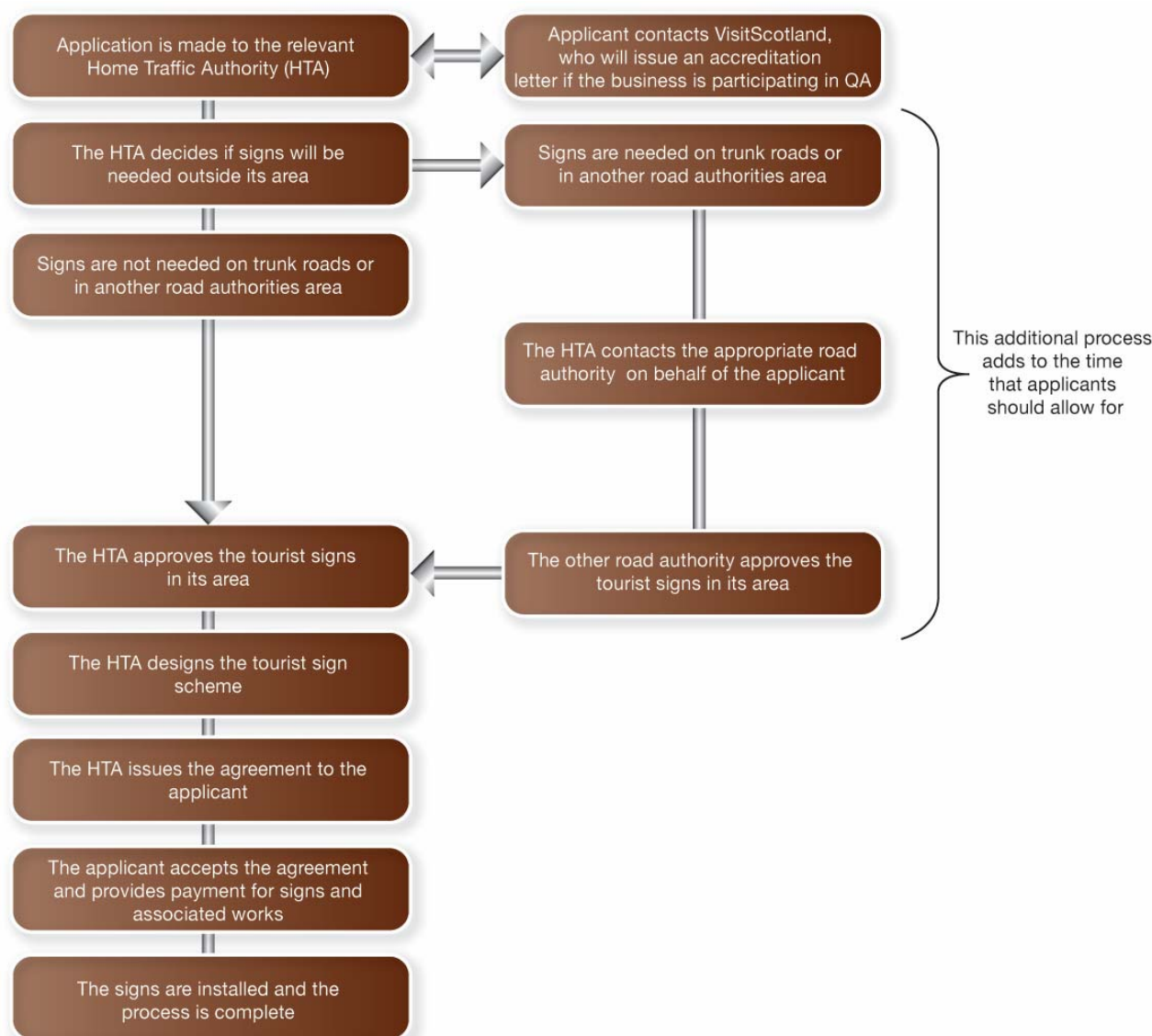


Figure 4.1 Typical Application Process in Scotland for Tourist Signs

The applicant is expected to read the relevant local authority's tourist signposting policy or Transport Scotland trunk roads and motorways tourist signposting policy in advance of making an application. VisitScotland's website contains useful information including an advice guide on applying for tourist signs.

Of the Scottish Local Authority policies reviewed, a number of the policies direct the applicant to write to VisitScotland before applying to the HTA. VisitScotland's role is to issue an accreditation letter confirming the businesses participates in QA which they are required to have as part of the eligibility criteria in the Transport Scotland Policy to enable them to apply to the relevant authority for signs. Some local authority policies advise the applicant to seek guidance on their eligibility before applying and that the relevant roads authority can check eligibility and advise the applicant of the outcome.

VisitScotland receives many applications and queries each year regarding joining their quality scheme. In 2013, they:

- Issued 114 accreditation letters;
- Handled 150 queries from tourism businesses;
- 28 queries from local authorities;
- 11 queries from TROs/Transport Scotland);
- Handled 60 withdrawals;
- Dealt with Member of Scottish Parliament (MSP)/ Member of Parliament (MP) queries.

This gives an indication of the scale of the tourist signposting business in Scotland.

### **4.3 Is the current application process efficient?**

Feedback from the stakeholder workshop undertaken during this research project revealed that some businesses felt the application process is daunting, and that there is a lack of consistency between roads authorities when dealing with applications. Also, it was felt there can be a lack of communication during the process between the roads authority and the applicant, particularly with regards to timescale.

Not many of the Scottish Local Authority policies indicated how long the process of tourist signposting took; those policies that did recommended that the applicant allows at least three months.

