

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	15 th March 2011
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Directional Signage Guidance for Paths
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/11/051

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents proposed Directional Signage Guidance for Paths which provides advice on the planning, design and implementation of directional signage on paths in open spaces. The guidance document is contained within Appendix 1 of this report.

The report seeks approval to adopt and publish Directional Signage Guidance for Paths.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Approve the proposed Directional Signage Guidance for Paths.
2. Instruct officers to publish the guidance.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Capital: There are no direct capital implications arising from this report. The Council's current path signage programme is funded from external grants.

3.2 Revenue: If approved, the guidance will be published on the Council's website, with paper copies being provided to stakeholders on request.

The recommended signage design has been developed in order to maximise sign robustness and life expectancy. A decrease in the frequency of sign replacement will contribute to reduced revenue costs.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The report will have a positive impact on the environment. Increased promotion of paths and access opportunities will raise awareness of and encourage sustainable travel. This will contribute to a reduction in transport-related emissions and road congestion. Increased management of access can also lead to environmental benefits by, for example, directing users away from sensitive areas.

A well promoted and consistently signed path network can enhance the attractiveness of the local environment, attracting path users. Greater use of the outdoors can help to foster understanding of the environment, leading to more caring environmental attitudes.

Timber for sign posts is to be sourced from sustainably managed forests.

Where paths are promoted by the Council for public use, there may be some degree of duty of care and it is advisable to ensure that the routes are safe and fit for purpose. As such, it is appropriate to regularly inspect paths in order to ensure that this is the case. Monitoring and design of future signage and paths will be encompassed under the existing externally funded Core Paths Plan implementation programme and by the existing path inspection regime undertaken by the Council's Ranger Service.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (the Land Reform Act) introduced a right of responsible access to most land and inland water in Scotland. It also introduced a duty on land managers to manage land responsibly in respect of access rights.
- 5.2 Directional signage is a key tool in helping to promote and manage Aberdeen's paths and outdoor access opportunities. By encouraging greater use of the outdoors and by assisting with land management, directional signage can contribute positively towards the health and well-being of Aberdeen's citizens, the environment and the local economy.
- 5.3 Aberdeen's Strategy for Access to the Outdoors 2004, approved by the Policy and Strategy Committee on 29th September 2004, committed the Council to the promotion of the path network through the installation of signage. In addition, the Aberdeen Core Paths Plan 2009, adopted by the Policy and Strategy Committee on 28th April 2009, committed the Council to promoting core paths through signage, interpretation panels and leaflets. It also committed the Council to the development of a consistent approach to path signage.

- Through public consultations carried out through the Core Paths Plan and more recently the Open Space Strategy it is apparent that there is a clear demand from the public for more information on the paths and outdoor recreation opportunities that Aberdeen offers.
- 5.4 The Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Guidance for the Aberdeen Local Development Plan – Proposed Plan 2010 refers to the proposed Directional Signage Guidance for Paths for detailed advice on signage standards.
 - 5.5 In recognition of the requirement for significant additional signage resulting from the above commitments, and in order to realise the benefits of increased path promotion through signage, the proposed Directional Signage Guidance for Paths was developed in order to provide advice on the planning and implementation of signage and to detail a City-wide standard for signage design. The development of a standard approach to signage is consistent with current best practice guidelines.
 - 5.6 An officer working group comprising operational and strategic Council staff, as well as staff from Aberdeen Greenspace, was set up in order to develop the proposed Directional Signage Guidance for Paths. Aberdeen Outdoor Access Forum, which brings together key stakeholders in access to the outdoors including land managers, user groups, communities, Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, NHS Grampian and Aberdeen City Council, has also been involved throughout the development of the guidance.
 - 5.7 Following research into various design options, the signage design standard detailed in the guidance was chosen taking into consideration cost, resistance to vandalism, sourcing of materials, life expectancy, maintenance, environmental considerations and best practice guidelines. These criteria are based on best value.
 - 5.8 The design standard was approved by the Aberdeen Greenspace Board on 15th September 2009.
 - 5.9 If this committee approves the proposed guidance, it will be used to inform the development of future signage within Aberdeen City.
6. IMPACT
 - 6.1 Corporate: This report will contribute to health and well being; active, sustainable and integrated travel; economic development and tourism; valuing and looking after the environment and encouraging participation in sports activity. It therefore has links to many of the outcomes in the Community Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement.

