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REPORT TO: Members' Library Service

MEETING DATE:

BY: Executive Director of Support Services/Executive Director
of Communities

SUBJECT: Tourism Signposting Policy Review

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report proposes a review of the existing Tourism Signposting Policy for East Lothian as shown in Appendix 1.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the revised policy as shown in Appendix 2.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In January 1996, the Scottish Government produced revised regulations on tourist signposting. These amended the regulations given in the SOID Circular 3/92, relaxing many of the previous restrictions and thus providing an opportunity for each local authority to develop their own policy.
- 3.2 East Lothian Council therefore developed their own policy, in consultation with Transportation Services. The aim of the policy is to maximise the benefits of tourism to the area by effectively directing visitors as safely and easily as possible to their chosen destination.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This policy will retain the benefits for both visitors and citizens when visiting main tourist attractions whilst avoiding proliferation of signs as it is detrimental to road safety and the visual environment, and can lead to the deterioration of the attractiveness of an area.

- 4.2 The revised policy has sought the approval from members of Visit East Lothian, East Lothian Tourism Attractions Group and East Lothian Golf Tourism Alliance Group.

5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 This report is not applicable to the wellbeing of equalities groups and therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - The cost of the provision and maintenance of tourist signing is borne by those responsible for the tourist attraction or establishment.
- 6.2 Personnel - All applications for signposting will be processed through Transportation Services.
- 6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

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DATE	24/4/12

EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

TOURISM SIGNPOSTING POLICY

General Principles

- (a) The following policy has been drawn up by East Lothian Council in response to new eligibility criteria for Tourist Signposting in Scotland.
- (b) Establishments which are eligible for signposting are those who are members of Visit Scotland, where, appropriate, a Scottish Tourist Board Quality Assurance Scheme, where such a scheme exists.
- (c) Signs should be taken down when an establishment is closed for the season. Seasonal operators should display opening dates on sign.
- (d) East Lothian Council will have final discretion to grant consent for, remove or temporarily cover signs which it considers are no longer satisfactory for any reason. In taking such decisions, the Council may take advice from the Scottish Tourist Board and/or Visit Scotland and/or Scottish Government and/or others.
- (e) All unauthorised signs will be removed at the owner's expense.

Signposting of Accommodation Establishments

- (a) Hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfast, golf courses and touring caravan/camping sites which are located outwith significant settlements and are not accessed directly (i.e. have frontage to or private access from) an important road will be eligible for signposting.
- (b) Establishments which are accessed directly from a major road may (at the discretion of East Lothian Council and on road safety grounds only) qualify for advance signs advising road users of the close proximity of the establishments.

Signposting of Eating Establishments

- (a) Establishments whose primary function is to offer meals and / or refreshments (but not providing accommodation, or whose main function is the sale of alcohol) which are located outwith important settlements and are not accessed directly (i.e. have frontage to or private access from) an important road will be eligible for signposting
- (b) Establishments which are accessed directly from a major road may (at the discretion of East Lothian Council and on road safety grounds only) qualify for advance signs advising road users of the close proximity of the establishment.

Signposting for Retail Establishments

- (a) Retail establishments which also have interest of a non-retailing nature for visitors and which are not accessed directly (i.e. have frontage to our private access from a major road) will be eligible for signposting.

- (b) Establishments which are accessed directly from a major road may (at the discretion of East Lothian Council and on road safety grounds only) qualify for advance signs advising road users of the close proximity of the establishment.

Signposting for Visitor Attractions

Costs

A standard fee of £40.00 will be payable to East Lothian Council for the consideration of each individual application and the supply of information to the applicant. Initial enquiries for advice or discussion on the merits of individual cases can be made by telephone to Transportation Services or in person at no charge to applicants.

The costs of design, manufacture, erection and maintenance of signs will be borne in full by the business or businesses concerned.

All costs associated with composite signs will be shared between the operators.

How to Apply

It will be a condition of permission and signposting that establishments join, and remain in membership of, Visit Scotland's quality Assurance Scheme, where such a Scheme exists.

Applications should be made to East Lothian Council's Transportation Department enclosing evidence of the establishment's most recent Quality Assurance award from

Schedule of Settlements

Aberlady	Kingston
Athelstaneford	Longniddry
Bolton	Macmerry
Cockenzie & Port Seton	Musselburgh, Inveresk & Wallyford
Dirleton	New Winton
Drem	North Berwick
Dunbar & West Barns	Old Craighall
East Linton	Oldhamstocks
East Saltoun	Ormiston
Elphinstone	Pencaitland
Garvald	Prestonpans
Gifford	Seton Mains
Gladsmuir	Spott
Glenkinchie	Stenton
Gullane	Tranent
Haddington	Tynninghame
Humbie	Whitecraig
Innerwick	Whitekirk

Schedule of “Important Roads”

For the purposes of this Signposting Policy, Important Roads are:-

A198, A199, A1087, A6093, A6094, A6095, A6124, A6137

B1345, B1347, B1348, B1361, B1377, B6355, B6363, B6368, B6369, B6370, B6371

Signposting alone is not a suitable for effective marketing, and it will be expected that establishments which obtain signposting will also use other techniques such as promotional print, which ideally will include clear directions and a simple map.