From the roads authority point of view, some of the process is out of their control, such as when they have to deal with another roads authority, and it is difficult for them to give an estimate of time for the whole process. The process can become protracted when two or more roads authorities are involved in a single application. In addition, the local authorities in particular are often resource-constrained, leading to delays in the application process.

On the other hand, some stakeholders feel that the application process undertaken by the HTA is generally working well.

## 5 COMPARING SCOTLAND WITH ELSEWHERE

### 5.1 Does Scotland differ from the rest of the UK?

#### Cost

In terms of cost, Scotland does not differ greatly from the rest of the UK. A major difference is that grants are available in Wales from Visit Wales for tourist signs on motorways and trunk roads to partly cover the cost. However, Visit Wales is part of the Welsh Assembly Government and is not a stand-alone Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) like in Scotland (VisitScotland) and England (VisitEngland). VisitScotland is funded primarily by grant-in-aid from the Scottish Executive Education Department, whereas Visit Wales is funded through central government funding.

The Welsh policy provides a breakdown of all the elements, similar to those listed in Section 3 above, making up the total cost of tourist signposting, and which allows the applicant to more fully understand the cost estimate supplied to them.

#### Eligibility and Application Processes

The eligibility criteria for policies reviewed in the rest of the UK is very similar to that in Scotland. Both England and Wales share the same eligibility criteria for tourist signposting, including the requirement to be quality assured by VisitEngland or Visit Wales. Northern Ireland also has very similar eligibility criteria, and the tourist applicant needs to be a member of an approved Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) quality scheme.

The application processes in the rest of the UK are also very similar to Scotland. The Welsh policy provides an application process flow chart, unlike some of the Scottish local authority policies, and a link to the appropriate website with the application form.

### 5.2 What happens in the Republic of Ireland?

#### Cost

The NRA Tourist and Leisure Signage Policy states that for the Republic of Ireland “White-on-brown tourist and leisure signage for approved attractions will be provided and maintained by the National Roads Authority as part of scheduled re-signing programmes in respect of national roads.” For any signs that are outside of these scheduled programmes, the tourist applicant is responsible for all the costs.

#### Eligibility and Application Processes

Eligibility criteria is similar to that of Scotland, but the NRA Tourist and Leisure Signage Policy has additional criteria. Retail establishments (including garden centres and shopping centres) are not eligible for tourist signs on the national road network, and likewise leisure, retail and music establishments in urban areas are also not eligible.

The tourist signposting policy by the NRA is for motorways, national primary routes and national secondary routes. The policy does not cover national primary and secondary routes in towns and urban areas with speeds less than 50Km/h. Each local authority (either county council or town/city council) is the roads authority within their jurisdiction, with the NRA providing funding and standards advice (the NRA itself is not a roads authority in the legal sense of who is responsible for the roads). Therefore as the NRA have no policy for urban areas where speed limits are less than 50km/h, it is the local authority who provides the guidance. Generally the local authority follow advice as established by NRA, otherwise each council follows its own policy. As there is not a national policy for tourist signs in such areas, signage policy tends to vary from one local authority to the next.

The NRA’s policy contained no information about the application process.

## 5.3 Are there better approaches internationally?

On the whole, this research did not necessarily find “better” approaches internationally, but there are some differences, and there are some aspects from which the tourist signposting process in Scotland may be able to learn.

### Cost

On the whole, applicants in other countries are also responsible for the total cost of tourist sign provision.

Some of the policies from Australia and America provided information on the costs of the signs, including cost ranges and a breakdown of cost elements.

### Eligibility and Application Processes

Eligibility criteria for tourist signs in other countries are also similar to Scotland, but some countries have additional criteria.

Areas of similarity between Australian and Scottish policies for eligibility for tourist signposting are:

- Facility/attraction to be open and operating;
- No pre-booking required;
- Facility/attraction to have a current brochure with opening times and other key information.

As with the Scottish policies reviewed, a general list of attractions is provided to give an indication of eligible attractions. Also each attraction has its own specific criteria in addition to the general criteria, and again this is similar to Scottish policies.

The application process is explained in the United States’ policies reviewed and includes a set response time to applications, detailing the prerequisites and a copy of the application form. If signage is approved then it is for a four year period which can be extended for an additional four years after which a new application is required.

Australian policies reviewed explain the application processes both in text and with the use of a flow chart. A copy of the application form is included in the document as well as the dispute resolution process. If approval is granted for the signs it is for a seven year period.

One of the Australian policies reviewed (the Victoria policy document) provides information on the application process including a set response time for accepting or refusing the application (14 days), a link to the website with the form and flow chart of the process. If the application is accepted then the tourist signs are approved for five years before a new application is required.

The South Australian policy provides details on the process (including an initial response time of 28 days), a copy of the application form and a flow chart illustrating the application process.

Applications for tourist signs in Sweden are done through an online application form.

Tourist signs in Norway are regulated by “Regulations on public traffic signs, road markings, traffic signals and instructions (sign regulations)”, from the Ministry of Transport, but it is not clear whether there is a tourist sign policy in the way that other countries have. The Norwegian Tourism Strategy gives some guidance on the type of symbols, or logos, that can be used, and by which organisations. It appears that the Norwegian Public Roads Administration (NPRA), which has five regional administrations, is responsible for tourist signs in Norway.

### Summary

There are aspects of tourist signposting policies from countries outside of the UK and the Republic of Ireland, that could be considered in Scotland, including;

- Provide in the policies a breakdown of costs to illustrate what is involved in putting up a tourist sign;
- All policies to provide an application flow chart to explain the process to applicants;
- Provide more information on timescale of the whole process;
- Provide an online application form.