It also links generally with the Council's Vision to be Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking by promoting Aberdeen as a better place to live and work.

- 6.2 Public: An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment was carried out on the proposed Directional Signage Guidance for Paths. The assessment did not identify any negative impacts associated with the guidance. It did identify a number of positive impacts for the citizens of Aberdeen and its visitors as a whole. These included contributions to health, the environment, social inclusion and quality of life. In particular, the guidance was found to have a positive impact on the following equality target groups: older, younger, disability, gender and poverty. The guidance was also found to promote good relations and wider community cohesion. The implementation of the guidance will be monitored in order to identify any unanticipated negative impacts. If negative impacts are identified, these will be addressed and the guidance will be updated at the next review.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Aberdeen City Core Paths Plan 2009
Aberdeen's Strategy for Access to the Outdoors, 2004

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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Appendix 1

**Aberdeen City Council
Directional Signage Guidance for Paths
March 2011**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Guidance

Directional Signage Guidance for Paths is intended to provide advice to land managers on the planning, design and implementation of directional signage for paths and other access opportunities located within open spaces and other rural areas in Aberdeen, contributing to the overall management of outdoor access.

The guidance aims to deliver a clear and consistent approach to directional signage across the City, leading to an easily identifiable path network and the provision of clear and relevant information on way-finding for path users.

By assisting with the development and implementation of directional signage, thereby supporting the promotion and management of paths and other access opportunities, this guidance aims to contribute to the delivery of key policy objectives including health, environment, sustainable transport, social inclusion, environmental awareness and economic development.

1.2 What this Guidance Covers

This guidance focuses on directional signage, the main purpose of which is to provide those taking access with information on route finding. It covers the signage of paths located within open spaces and other rural areas, as well as the signage of access and egress points associated with water courses.

The signage of wholly urban routes, such as streets and pavements, is not covered by this guidance. However, signage to be located on paths which run parallel or in close proximity to road corridors will generally be covered by the design standard detailed in Chapter 5. Land managers wishing to install signage on such routes should contact Aberdeen City Council in order to discuss the relevant issues.

The document sets out the rationale for directional signage and highlights the key issues that should be considered when planning and implementing directional signage of the path network and water courses. Importantly, it details a design standard for fingerposts and waymarkers.

1.3 Who is the Guidance For?

The guidance is aimed at land managers, developers, community groups and others who wish to install new or replacement signage on land for which they are responsible.

1.4 Further Guidance and Information

Directional Signage Guidance for Paths sets out the local context for directional signage. It should be used in conjunction with national signage guidance produced by Paths for All in the publication *Signage Guidance for Outdoor Access – A Guide to Good Practice*.

Detailed information on the provision of countryside facilities and interpretation for all abilities can be found in the *Fieldfare Trust 'Countryside for All' Good Practice Guide*.

2 RATIONALE FOR DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

2.1 Outdoor Access in Scotland

Scotland offers many opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and has some of the best access rights in Europe. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (Land Reform Act) introduced a right of responsible access to most land and inland water in Scotland. This right applies to all non-motorised users including walkers, cyclists, horse riders and canoeists. The legislation places responsibilities on both those exercising their access rights and on land managers. Responsible behaviour is based on three key principles – respect the interests of other people, care for the environment and take responsibility for your own actions. The Scottish Outdoor Access Code provides detailed guidance on these responsibilities.

2.2 Outdoor Access in Aberdeen

Visitors and residents of Aberdeen have many opportunities to enjoy their access rights in and around the City. From award winning parks to the Rivers Dee and Don, a coastal path, forest trails and routes through farmland and settlements around the city, there's plenty to see and do outside.

Aberdeen's path network plays an important role in facilitating the enjoyment of access rights. Paths link communities and provide routes between the places that people live and work, as well as to other local services and facilities such as schools and shops. Paths also link communities to recreational areas such as parks, woodland and water courses, making it easy for people to explore and enjoy the local environment.

Aberdeen has a network of core paths which are identified in the Aberdeen Core Paths Plan 2009, prepared under the Land Reform Act. The core paths provide a framework of key routes for recreation and travel throughout the city and are made up of many types of path ranging from natural ground to high specification constructed paths. Water access and egress points are also included. The core path network as a whole caters for all user types and abilities. Core paths are supported by paths in the wider network. There is a requirement to promote core paths and signage offers an easy and effective method of doing so.