Tourism Signposting Policy

East Lothian



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1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 In January 1996, the Scottish Government produced revised regulations on tourist signposting. These amended the regulations given in the SOID Circular 3/92, relaxing many of the previous restrictions and thus providing an opportunity for each area to develop local policies to be implemented in a logical manner.
- 1.2 Signposting is an essential part of the basic tourism infrastructure in East Lothian. Effective signposting can make an important contribution to the economic health of the tourism industry by enhancing the visitor experience and guiding visitors to their chosen destination(s), thus avoiding confusion and encouraging them to stay longer.
- 1.3 East Lothian Council has developed the following policy to provide guidance on signs appropriate to meet the strategic needs of the tourism industry and road users within the area in general, consistent with safe and efficient traffic management and with minimal impact on the environment.

2. **Visitor Attractions & Tourist Facilities**

- 2.1 A **“tourist attraction”** is, for the purpose of this policy, a permanently established attraction or facility, which attracts or is used by visitors to East Lothian, is open to the public without prior booking during its normal opening hours and who have achieved an award under the VisitScotland Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance scheme. Examples of a tourist attraction include:
 - Historic properties and castles
 - Parks & gardens
 - Ancient monuments and museums
 - Leisure & sports centres
 - Nature reserves, beaches and viewpoints
 - Watersports
 - Golf courses (including Championship courses)
 - Visitor Information Centres
 - Walks
- 2.2 **“Tourist Facilities”** include:-
 - Hotels
 - Guesthouses
 - Bed & Breakfast Establishments
 - Restaurants and Cafes
 - Touring Caravan and Camping Parks
 - Picnic Sites
 - Youth Hostels
- 2.3 These lists are not exhaustive but serve to give an indication of the types of establishment in each category.

3. **Eligibility**

3.1 **Visitor Attractions**

All establishments defined as a visitor attraction within the Regulations, which are located outwith main settlements, and which are not accessed directly (i.e. have frontage to or private access from a major road) will be eligible for signposting.

Establishments will be eligible for advance signs advising travellers of the proximity of the attraction subject to the conditions noted with regard to their location in relation to “main settlements” and “major roads”.

All signs will be located at the nearest and/or most logical points on important road(s).

3.2 **Accommodation Establishments**

Hotels, guest houses, bed & breakfasts and touring caravan and camping sites, which are located outwith main settlements and are not accessed directly (i.e. have frontage to or private access from a major road) will be eligible for signposting.

3.3 **Eating Establishments**

In general, Eating Places and Establishments will not be eligible for tourist signposting if they are situated in the centre of the settlement and generally visible to the car borne visitor. Establishments offering meals and or/refreshments (but not providing accommodation) and which are located outwith main settlements and not accessed directly (i.e. have frontage to or private access from a major road) will be eligible for signposting.

3.4 **Retail Establishments**

Retail establishments which also have interest of a non-retailing nature for visitors, which are located out with main settlements, and which are not accessed directly (i.e. have frontage to or private access from) a major road, will be eligible for signposting.

Establishments which are accessed directly from a major road may (at the discretion of East Lothian Council and on road safety grounds only) qualify for advance signs advising road users of the close proximity of the establishments.

3.5 **Golf Clubs**

Golf Clubs do not currently fall within the Visit Scotland Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme. They will be required to complete a form giving details of the facility and sign a copy of VisitScotland’s Code of Conduct and demonstrate effective marketing of the facility or site. Golf Clubs are not automatically eligible for tourist signposting, approval is dependent on a number of criteria requirements.

3.6 **Other Tourist Facilities**

There may be some facilities such as natural attractions, areas of geographic interest, beaches, viewpoints, etc, which do not/not currently fall within the VisitScotland Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance scheme and applicants for these, will be asked to complete a form giving details of the facility and to sign a copy of VisitScotland’s Code of Conduct. Establishments should also be able to demonstrate effective marketing of the facility of site.

4. **Main Settlements**

Hotels, eating and retail establishments located within main settlements and which are not accessed directly (i.e. have frontage to or private access from a major road) will be eligible for signposting. Bed and Breakfast establishments within two main settlements will not be eligible for signposting.