## 6 POSSIBLE FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

### 6.1 Can the cost to tourist operators be reduced?

There is not much scope to reduce the cost of tourist signposting to tourist operators, unless some or all of the cost is transferred elsewhere, either to the roads authority or to central government. As can be seen in Section 3.1, there are a number of regulations which govern tourist signs (and other signs), reducing the scope to use, for example, cheaper materials, or relax the traffic management requirements.

### 6.2 What benefits arise from changing established policies and practice?

Through extensive discussions with a diverse range of stakeholders, the current system of providing tourist signs in Scotland, although well established, is viewed by some as being less than satisfactory. As noted in Section 4.3, stakeholder discussions concluded that the main perceptions were that some applicants find the application process daunting, there is a lack of consistency between policies, there is a lack of communication/transparency, operators can sometimes find the process to be slow, and the cost to tourist operators can vary significantly.

Refreshing or reviewing tourist sign policies could have several potential benefits, including providing tourist operators with a clearer understanding of the process. The following text describes how each of the issues identified above could be addressed.

#### **Application Process Too Daunting**

- Include application flow charts to explain the process to applicants;
- Include examples of signing schemes;
- Consider the effectiveness of Transport Scotland and Local Authority tourist signposting policy documents;
- Include frequently asked questions (similar to FAQs in VisitScotland 'Guide to Signposting for the Tourist Trade');
- Include case studies.

#### **Lack of Consistency**

- A review of all Scottish policies could address any inherent inconsistencies.

#### **Lack of Communication/Transparency**

- Inclusion of application flow charts help applicants to understand the process;
- Encourage roads authorities to provide frequent updates to applicant;
- Provide an indication of timeframe.

#### **Operators Perceive the Process to be Slow**

By addressing the communications issues noted above, applicants should be more aware of the process and hence should be more understanding of the time taken.

#### **Cost Varies Significantly**

As noted in Section 3, each signing scheme will always be unique with the various factors contributing to the overall cost and as such costs will always vary to some degree. However, by addressing the communications/transparency issues noted above and including cost breakdown details, it should be possible to improve the applicant's understanding of the cost factors involved.

An online application form or online application system on the relevant roads authority's website could speed up the application process. The system could be set up to include many of the refinements noted above. In addition, an online tracking system linked to the application flow chart could help applicants check the status of their application, and help with internal management of applications. Although on a different



scale, 'ePlanning' has been a success story for online planning applications, which almost all local authorities have adopted. A central online application system had been discussed with stakeholders, but it was felt that there were potential deliverability issues. However roads authorities could individually adopt an online system.

### **6.3 Are there opportunities to find new ways of funding tourist signing?**

In Wales, partial funding towards the cost of providing tourist signs on motorways and trunk roads is available from Visit Wales (which is part of the Welsh Government), funding is limited and each application will be assessed individually on its merits by Visit Wales. In the Republic of Ireland, tourist signing is provided by the National Roads Authority if it qualifies as part of a scheduled re-signing programme in respect of National Roads. In Scotland, it was noted by stakeholders that grants or loans are available to small businesses for other things, including innovation grants, investment grants, loans/grants to improve energy efficiency and waste management, but no such grants are currently available for tourist signs in Scotland. In the event that alternative funding models were examined, the eligibility criteria for such funding would need to be considered. The types of eligibility criteria suggested could possibly include the size of the business (for example, smaller businesses get proportionally more funding), and/or the distance of the attraction from the main road/trunk road.



## 7 CONCLUSIONS

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Tourism is vital to Scotland's economy and tourist signing performs a vital support function by safely and efficiently directing visitors to tourist attractions, thus connecting supply and demand.

### 7.1 Constraints due to statutory or regulatory obligations

Tourist signposting in Scotland is constrained by a number of statutory or regulatory obligations, as discussed in Section 3, including the type of symbols that can be used, the use of materials for both the sign and posts, and the number of tourist destinations allowed on one sign. Traffic management regulations and requirements are also a constraint, which is seen as one of the biggest components of the overall cost of providing tourist signs, particularly on trunk roads and motorways.

These obligations constrain the ability to radically alter the composition and arrangement of tourist signs and hence reduce the overall costs of tourist signposting significantly.

### 7.2 Areas where change could be relatively simple in the short term

Roads authorities could start to collect cost data, including what they charge tourist attractions for tourist sign schemes, and include the breakdown of cost elements (i.e. how much for design, manufacture, installation, traffic management). This would help inform future analysis of the total cost of tourist signposting, and whether it would be beneficial for central government to provide support to this part of the tourist industry.

The working group including Transport Scotland believes there is a need to review or refresh Transport Scotland's tourist signposting policy, to make it shorter and less technical. Previously, the Welsh Assembly Government's policy was very similar to that of Transport Scotland, but they have since revised their policy in 2013 to be more succinct and make the process clearer for applicants. There is potential for Scotland to follow suit.

In addition, a review of local authorities' tourist sign policies could be undertaken, to include more clarity to the applicants as noted in Section 6.2 as well as consistency between the different Scottish policies.

### 7.3 Possible longer term changes

A potential longer term change could be for roads authorities to adopt an online application system (central or otherwise) as discussed in Section 6.2.

Subject to the collection of costs data, carry out analysis and consider the merits of providing central funding support to this part of the tourist industry.

### 7.4 Information or data not readily available

Efforts were made to obtain information on tourist signposting in Scandinavia, but this has proved challenging. Limited information is given in Section 5.3 above.