2.3 Signage and Outdoor Access

Directional signage is a key tool in helping to promote and manage Aberdeen's paths and outdoor access opportunities. The provision of directional signage will provide a welcome to an area and will help to raise awareness of the existence of the path network. The provision of clear and informative information about where a path leads to and the distance to a stated destination will assist people in

making decisions about route-finding, helping them to feel more confident in using the path network.

Directional signage can also assist land managers with access management, for example by directing people away from sensitive areas or towards a preferred route.

By encouraging greater use of the outdoors, and by assisting with land management, directional signage can contribute positively towards the health and well-being of Aberdeen's citizens, the environment and the local economy.

2.4 Signage for all

Path signage should cater for all user types and abilities. It is important to ensure that signage complies with the Equality Act (2010) which demands that access managers do not unjustifiably discriminate against those with disabilities. In addition, the Disability Equality Duty (DED) places a duty on all public authorities or their agents to provide for disabled people. Further information on the Equality Act and DED can be found on the website of the Scottish Disability Equality Forum available at: www.sdef.org.uk

In addition, the *Fieldfare Trust 'Countryside for All' Good Practice Guide* provides further information on the provision of countryside facilities and interpretation for all abilities.

In order to comply with the Land Reform Act, signage should not stipulate a particular user type. Words such as footpath and cycle path should not be used. Similarly, symbols depicting particular user types should be avoided.

2.5 Prioritising Paths for Signage

Signing of the path network will require both time and resources and it should therefore be acknowledged that not all paths in the network can have signage implemented at the same time. For this reason, it is important to be able to prioritise paths for signage.

Highest priority should be given to the provision of signage on routes which are important for recreation or sustainable, active travel, particularly those that provide key links to services, facilities or local attractions. These routes will generally be well used already, or will have the potential to be with increased promotion. Next, consideration should be given to the signage of more minor routes.

The priority of the Council is to sign all core paths.

Signing may involve the installation of completely new signs or the replacement of existing signage which has become worn or damaged.

3 THE BASICS OF DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

3.1 Directional Signage Explained

Directional signage is used to provide people with information on where a path leads to and how far it is to a given destination. It should provide clear and relevant information to path users. In particular, it should provide path users with information on destination, direction and distance. Further information on these three aspects of directional signage can be found in Section 4.

3.2 Types of Directional Sign

There are two principal types of directional sign, fingerposts and waymarkers. A brief description of each is provided below.

3.2.1 Fingerposts

A fingerpost consists of a sign post which has one or more finger blades attached to it (Diagram 1). The blade of each finger contains text detailing the destination that the path leads to as well as the distance to the stated destination. Finger blades should point in the direction of the stated destination. Fingerposts should be located at the beginning and end of a path, as well as at junctions with other paths and at points where new users are likely to join the path for the first time.

3.2.2 Waymarkers

Waymarkers are more basic than fingerposts and consist of a post containing information on the direction of the path only (Diagram 2). This information is often provided in the form of a coloured arrow which is orientated to point in the direction that the path follows. Waymarkers should be used in conjunction with fingerposts, providing clarification of direction at key points along a route. In some cases, waymarkers can be used to mark different routes at minor junctions, although this is usually best done with a fingerpost. It is also helpful to install waymarkers at key points along a lengthy, continuous stretch of path, helping to reassure users that they are still following the correct route.

Waymarkers are commonly used to differentiate between different paths within a relatively small area such as woodland. This is achieved by using a different arrow colour to colour-code each separate path.

At sites which have a principal access point, such as a car park, consideration should be given to the provision of an orientation panel detailing all of the routes within the site and a description of how they are signed. The orientation panel may also include a map of the site, as well as other interpretive information about any features of interest.

4 PLANNING AND LOCATING SIGNAGE

When planning signage, it is important to ensure that the sign is in-keeping with its surroundings and does not detract from the natural or built environment. Signs should be positioned carefully to ensure that they are easily seen by the public but are not intrusive. The minimum number of signs should be used to give a clear indication of paths while avoiding an area appearing cluttered.

Before installing signage, consent of the land owner should be sought. In some cases, proposed signage may require permission from the relevant authority. Further details are provided below.