Each “main settlement” has individual and unique characters as a tourist destination. Some are linear settlements, other clustered; some have Conservation areas, other have less architectural merit; some attract many visitors annually, others fewer. This policy cannot cover the multitude of variations which exist but will take into account such factors as the volume of establishments which are eligible for signs, their location, the possibility of directing visitors to car parks and having pedestrian-only signs there from, etc. Combined signs will be of particular importance within such main settlements.

5. **Bypassed Communities**

Main settlements bypassed by, or within 3 miles of, a major road, will be eligible for signs which contain:-

- An objective and descriptive phrase of up to four words (e.g. ‘Haddington Historic Market Town’)
- Up to six symbols denoting the services available within the main settlement.

Signs **will be** located at the nearest and/or most appropriate points on major roads.

6. **Trunk Roads & Motorways**

Final decisions for signs on trunk road and motorway network will rest with Transport Scotland.

7. **Criteria**

- 7.1 To be eligible for tourist signing, all tourist attractions and facilities must be recognised by VisitScotland and must be members of the relevant VisitScotland Quality Assurance Scheme, where one exists.
- 7.2 Eligibility does not confer automatic entitlement to tourist signs. Several other considerations must be taken into account, including existing sign provision, availability of space for new signs and road safety considerations. Each application will be considered on its merits.
- 7.3 Establishments which are primarily retail outlets (including retail parks, shopping centres and garden centres) will only be eligible for signposting if the destination is recognised by VisitScotland as a “Tourist Facility” through its Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme. Applications will still need to meet all the other relevant criteria in order to be eligible for tourist signs.

8. **General Points**

- 8.1 It will be the condition of signposting that there will be no private directional or advertisement signs related to the establishment. All private signing within and out with the roads' boundary will be removed at the owner's expense. Themed country trails should be supported by printed material, which is distributed by the Council or visitor information centres.
- 8.2 East Lothian Council will have absolute and final discretion to remove or temporarily cover signs which it considers are no longer satisfactory or which are likely to detract from road safety. Tourist signing may be refused on road safety/traffic management grounds because of siting difficulties and/or signing overload.
- 8.3 Tourist attractions can be signed both outwith and within main settlements. However, within main settlements, it could be considered impractical on the grounds of safety and visual amenity, to provide signs for every qualifying establishment – too many signs may confuse the visitor as much as too few. Therefore, a decision may be made to only allow signing for large traffic generator attractions to be permitted signs in main settlements.
- 8.4 Signposting alone is not a substitute for effective marketing and it will be expected that establishments which obtain signposting will also use other techniques such as promotional print, which ideally will include clear travel directions and a simple map.
- 8.5 In the interests of sign proliferation and fair competition, signing of cafes, restaurants, hotels and bed and breakfasts will not be permitted within main settlements unless they are very hard to find and there are no other similar facilities in the area.
- 8.6 Specific tourist signs (as opposed to more conventional statutory direction signs) are not always necessary. They should, if possible, be integrated into existing signs and efforts should be made to encourage qualifying "businesses" in a locality to apply jointly for combined signs.

9. **Schedule of Main Settlements**

For the purpose of this policy, Main Settlements are:-

Aberlady, Athelstaneford, Cockenzie & Port Seton, Dunbar & West Barns, East Linton, Gifford, Gullane, Haddington, Longniddry, Musselburgh & Inveresk, North Berwick Ormiston, Pencaitland, Prestonpans, Tranent, Wallyford, Whitecraig, Whitekirk.

10. **Schedule of Major Roads**

For the purposes of this policy, Major Roads are:-

A198, A199, A1087, A6093, A6094, A6095, A6124, A6137
B1345, B1347, B1348, B1377, B3655, B6363, B6368, B6369, B6370, B6371

11. **Costs**

- 11.1 All the costs of providing signs and maintaining them as and when necessary for a specific tourist attraction or facility or composite signs will be the responsibility of the establishment.

12. **Technical Specifications**

- 12.1 East Lothian Council will determine such matters as exact dimensions of all signs, their design, colour materials and wording used in their manufacture and their exact location with respect to road safety procedures.
- 12.2 Signs will be worded with the name of the establishment and/or a generic title and the distance in miles/yards thereto as appropriate. The name of the establishment will be restricted to its trading name only.

13. **How to apply**

- 13.1 Applications should be submitted to East Lothian Council enclosing evidence of the establishment's most recent Quality Assurance award from Visit Scotland. For those who do not currently fall within such a scheme, should submit a signed copy of VisitScotland's Code of Conduct.

Contact Details:

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