Cost data was difficult to obtain during this project, despite efforts to contact roads authorities to provide costs. Limited information is provided in the policies of some Scottish Local Authorities. Some manufacturing costs were provided by a sign manufacturer, but this is only a small part of the total cost of tourist signposting. However, as mentioned in Section 3, each signposting scheme is unique and each element of cost has a number of variables, and no two signposting schemes will have the same cost to the respective applicants. This makes it difficult for roads authorities to provide an indication of costs in their policy or website. However, perhaps a range of costs for different tourist sign schemes could be provided by roads authorities.

## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

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There are three main recommendations stemming from this research, as described below.

1. A refresh of the Transport Scotland tourist signposting policy should be considered. Subject to an update of Transport Scotland's Tourist Signposting Policy Document being undertaken, local authorities may wish to review their policies. To assist in this process, the local authorities could be provided with guidance and templates for their revised policies.

2. It would be of benefit if local authorities and Trunk Road Operating Companies collect cost data on tourist signposting and costs at the different stages, say over a couple of years, and compile a database of these costs to form a baseline for future assessments.

This could be used to establish a cost benefit analysis for tourist signposting could be undertaken. This would include a more detailed study into the various costs of tourist signs, including design, manufacture and installation across different roads authorities (which would require more involvement from stakeholders over a longer time period), and the identification of the various benefits from tourism signposting. This cost benefit analysis would help inform whether central funding is feasible for tourist signposting in Scotland.

3. Consideration could be given in the future to provide alternative or innovative ways of funding the provision of tourist signing in Scotland.

**Appendix A**  
**List of documents reviewed**

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# Appendix A – List of documents reviewed

| Country  | Document Title   | Document Owner                      |
|----------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Scotland | Tourism signposting policy in Aberdeenshire  | Aberdeenshire Council               |
| Scotland | Tourism Signing Policy<br>Qualifying criteria for the use of White on Brown Tourism Signs in Angus                             | Angus Council                       |
| Scotland | Clackmannanshire Council draft tourist signposting policy  | Clackmannanshire Council            |
| Scotland | Tourism signposting policy, local policy guidelines  | East, South, North Ayrshire Council |
| Scotland | Tourism signposting policy East Lothian Council  | East Lothian Council                |
| Scotland | East Renfrewshire Council use Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley tourist signposting policy                                      | East Renfrewshire Council           |
| Scotland | Falkirk Council – Development Services<br>Roads and Development Unit   | Falkirk Council                     |
| Scotland | Roads and transport, Policy on tourist signposting on roads  | Highland Council                    |
| Scotland | Midlothian Council –Tourist Signposting Policy   | Midlothian Council                  |
| Scotland | Tourist Signposting Policy in Moray October 2013   | Moray Council                       |
| Scotland | Orkney Islands Council tourist signposting policy 2012   | Orkney Islands Council              |
| Scotland | Tourist Sign Posting Policy  | Scottish Borders Council            |
| Scotland | Tourist signposting  | South Ayrshire Council              |
| Scotland | Criteria for Tourist Signing in South Lanarkshire  | South Lanarkshire Council           |
| Scotland | Tourism signposting technical policy   | Stirling Council                    |
| Scotland | The West Lothian Council policy is displayed as web page on the Council's website.   | West Lothian Council                |
| Scotland | Western Isles Council do not have a policy but use Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy and Guidance             | Western Isles Council               |
| Scotland | Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy and Guidance  | Transport Scotland                  |
| Scotland | A Guide to Signposting for the Tourist Trade   | VisitScotland                       |
| Scotland | Feedback to VisitScotland on brown tourism signposting   | Forestry Commission Scotland        |
| Scotland | Schedule of Conditions (accommodation)   | VisitScotland                       |
| Scotland | Schedule of Conditions (attractions)   | VisitScotland                       |
| Scotland | VisitScotland Quality Assurance Scheme - Economic & Business Benefits  | VisitScotland                       |
| Scotland | Quality Assurance 2013 Fees  | VisitScotland                       |
| Scotland | Moray signposting costs  | Moray Council                       |
| England  | A guide to who is eligible for Brown and White Tourism Signs, how to apply and the costs involved                              | Cumbria County Council              |
| Britain  | Advice on traffic signs for tourist businesses in England  | Highways Agency                     |
| Britain  | Authorisation of Traffic Signs   | Department for Transport            |
| Britain  | Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England<br>Guidance for Tourist Signing - General Introduction TA 93/04 | Department for Transport            |

| <b>Country</b>      | <b>Document Title</b>   | <b>Document Owner</b>                  |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Britain             | Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England<br>Guidance for Tourist Signing - Local Roads TA 94/04 | Department for Transport               |
| Britain             | Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions and Facilities in England<br>Tourist Signing - Trunk Roads TD 52/04              | Department for Transport               |
| Wales               | Traffic Signs for Tourist Destinations on Trunk Roads and Motorways in<br>Wales                                       | Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh<br>Government  |
| Northern Ireland    | Tourist Signing in Northern Ireland   | Road Service                           |
| Republic of Ireland | Policy on the Provision of Tourist & Leisure Signage<br>on National Roads   | National Roads Authority               |
| Germany             | German Tourist Signposting policy (translated key sections)   | Sachsen-Anhalt Government              |
| Germany             | German Tourist Signposting policy   | Sachsen-Anhalt Government              |
| USA                 | Indiana Tourist Attraction Sign Policy  | Indiana state                          |
| Australia           | Tourist Signposting   | Transport Roads & Maritime<br>Services |
| Australia           | Road Sign Guidelines  | Government of South Australia          |
| Australia           | Tourist Signing Guidelines  | Vic Roads                              |
| Australia           | Service and Tourist Signing Guide   | Queensland Government                  |
| Australia           | Tourist and Service Signs   | Queensland Government                  |