4.1 Road Corridors

Signs that are to be installed in close proximity to a road corridor, either at the beginning of a path or where a path runs parallel to the road, must be designed and located in accordance with the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 and the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD). In many cases, the timber design standard detailed in this guidance will be suitable, provided that the sign is located appropriately. It is important to ensure that signs are set well back from the main carriageway, for example on grass verges. No part of the sign or post should fall within 500 mm of the running carriageway. If considering signage within the vicinity of a public road, approval should be sought from Aberdeen City Council Road Safety and Traffic Management department.

4.2 Planning Permission

The majority of signs in open spaces can be installed without the need for planning permission. However, some signs may require planning consent before they can be installed. If you are unsure whether or not a sign requires planning permission, please contact Aberdeen City Council access officers.

4.3 Natural Heritage

In both designated and non-designated sites, the location and installation of signage must avoid damage to important habitats, plus, disturbance or displacement of species. For further guidance, please see the Aberdeen Nature Conservation Strategy 2010-2015 or contact an Environmental Planner in the Aberdeen City Council Planning Department. If the site is a statutory designated site, signage proposals should be discussed with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

4.4 Cultural Heritage

The location and installation of signage must not impact negatively on any feature of historical interest or its setting. In some cases, sign installation may

require consent from Historic Scotland. For further advice, please contact Aberdeen City Council's Lead Curator for Local History and Archaeology who will provide further information and may recommend contacting Historic Scotland. Please allow adequate time for your query to be considered.

4.5 Utility Services

Before signage installation begins, all locations should be checked for the presence of underground utility infrastructure such as cables and pipes. This information can be obtained from the relevant authority e.g. Scottish Power, Transco, Scottish Water, BT etc. If service infrastructure is present, signage should be located and installed following discussion with the relevant authority.

4.6 Informing the Access Authority

Following the installation of signage, land managers are requested to inform Aberdeen City Council access officers of the sign locations and the information that they display. This will allow access officers to maintain an up to date and comprehensive record of path signage within the city. It will also assist with the development of a strategic approach to the planning and installation of future signage.

4.7 Sign Maintenance

When planning signage, consideration should be given to a maintenance programme. It is important that land managers undertake sign maintenance in order to ensure that signs continue to be fit for purpose, safe and provide useful information to path users. It is advisable to incorporate sign maintenance into the overall programme of land management.

5 DETAILED FINGERPOST DESIGN

This chapter sets out a design standard for directional fingerposts which are to be located on paths through open spaces and other rural routes. A consistent design standard will contribute to an identifiable and attractive local path network, encouraging use and enjoyment of Aberdeen's paths and water courses. The specification of a design standard will also ensure that signs are of a high quality, thereby increasing their attractiveness and life expectancy.

Diagram 1 illustrates the recommended design standard for fingerposts. In developing the design, consideration has been given to cost, resistance to vandalism, sourcing, life expectancy, maintenance, environmental considerations and best practice guidelines. Further detail on the design choice is set out below.

5.1 Information Provision

Signage should provide information that is both clear and relevant to path users. In particular, fingerposts should provide path users with information on destination, direction and distance in order to assist in way-finding and decision making.

5.1.1 Destination

It is important that people know where a path will lead them to as this will influence their decision on whether or not to use it. The destination displayed on the sign should be the primary destination(s) that the path leads to. In order to keep the information clear and simple, in most cases no more than two destinations should be displayed. In general, the location name used should be that which appears on the Ordnance Survey (OS) map. However, if a location has a widely used and well accepted local name which differs from that shown on the OS map, use of the local name may be more appropriate.

Not all paths will lead to a definite destination, for example circular routes or a network of trails through woodland. In these cases it may be appropriate to use a descriptive name for the route such as 'Woodland Trail' or 'Circular Path'. When using a descriptive term it is important to avoid using words which could be seen to stipulate a particular user type. For example, avoid words such as footpath and cycle path. Similarly, symbols depicting particular user types should be avoided. It is likely that waymarking will be beneficial on this type of route.

5.1.2 Direction

When installing fingerposts, it is important to ensure that the finger blades are positioned at an angle which ensures that they are pointing in the correct direction of the path and the stated destination. This is of particular importance

when installing double, triple or quadruple fingered signs which will have fingers fixed to the post at right angles.

