

Outdoor Signs and Advertisements



SUMMARY

This section of the website advises you about who to ask about outdoor signs and advertisements. Planning regulations strictly control the size, position and illumination of such signs. You are advised to seek the advice of the planning department of your local authority or National Park authority (where relevant) before commissioning and setting up any signs for your premises to avoid wasting money because if they do not comply with the regulations you will be forced to remove them.

This section answers the following questions:

- What is an outdoor sign or advertisement?
- Do I need planning consent for all outdoor signs and advertisements?
- How can I get more detailed information about outdoor signs and advertisements?
- Who controls outdoor signs and advertisements?
- How do I apply for planning consent for an outdoor sign or advertisement?
- What can I do if the planning authority refuses consent?
- Who do I ask about 'brown signs'?
- What is an outdoor sign or advertisement?
- The advertisement control system covers a very wide range of advertisements and signs including:
 - posters and notices
 - placards and boards
 - fascia signs and projecting signs
 - pole signs and canopy signs
 - models and devices
 - advance signs and directional signs
 - estate agents' boards
 - captive balloon advertising (not balloons in flight)
 - flag advertisements
 - price markers and price displays
 - traffic signs
 - town and village name-signs

Memorials and railway signals are not regarded as advertisements

DO I NEED PLANNING CONSENT FOR ALL OUTDOOR SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS?

You do not need planning consent for all sorts of outdoor sign or advertisement. There are three different groups of outdoor advertisement, i.e.

- Advertisements which the rules deliberately exclude from the planning authority's control.

These include:

- Captive balloon advertisements as long as they are 60 metres above the ground, not displayed for more than 10 days in any calendar year; and not in any Area of Special Control of Advertisements, a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or conservation area.



KEY POINTS

- Planning regulations strictly control the display of outdoor signs and advertisements.
- Seek the advice of the planning department of the local authority before commissioning any signs for your premises.

WHO DO I ASK?

- Advertisements displayed on enclosed land, e.g. on a railway station forecourt, inside a bus station or sports stadium.
 - Advertisements displayed on or in any vehicle, which is normally moving (e.g. the side of a bus).
 - Advertisements which are an integral part of the fabric of a building. Price tickets or markers, trade-names on branded goods, or displayed on petrol pumps or vending machines.
 - Advertisements relating to a pending Parliamentary, European Parliamentary, Welsh Assembly or local government election.
 - Advertisements required by any Parliamentary Order, or any enactment, to be displayed.
 - Traffic signs as defined in section 64(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
 - A national flag of any country.
 - Advertisements displayed inside a building.
- Advertisements for which the rules give a 'deemed consent' so that the planning authority's consent is not needed, provided your advertisement is within the rules.

These include:

- Advertisements needed by public bodies (e.g. local authorities, public utilities and public transport operators) to give information about their services, e.g. a notice-board at a municipal swimming pool, a bus or rail timetable or a warning notice at an electricity sub-station.
 - Small notices and signs displayed on premises or buildings, e.g. the street number or name of a house or a sign saying 'Please shut the gate', 'Beware of the dog' or 'No parking please'.
 - Signs to advertise that a person, partnership or company is carrying on a profession, business or trade, e.g. a brass plate outside a doctor's surgery or a sign for a hotel, inn, public house, club, boarding-house or hostel.
 - Notices to publicise forthcoming events or the short-term use of a site, e.g.: boards advertising land or premises for sale or to let; announcement of a sale of goods or livestock; announcement of construction work being carried out on a site; local charity events; demonstration of agricultural methods or processes; the visit of a travelling circus or fair.
 - Illuminated advertisements except in a Conservation Area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Park or Area of Special Control of Advertisements.
 - Advertisements on business premises to draw attention to goods or services available at the premises, e.g. office buildings, shops and shopping arcades, theatres, cinemas and dance-halls, bingo halls and amusement arcades, restaurants and cafes.
 - Advertisements on the forecourt of business premises
 - Flag advertisements
 - Advertising flags on housebuilding sites and sites where new houses remain for sale, except in a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Conservation Area or Area of Special Control of Advertisements.
 - Poster-hoardings around temporary construction sites
 - Four-sheet poster panels displayed on purpose-designed highway structures
 - Properly authorised signs for approved Neighbourhood Watch and similar schemes
 - Housebuilding firms are allowed to put up temporary directional signs to tell potential visitors how to reach a site where new residential development is taking place.
 - Advertisements can be displayed inside a building if they are illuminated (e.g. a sign in a chemist's shop window), if the building is mainly used to display advertisements or they are within one metre of any window or other external opening through which they can be seen from outside.
 - Sites used for displaying advertisements on 1 April 1974
 - Advertisements displayed after the expiry of express consent and for which the planning authority has not forbidden further display of an advertisement or refused an application for its renewed display.
- Advertisements for which the planning authority's 'express consent' is always needed. This includes virtually all posters, some illuminated signs, fascia signs and projecting signs on shop-fronts or business

WHO DO I ASK?

premises where the top edge of the sign is more than 4.6 metres above ground level and most advertisements on gable-ends.

WHO CONTROLS OUTDOOR SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS?

The display of all outdoor signs and advertisements is strictly governed by planning regulations. These regulations are complex. In Wales, the planning departments of local authorities are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the regulations and for deciding whether a particular advertisement should be permitted or not. However, there is one exception to this arrangement and that is that if your advertisement is to be displayed in any National Park, the planning authority is the National Park authority. You are strongly advised to seek the advice of the planning department of your local authority or the National Park Authority before commissioning and setting up any signs for your premises.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR PLANNING CONSENT FOR AN OUTDOOR SIGN OR ADVERTISEMENT?

Most planning authorities provide a standard application form, which includes information on the current charge for applying for each type of advertisement. As well as the completed application form you will have to provide illustrative plans and drawings.

WHAT CAN I DO IF THE PLANNING AUTHORITY REFUSES CONSENT?

If the planning authority refuses consent for your advertisement, or requires you to remove an existing advertisement, you have a right to appeal against their decision. Your appeal would be to the Welsh Assembly Government.

WHO CAN I ASK ABOUT 'BROWN SIGNS'?

There are special directional brown signs for certain accommodation and visitor attraction providers. The criteria for being able to apply for one are based upon WAG/Visit Wales criteria. For further information telephone: 02920 499909