**Appendix B**  
**List of stakeholders**

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## Appendix B – List of stakeholders

| Name             | Organisation                                |
|------------------|---|
| Yvonne Cook      | VisitScotland                               |
| Tracie Denoon    | VisitScotland                               |
| Marc Crothall    | Scottish Tourism Alliance                   |
| Ian Gardner      | Roslyn Chapel Trust                         |
| Calum Ross       | British Hospitality Association             |
| David Smyth      | Association of Scotland's Self Caterers     |
| Eva McDiarmid    | Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions |
| Hilary Tasker    | Angus Council                               |
| Joe Hawke        | Angus Council                               |
| John Walker      | West Dunbartonshire Council                 |
| James Smith      | Moray Council                               |
| Mari McIntosh    | Moray Council                               |
| John O'Neil      | Dundee City Council                         |
| Mark Skilling    | Aberdeenshire Council                       |
| Kate Pearson     | Scottish Borders Council                    |
| Jim McQuillin    | Scottish Borders Council                    |
| Ann Camus        | Fife Council                                |
| Gillian Fyfe     | COSLA                                       |
| Emma Sinclair    | Tourism and Major Events                    |
| Lynne Veitch     | Tourism and Major Events                    |
| Rosie Wylie      | Historic Scotland                           |
| Robert Eckhart   | Historic Scotland                           |
| David Miller     | Scottish Natural Heritage                   |
| Stuart Edgar     | Transport Scotland                          |
| Susan Love       | Federation of Small Businesses              |
| Ashley Gibson    | Scottish Enterprise                         |
| Chris Taylor     | Highlands and Islands Enterprise            |
| Fiona Murray     | Forestry Commission                         |
| Raymond Walsh    | West Dunbartonshire Council                 |
| Barry Kerr       | Dundee City                                 |
| John Wood        | COSLA                                       |
| George Eckton    | COSLA                                       |
| Hisashi Kuboyama | Federation of Small Businesses              |
| Samantha Elliot  | Scottish Borders Council                    |

## Stakeholders who attended the Workshop

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| Name             | Organisation                   |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Yvonne Cook      | Visit Scotland                 |
| Ian Gardner      | Rosslyn Chapel Trust           |
| Hilary Tasker    | Angus Council                  |
| Joe Hawke        | Angus Council                  |
| John Walker      | West Dunbartonshire Council    |
| James Smith      | Moray Council                  |
| Mark Skilling    | Aberdeenshire Council          |
| Kate Pearson     | Scottish Borders Council       |
| Jim McQuillin    | Scottish Borders Council       |
| Ann Camus        | Fife Council                   |
| Lynne Veitch     | Tourism and Major Events       |
| Rosie Wylie      | Historic Scotland              |
| Stuart Edgar     | Transport Scotland             |
| Susan Love       | Federation of Small Businesses |
| Barry Kerr       | Dundee City Council            |
| John Wood        | COSLA                          |
| Hisashi Kuboyama | Federation of Small Businesses |
| Samantha Elliot  | Scottish Borders Council       |
| Phil Whitfield   | Forestry Commission Scotland   |

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**Appendix C**  
**Details of the workshop and working group**  
**meetings**

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# Appendix C – Details of the workshop and working group meetings

## Tourist Signposting Research - 9th December 2013

### ATTENDEES:

Yvonne Cook (Visit Scotland)  
Hilary Tasker (Angus Council)  
Joe Hawke (Angus Council)  
John Walker (West Dunbartonshire Council)  
James Smith (Moray Council)  
Mark Skilling (Aberdeenshire Council)  
Samantha Elliot (Scottish Borders Council)  
Lynne Veitch (Scottish Government Tourism)  
Rosie Wylie (Historic Scotland)  
Stuart Edgar (Transport Scotland)

Barry Kerr (Dundee City Council)  
John Wood (Cosla)  
Hisashi Kuboyama (Federation of Small Businesses)  
Ernie Crawford (CH2M Hill)  
Nicola Vemmie (CH2M Hill)  
Nicola Blaney (CH2M Hill)  
Dominick Cafferkey (Transport Scotland)  
Andrew Davidson (Transport Scotland)

Phil Whitfield (Forestry Commission Scotland)

### COPY TO:

Kate Pearson (Scottish Borders Council)  
Mari McIntosh (Some local authorities)  
John O'Neil (Some local authorities City Council)  
Emma Sinclair (Tourism and Major Events)  
Robert Eckhart (Historic Scotland)  
David Miller (Scottish Natural Heritage)  
Chris Taylor (Highlands and Islands Enterprise)  
Fiona Murray (Forestry Commission)  
Raymond Walsh (West Dumbartonshire Council)

Tracie Denoon Visit Scotland  
George Eckton (Cosla)  
Marc Crothall (Scottish Tourism Alliance)  
Calum Ross (British Hospitality Association)  
Jim McQuillin (Scottish Borders Council)  
Ian Gardner (Rosslyn Chapel Trust)  
Eva McDiarmid (ASVA)  
Ann Camus (Fife Council)

**PREPARED BY:** blaneyn  
**DATE:** December 11, 2013  
**PROJECT NUMBER:** 483484

The purpose of this summary note is to record the proceedings and key findings from the stakeholder workshop held at the Cosla Conference Centre in Edinburgh on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2013.

### Presentations

Yvonne Cook, of Visit Scotland, welcomed the delegates and outlined the agency's support for this research, while outlining the importance tourist signing contributes to both the sectors development and road safety improvements.

Nicola Blaney, of CH2M Hill, detailed the contribution tourism provided to the Scottish economy in 2012 (£5.2bn and employed approximately 200,000 people) and gave an indication of the potential cost to the Scottish society from road traffic accidents which can be attributed to poorly designed and sited signage.