5.1.3 Distance

A distance to the stated destination should be included on the finger as this will help to give path users an indication of how long a route will take them to complete and will influence their decision on whether or not to use it.

Distances should be given to the nearest quarter of a mile. In general, the number alone is sufficient and should not be followed by the word 'mile' or the letter 'm'. An estimated time should not be included as this will vary according to user type and ability. When signing to a distinct area or community, the distance measured should be to the centre or main focal point of the community such as the high street or the main post office.

5.2 Choice of Materials

As this guidance covers the directional signage of routes through open spaces and other rural routes, timber is the most appropriate material. Timber is not only in-keeping with the natural environment but it also offers a renewable and biodegradable choice of material. When sourcing timber, it is important to ensure that it comes from sustainability managed forests.

5.2.1 Sign Post

The sign post is made from treated softwood as it is both cheaper and easier to source than hardwood alternatives. In particular, larch is recommended because of its durability. The post has been designed to be chunky in order to minimise the potential for vandalism from snapping or pulling the post out of the ground. This risk will be further minimised by concreting the post into the ground. Although vandalism of fingerposts tends to target the finger blades, if the posts are damaged, softwood is less expensive to replace than hardwood alternatives. The softwood is treated in order to give greater resistance to weathering, thereby increasing the life expectancy of the sign.

5.2.2 Sign Blade

The sign finger is manufactured from oak. The use of a hardwood maximises finger robustness, thereby reducing the potential for the sign to be snapped as a result of vandalism. The stipulation of a maximum finger length further reduces this risk by reducing finger leverage. Although oak will be more expensive to replace than a softwood alternative, the increased ability of hardwood to resist vandalism will make it a cost-effective choice. Furthermore, the relatively small volume of wood required for the fingers, in comparison to the posts, will lessen the overall cost.

5.3 Signage Construction and Installation

The method of construction is intended to further enhance the robustness of the sign. By inserting the finger the full width of the post leverage is further reduced, lessening the risk of snapping. The fingers are fixed using bolts, rather than wooden doweling so that damaged fingers can be replaced easily and quickly.

It is important that signs are sturdy and able to withstand factors such as strong wind, snow and people leaning on them. For this reason, it is recommended that sign posts are concreted into the ground to a minimum depth of 700 mm and where possible up to 1000 mm.

5.4 Accessibility to Users

The recommended fingerpost design has been developed using best practice guidelines on accessibility, including the Paths for All '*Signage Guidance for Outdoor Access*' and the Fieldfare Trust '*Countryside for All*' *Good Practice Guide*. These documents should be referred to for additional information.

To ensure that the sign is readable, white lettering has been used in order to provide a contrast between the darker timber background. Arial is the chosen font as it is considered to be the most readable by those with visual impairments or learning difficulties. Similarly, the font size is large enough to enable most people to read it easily. The use of a normal mix of upper and lower case letters, adequate line spacing and even text spacing further enhances readability.