The context was set by explaining a designer, manufacturer, contractor and roads authorities' conditions of use of signs by UK law under the Traffic Signs and General Directions Regulations (TSRGD) with specific reference to the prescription of the text size on a sign and traffic management requirements. A brief history of the development of tourist signposting policy in Scotland was provided with reference to the Home Traffic Authority (HTA) concept introduced by the Trunk Road and Motorway Tourist Signposting Policy and Guidance revision in 2006.

The aims, scope and methodology of this research were outlined. The aim is to gain a sound understanding of the current approaches to tourist signposting in Scotland and elsewhere in the world, as well as recommending potential improvements for further development. The scope is tight with a deadline of the end of this financial year. CH2M Hill have proposed to undertake an information gathering exercise and desktop review with support of targeted phone call discussions with those involved in tourist signposting in Scotland and the rest of the UK and Ireland, in order to produce a compare and contrast report. The report will also be informed by stakeholder engagement to verify issues from current practices and to determine the feasibility of potential options for improvements with regards to tourist signposting policy, costs, procurement and maintenance. CH2M Hill have identified risks for this piece of research and were outlined to the group:

- Risk of the availability of quantifiable data, and
- Risk of not acquiring all information desired.

The group was also informed that CH2M Hill are aiming to provide a better understanding of the variance in current costs of tourist signposting but will not be a cost benchmarking exercise, as this is out with the scope of this research. There is a on-going gap analysis exercise to manage the identified risks detailed above.

The presentation outlined the current applications methods both for the trunk road and local road networks. Key baseline points were also outlined as follows:

- Applicants required to be recognised by the Visit Scotland Quality Assurance Scheme (Thistle symbol use),
- All Scottish policies reviewed to date state that brown signs are not advertising signs,
- Motorway placement requires minimum visitor numbers,
- Excessive signing and removal is covered in all Scottish policies currently reviewed,
- The HTA is responsible for co-ordinating design and approval but not the installation in other roads authorities,
- Applicants are responsible for the cost of replacement signs when they reach the end of their serviceable life, and
- The applicant is responsible for the sign design, manufacture and all associated installation costs (traffic management/ barriers ect).

Following the first breakout session Yvonne Cook, of Visit Scotland, provided an overview of Visit Scotland's Quality Assurance Scheme, indicating that consumer research has been undertaken which concluded that consumers value Visit Scotland Quality Assurance schemes and use them in the selection process alongside user reviews. Consumers generally describe VS schemes as trusted, credible, delivered by experts, and as 'recognition by the national tourist board.' There are many benefits to participating in the schemes and Visit Scotland provides regular updates to Roads authorities.

Following on from this there was a short presentation on some of the emerging findings from reviewing other countries' tourist signposting policies. Specifically, the Scottish baseline was compared to Wales, Northern Ireland, England and Australia. Generally all the policies are very similar with the few differences (such as visitor number criterion) outlined to the stakeholders.

The day was summarised by CH2M Hill and closing remarks with thanks from Andrew Davidson, Transport Scotland.

## **Breakout Session1**

The aim of the session was to discuss the current state of play, through the use of a "post-it" session and follow up discussion on the following topics:

- Application process/ Policy,
- Eligibility criteria,
- Sign design,
- Cost,
- Procurement, and
- Maintenance.

The attendees were split into 3 smaller breakout groups, as follows:

| Group 1       | Group 2          | Group 3        |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| Yvonne Cook   | Rosie Wylie      | Stuart Edgar   |
| Lynne Veitch  | Hisashi Kuboyama | John Wood      |
| Joe Hawke     | James Smith      | Hilary Tasker  |
| John Walker   | Samantha Elliot  | Barry Kerr     |
| Mark Skilling |                  | Phil Whitfield |

#### Group 1 feedback

Priority given to application is perceived to be how important tourism is to an authority. Additionally not all authorities have a tourist signposting policy and not all are available publically on-line.

The application process is seen as “clunky”. An electronic system would be better.

It is expected that the vast majority of the applications go to local roads authorities and there is no need for the HTA.

At application stage there should be a clear idea of the time required to implement communicated to the applicant. There is also the need for better understanding of costs and that roads authorities do not profit from the applications. There is no consistency with the charge for application and design across Scotland.

It was mentioned that there can be political pressure for non- compliant signs to be implemented.

There is no desire to use English symbols. Some authorities don't have a sign designer.

There are many out of date signs still in use on the road network. There is no consistency across authorities relating to sign removal costs.

It would be beneficial to understand how many roads authorities are affected by looped and stacked signs.

It would be beneficial to understand the aggregate signage cost to Scotland and this may be used to inform decisions where the government could assist.

Small businesses need help with the financial costs of implementing brown signage. Additionally, businesses want a grant/ contribution.

Who owns? Who maintains? Who takes down?

#### Group 2 feedback

It is reported that many businesses feel the application process is too daunting. There is a lack of consistency with each roads authority having its own processes and leads to confusion over which is correct. It is not adopted by all authorities though as it can add to staff costs

Some roads authorities do review their policies and compare it to neighbouring authorities which should assist with consistency issues (Moray recently updated their policy after reviewing Aberdeenshire).

There is differing efficiencies over invoicing which can spread over a number of financial years.

There is a difference in the level of priority given to applications dependant on the personnel involved.

The concept of HTA is generally accepted as working well.

The number of signs implemented is a balancing act:

- Not having too many,
- But enough to adequately sign the destination ,
- Existing signs – review existing,
- Some local authorities Bill operators for taking away Brown signs if no longer part of QA scheme, and
- Visit Scotland notifies the council.

Signage design is generally undertaken by the roads authority but the applicant may do their own but must use an approved designer. Some authorities charge for design cost and others don't. Similarly, some charge an upfront fee where others do not.

Some local authorities give an estimation of cost including design costs. Businesses would be prepared to pay costs if process was easy & streamlined, the bureaucracy is more off putting than costs. Some local authorities has an annual schedule of costs comprising of:

- Design,
- Manufacture,
- Installation including traffic management (TM), and
- Maintenance costs transferred to the operator (not charged for).

Some local authorities send a letter of agreement which includes maintenance.

Roads authorities can implement brown signage in absence of an application.

A local authority within the group use the Scotland Excel contractor framework (recommend it to applicants) and this appears to be working well.

### Group 3 feedback

The HTA concept breaks down at the implementation stage which creates confusion for applicants. Very often applicants will chase up other roads authorities.

There is a lack of customer services. Applicants feel their applications are not a priority and very often there is no communication with the HTA.

A local authority within the group prepare a design package, aim to deliver in 4weeks of receiving application and provide details for Tayside Contracts for installation. Design package is free of charge. It is felt this works well and is an example of good practice.

Policies are not clear on who owns the sign and concerns that out of date signs can be on the network for too long. Policy could also consider what to do in the event of composite signs where only 1 or 2 destinations become bankrupt/ no longer valid for a sign. Also mention that there should be a service level of agreement for maintenance and the life of the sign. There is concern that although there are policies in place there is often political pressure to make exceptions. Also discussion around if there is a need for a

framework/ hierarchy of attractions to help assist with the prioritisation of signage implementation and removal.

The application process needs to be more responsive with much better communication to help the applicant understand the details of each programme of works.

Use of the thistle symbol seems odd as all applicants should have this status. Would be worthwhile undertaking market research to establish how the road users interpret it. Ski centres have expressed interest in having a symbol. It was noted that it may be good to use more symbols (like some of those prescribed in TSRGD for England and Wales).

Forestry commission symbol is being applied incorrectly to signs but is correct in Trunk Road Policy.

There is no pricing structure as it is hard to quantify in advance the cost of an application. This can add to the poor customer service experience – a ball-part indication at application stage would be good practice where possible.

Questions rose over liability if there is an accident attributed to a tourist sign, related to ownership of signs.

Multiple routes to a destination are signed in certain cases. Some local authorities normally sign one route and over time implement more if it becomes obvious that it is necessary.

## Breakout Session2

The aim of the session was to discuss areas for improvement and to identify any examples of best practice. Additionally, to identify members for a smaller working group.

The attendees were split into 3 smaller breakout groups, as follows:

| Group 1      | Group 2          | Group 3       |
|--------------|------------------|---------------|
| Yvonne Cook  | Rosie Wylie      | Stuart Edgar  |
| Lynne Veitch | Hisashi Kuboyama | John Wood     |
| Joe Hawke    | James Smith      | Hilary Tasker |
| John Walker  | Samantha Elliot  | Barry Kerr    |
|              | Phil Whitfield   | Mark Skilling |

### Group 1 feedback

A centralised, electronic system for applications would be a huge step forward with a number of resulting benefits ranging from all authorities able to see all applications, email reminders, data collection and monitoring of the process. Applicants could potentially also check the status of their application.

There was discussion around the criteria for certain town signs on the motorway requiring a tourist information centre (TIC) within it for it to qualify for the sign. It was agreed that in light of mobile technology that the policy should disconnect from this – sign where there are TICs but do not make it a criterion.

It was also noted that policies would be improved by defining the difference between a signs design life and what happens if a sign is damaged through an accident.

It was also discussed that there is a need for legal advice and further clarity on the signs ownership and the liability in the event of an accident or incident.

There was also discussion around the issues that can arise from a number of destinations in the one area all requiring signage and the need to minimise signage clutter. There were discussions touching on the need for

a hierarchy to be defined or even a solution to be developed through materials or intelligent transport systems (ITS).

### Group 2 feedback

Areas for improvement were identified as follows:

- A one stop shop for brown signs for example a website that provides an idea of the design with photos, an estimation of cost and timescales,
- Signs centrally funded or a grant system,
- Application process simplified or standardised at a central level,
- Implementation across all roads authorities co-ordinated so its undertaken within the one programme,
- Introduction of KPIs, quality assurance and more governance across all roads authorities,
- Consideration given to penalties, and
- A complaints system where they are dealt with quickly.

### Group 3 feedback

Areas for improvement were identified as follows:

- Improve communications with applicant with regards to the process, indicative timescales, to help them understand the different design requirements,
- Streamline process – organisation/single system – needs to be re-engineered,
- Consider central funding – would be much easier to manage,
- Grant scheme – should be focussed on those with a certain level of turnover,
- Maintenance Agreement/Service level Agreement – clarification/define existing arrangements,
- Clarity over the issue of ownership/insurance, and
- Consultation with the end user to see how valuable signs are.

Generally the symbol use is accepted as about right at present. They are only effective when they are understood.

## **Research Working Group**

There were a number of nominations from each of the breakout groups in the afternoon. All nominations were presented to the full group and the following group was agreed with the intention of a meeting in the last week of January and February to feed into the research as it progresses:

- Yvonne Cook (Visit Scotland)
- Lynne Veitch (Scottish Government Tourism and Major Events)
- Rosie Wylie (Historic Scotland)
- Hilary Tasker (Economic Development - Angus Council)
- Mark Skilling (Transportation - Aberdeenshire Council)

Eva McDiarmid of the Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions (ASVA) was also nominated by the group as very well placed to represent the views of the tourism business sector, she will be approached after the workshop to ascertain her acceptance of this.