Timber Sign Post Design Specification

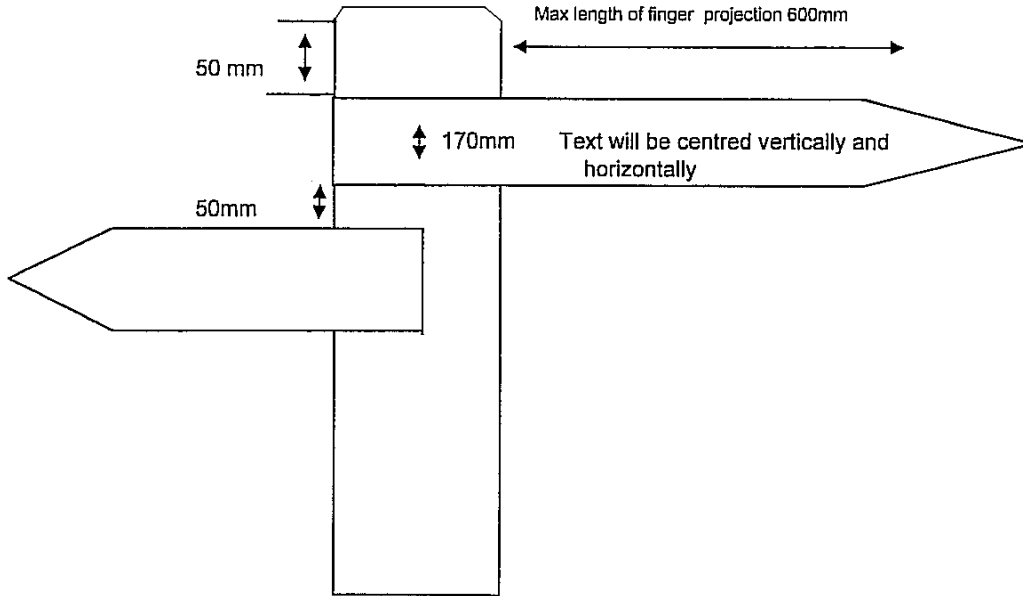


Diagram 1 Finger Post Design

Post

Treated Softwood (larch recommended) (BS8417:2003)

Height: 3600 mm

Depth: 127 mm x 127 mm

First finger to be 50 mm from the top of the post

Square top cut at 45 degree angles

Post to be concreted into ground to a minimum depth of 700 mm and where possible up to 1000 mm

Finger

Untreated/ Unvarnished oak

Depth: 170 mm

Thickness: 32 mm

Edges of finger to be square, NOT bevelled

Maximum finger length projection (from post to point) 600 mm

Finger should be minimum length to fit text

Lettering

Lettering font: Arial

Upper case: 28 mm

Lower case: 25mm

Minimum of 20 mm between text and top and bottom edges of finger

Distance from the post to the start of the lettering: 50 mm

Letters should be painted in white and routed to a depth of 3mm

Fitting

Slot cut into post and finger to be slotted full width of post

Finger held by two 120mm steel round headed threaded bolt nuts counter sunk on reverse side

Fingers fitted at a 90 degree angle

Additional fingers to be placed 50 mm below the base of the top finger

6 DETAILED WAYMARKER DESIGN

Many of the design features of the finger posts are also applicable to waymarkers. It is equally important that waymarkers provide the right information, are accessible, durable and sit well within their environment.

The diagram below illustrates the waymarker design recommended by Aberdeen City Council.

Waymarker Post Design Specification

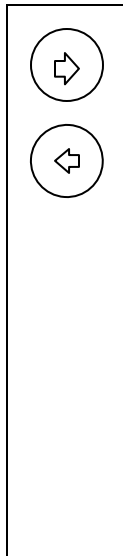


Diagram 2 Waymarker Design

Post
Treated sawn softwood (larch recommended) (BS8417:2003)
Height: 1500 mm
Depth: 100 mm
Width: 100 mm
To be concreted into ground to a depth of 500mm up to a maximum of 700 mm

Routing
Centre of routed disc to be 100 mm from the top of the post
Routed area for disc: 75 mm diameter
Routed area for disc: 3 mm deep

Disc
Diameter: 75 mm
Depth: 3mm
Material: Rigid PVC
Information: Coloured arrow on a white background

6.1 Waymarker Posts

Waymarker posts should be manufactured using treated softwood. This will minimise the cost of purchase and replacement. A short and chunky design has been chosen in order to lessen the risk of vandalism. The posts should be concreted into the ground in order to give a sturdy structure which is difficult to knock over or to pull out.

6.2 Waymarker Information

Information provided by waymarkers is displayed on a PVC disc inserted into a circular routed area on the post. By inserting the disc into a routed area the potential for the disc to be prised off is minimised. Discs should be positioned on the post to ensure that the arrows are orientated to point in the direction that you want people to go. It is important to ensure that the route is clearly waymarked from both directions. As well as allowing the route to be used both ways this will also allow path users to retrace their route if necessary.

Ideally, arrows directing people to continue straight ahead should be placed horizontally on the side of the post, rather pointing upwards towards the sky, as this may be confusing for people with learning difficulties.

The waymarker disc should have a white background with a coloured arrow. If colour coding is to be used to waymark a number of different trails in the same area, arrow colours should contrast strongly in order to avoid confusing those who are colour blind. People with colour blindness commonly confuse red/yellow/green, red/black and blue, green, purple.

6.3 Orientation Panels

Consideration should be given to the provision of an orientation panel at sites which have a principal point of access such as a car park. The orientation panel should detail the routes within the site and give a description of how they are waymarked. It may also include a map of the site, as well as other interpretive information about any features of interest.

In order to maximise readability, light coloured text should be used against a dark background. The use of a normal mix of upper and lower case letters, adequate line spacing and even text spacing should be used. Arial is the recommended font. The table below details recommended minimum font sizes for orientation panels.

Recommended Font Size for Orientation Panels	
Titles	60 – 72 point
Subtitles	40 – 48 point
Body Text	24 Point
Captions	18 Point

Orientation panels must be placed in an accessible location in order to enable those who are visually impaired to get close enough to the panel to read it. Panels should also be positioned at an appropriate height and angle to enable those in wheelchairs, as well as those standing, to view them. If possible, consideration should be given to the provision of some information in Braille or tactile lettering.

Please see the Paths for All '*Signage Guidance for Outdoor Access*' and the Fieldfare Trust '*Countryside for All*' *Good Practice Guide* for further detail.

7 SIGNAGE FOR WATER USERS

The main inland water bodies in Aberdeen are the Rivers Dee and Don. As both are linear watercourses it is not generally necessary to sign or waymark the entire length of the river. However, it is beneficial to sign access and egress points as well as any paths leading to them.

It is important that people are directed to the most suitable location to access the river and to ensure that they follow the most appropriate route to get there. This will help to minimise conflict with other land management interests. Directional signs, as described in Chapter 5, should be used to direct people to the access point. The access point itself should have additional signs installed in order to ensure that its exact location is clear.

Egress points should have a sign located on the waterside a short distance from the point of egress. This should be installed on the river bank. It is important to ensure that the sign is visible from the water and that it is located so as to give users adequate warning that they are approaching the egress point. The signs should include a distance to the point of egress. Depending on the level of warning required, this may be in metres. Additional signs should be installed at the exact egress point to ensure that it is obvious to water users.

Signs to be located at access and egress points are likely to be submerged when the rivers are in spate. Therefore, metal signs are the most appropriate.

Land managers wishing to install signage at access and egress points should contact Aberdeen City Council in order to discuss an appropriate signage design. It may also be helpful to contact the Aberdeen Kayak Club and the Scottish Canoe Association.

It is important to note that the River Dee is part of the River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) 1992 (the Habitats Directive). Land managers wishing to install signage within the SAC must contact Scottish Natural Heritage in order to discuss their proposals.

For further information on signage for water users, please refer to *Using Inland Water Responsibly: Guidance for all Water Users*. This document is available at: www.pathsforall.org.uk

8 EXCEPTIONS TO THE STANDARD DESIGN

This guidance sets out a standard design for directional signage. However, it is recognised that, in some cases, it may be desirable to display additional information on a sign. Examples may include signs that have been funded by an organisation or company; or when signs are to be located along a specifically promoted route. Care should be taken to avoid displaying too much information as this can lead to the sign appearing cluttered, can lessen the overall message or confuse path users and can lead to increased maintenance costs.

8.1 Funded Routes

Organisations or companies that fund signage or provide access may wish to display their organisation or company logo on the sign in order to promote their involvement with the route.

Discs containing funder logos should be no larger than 75mm in diameter and should be inserted into a 3mm deep routed area on the post, as with waymarker discs. By inserting the logo into a routed area there is less chance that the logo will be prised off.

In order to reduce signage clutter, no more than two discs should be inserted on a finger post (funder logo and promotional logo) and no more than four discs on a waymarker (directional arrows, funder logo and promotional logo).

8.2 Promoted Routes

In the case of specifically promoted routes, it may be desirable to display the route name on the finger blade. It may also be appropriate to display a branding logo on the sign post and on waymarkers. The use of branding will ensure that the route is easily identifiable and will assist with route promotion and marketing. Branding discs should be inserted into a previously routed area (3mm) and should be no larger than 75 mm in diameter.

In order to reduce signage clutter, no more than two discs should be inserted on a finger post (funder logo and promotional logo) and no more than four discs on a waymarker (directional arrows, funder logo and promotional logo).

9 MONITORING AND REVIEW

The level of provision, the condition and the impact of path signage will be monitored through path surveys and feed-back from path users, Council officers, partners and land managers.

The Council's Geographic Information System (GIS) will be used to keep detailed records of directional signage across the City. This will assist in the strategic planning of new and replacement signage.

This guidance will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended every five years.

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USEFUL CONTACTS

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Aberdeen Kayak Club

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