**\*\*Post Workshop Note: Eva McDiarmid has agreed to represent the business sector views within this group.**

**PROJECT NUMBER:** 483484

**MEETING:** SRRB – Tourist Signposting Research  
Workshop Meeting 1

**DATE:** Thursday 30 January 2014, 11am – 2pm

**VENUE:** Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, Glasgow

**PRESENT:** Nicola Vemmie, CH2M HILL  
Andrew Davidson, Transport Scotland  
Dominick Cafferkey, Transport Scotland  
Yvonne Cook, Visit Scotland  
Lynne Veitch, Tourism & Major Events, Scottish Government  
Rosie Wylie, Historic Scotland  
Hilary Tasker, Angus Council  
Eva McDiarmid, Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions (ASVA)  
Wendy Chisholm, CH2M HILL (minutes)

**APOLOGIES:** Mark Skilling, Aberdeenshire Council

## Presentation and Discussion

This is a follow up meeting to the larger Stakeholder Group in December 2013, to catch up and to feed into the research and finalise the report.

A presentation was given by CH2M HILL, providing the working group with a summary of the evidence gathered to date, and identified some research gaps. Three different example scheme layouts were shown, which are being used to gather costs from sign manufacturers.

A general discussion was held, covering a wide variety of topics, including:

- the collection of cost information to allow for it to be analysed;
- transparency with costs, and process;
- breakdown and range of costs for each stage;
- consistency in the application process and in policies;
- the importance of tourism in different Local Authority (LA) areas, perhaps reflected in the level of detail for the LA tourist signposting policy;
- timeframes for applications to be given to users;
- a flowchart to simplify the process for users, and perhaps different flowcharts based on different types of schemes (e.g. whether more than one LA is involved), and timelines added to flowchart;
- a central online application system, with a tracking system;
- cluster signage;
- group applications;
- menu for sign application;
- grant scheme
- example scheme layouts, and examples of signs, given in policy;

- 
- (annual) review of tourist signs – helps with sign proliferation;
  - put number of destinations allowed into local policies;
  - use of new technology/VMS for tourist signposting;
  - knowledge hub/portal on websites;
  - put avatars on websites, i.e. stories of how tourist operators went through the process to get tourist signs.

There was also a discussion about whether the Transport Scotland policy needs to be reviewed and updated, which will in turn potentially lead to renewing local authorities policies, making them more consistent and simpler.

## **Summary of Actions**

NV to email presentation to Working Group.

Working Group (WG) to respond to additional questions which were sent out after the meeting.

WG to comment on list of improvements/recommendations, sent out previously.

WG to send any information on costs (now and later).

NV and YC to talk regarding Visit Scotland application costs.

YC to send contact details of Robert Cullen to NV.

NV to contact Stuart Edgar regarding costs from the OCs.

YC to provide details on successful scheme.

## **Next Meeting**

Monday 24 February 2014, 1-3pm at Transport Scotland.

AD – Suggestion that Angus Corbie come along to go over his Presentation regarding Scenic Roads Initiative. TS to check availability of AC, and will inform WG if going ahead.

**PROJECT NUMBER:** 483484

**MEETING:** SRRB – Tourist Signposting Research  
Workshop Meeting 2

**DATE:** Thursday 24 February 2014, 1pm – 3pm

**VENUE:** Transport Scotland, Buchanan House, Glasgow

**PRESENT:** Nicola Vemmie, CH2M HILL  
Andrew Davidson, Transport Scotland  
Dominick Cafferkey, Transport Scotland  
Yvonne Cook, Visit Scotland  
Lynne Veitch, Tourism & Major Events, Scottish Government  
Hilary Tasker, Angus Council  
Mark Skilling, Aberdeenshire Council

**APOLOGIES:** Rosie Wylie, Historic Scotland  
Eva McDiarmid, Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions (ASVA)

## Presentation and Discussion

This was the final stakeholder meeting of this project.

A presentation was given by CH2M HILL, providing the working group with a summary of progress by CH2M HILL since the last meeting, actions from the last meeting, work in progress, and the table of contents of the report.

A general discussion was held, and suggestions for inclusion in the report were given, including:

- If all Scottish LA policies can be obtained, a high-level summary of these policies would be useful;
- Pre-2006 LA policy not necessarily out of date;
- Suggestion to add “sign removal” to “cost” stages graph;
- Suggestion to add an additional graph, showing comparative/relative sizes of boxes for each stage, based on its cost in proportion to total cost, e.g. big box for installation and traffic management, small box for maintenance, etc.;
- Suggestion to put together a matrix, showing variables affecting cost at each “stage”, per road type;
- Suggestion to include real-life examples/case studies of costs of tourist sign schemes – request was made to the LAs to provide these. YC also said she may be able to provide examples. Different sizes and types of schemes;
- Potential to also include examples (good and bad) of application process;
- Note in report – Obtaining costs has proven very difficult, but it is a key issue.
- The issue of grants was discussed again, including grants being available for small businesses for other aspects of their business, why not also for tourist signs.
- LA/OC to record costs going forward
- Online application system – at LA level. Good example of this, ePlanning – almost all LAs have embraced this.

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## **Summary of Actions**

YC to provide contact details of all Scottish LAs to NV, for NV to request tourist policy from LAs.

MS, HT and YC to provide real-life examples of costs of tourist sign schemes.

YC to provide, if possible, examples (good and bad) of application process from their contacts.

NV to submit draft final report to AD and DM for comment on 14 March 2014. NV to also send to WG on same date.