



## Interpretative Sign and Brochure Design and Content

### Scope

Designing quality interpretation is fundamental to the on-going success of visitor attractions and experiences.

Signs and notices play an invaluable public relations role in park/path design by identifying the feature/path, giving directions, clarifying rules of safe usage and providing both basic and unique information relating to the path.

In doing so signs provide the means of giving the path users the full benefit of the experience of traversing the path, by allowing them to geographically orient themselves, by protecting their safety, by enhancing their enjoyment of the environment, by providing them with an understanding of the local history and by influencing their perceptions of the landscape.

Effective signage can also play a role in minimising the environmental and ecological impact of path users.

The following provides example interpretative sign design guidance for developers and managers who provide information about their path or park area. The content is based on a designed Wetland and is typical for other locations.



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# Interpretative Sign and Brochure Design and Content

## 1 Interpretative Signage

Outdoor interpretation takes place in a wide variety of locations but it is generally site-based i.e. it is located where there is something of interest to interpret.

Places where you could consider using interpretative signage could include national parks and natural areas, historic sites, cemeteries, water supply installations such as dam walls and storage and zoos.

The most commonly used Media include path head display signs, feature-based interpretative signs, self guided brochures, sometimes linked to numbered stops or the feature-based signs, and various forms of face-to-face interpretation including guides and costumed first or third person interpreting /shows/re-enactments, common in the historic town or pioneer village.

Audio-cassettes have been developed in a few places but their use is more common in indoor venues such as museums.

Push button audio description points could also be considered by wealthier organisations in busy locations, where subject matter needs to change regularly at short intervals, where alternate languages are needed. These should be able to link up with hearing aids with a 'T' connection.

Signs may be merely informative, some are directed at behaviour and others are genuinely interpretative in the sense of attempting to expand and integrate the visitors understanding of what they are seeing. This can be achieved by employing a variety of interpretative techniques, such as investigative challenge, 3D effects to feel or, in rare situations usually indoor, moving parts, smells and sounds.

The application or lack of it, of visitor research and evaluation in outdoor interpretation simply reflects the general lack of planning of and for interpretation in parks and nature reserves. Outdoors people are generally presented with a location with little or no informational or educational input. Provision of information is a 'value added' method of enriching visitor experience and encouraging return visits.

Path and park managers tend to evaluate and invest in more obvious revenue generating mechanisms such as a café or boating lake. The fact that providing information enriches the visitor's experience and the increased chance of a return visit is missed.

Interpretative signage is increasingly common at outdoor sites but it is a relatively limited and poorly understood media form.



The general lack of planning of interpretation means that development and installation of interpretative signage in outdoor venues tends to be a series of unconnected events with little integration on the one site, let alone between sites within the same region. Front-end and formative evaluation may be no more than running the drafts by some colleagues. Given the outdoor conditions and the ever-present threat of vandalism, signs are then designed to last, so that replacement costs are high. This leads to an install and forget mentality – not only are there no funds for remedial or re-evaluation, but what could we do with the results anyway?

In UK the Local Access Forums should lead the way in providing continuity between sites and in the accumulation and sharing of user findings with regard to sign design and content. Simply numbering or naming paths throughout the Forums area helps identity and simplifies production of interpretative brochures.

Outdoor locations vary enormously not only in their ambience or the experience provided but in their spatial characteristics. The intimate spaces of a forest walk where signs may be overgrown or dimly lighted are quite different to large open moorland spaces where signs have to be larger simply to be even noticed. Managers need to evaluate issues of sign size, design, content & text length and illustrations in relation to these local characteristics, as well as to the frequency of signs related to the length of the walk or features of the site.

Designers should not rely on one source or one group when designing sign and brochure content. While for example your group is enthusiastic about restoring a canal and you wish to share your enthusiasm the route may run through an area of special ecological, scientific or historical interest. Providing information about these features can enhance visitor experience and attract people who might otherwise not visit your site.

Like all forms of communication, the danger of audiences misunderstanding your message is very real. The importance of carefully checking your signs for double meanings, culturally specific explanations, confusing sentences and unclear meanings cannot be overstated! Get someone totally unconnected with your organisation to proof read any sign or document content. Preferably get someone from various age groups and learning abilities to have a look.

## **1.1 Some Benefits of Interpretative Signs**

The main benefits of providing interpretation for your visitors are:

- Interpretation helps to meet the increasing demand for more educational and informative visitor experiences.



- Interpretation provides interesting and memorable experiences that ensure visitor satisfaction, positive word-of-mouth advertising and repeat visits.
- Interpretation encourages visitors to care about the places they visit.
- Interpretation helps minimise environmental and cultural damage by explaining the impacts of various behaviours and suggesting appropriate alternatives.
- Interpretation can act as a substitute experience for
  - places that are very fragile and/or difficult to visit (e.g. caves, wetlands, sacred temples), or
  - topics that are impossible to experience directly (e.g. disease, medieval history).

## 1.2 Some Signage Considerations

**Content:** ask your selves...

What would we want to know about if we were visiting this?

What questions would our visitors ask us if they could?

What will our visitors already know, and how can we build on this?

Get outside opinions; do not rely on your internal group members.

They are likely to have similar opinions and perspectives; this will not always ensure that appropriate and understandable information is provided.

**Interpretative maps:** Add interpretative signs with maps at path heads.

- Keep maps simple. Don't get bogged down by precision.
- Design for the mind's eye to show only main path features, directions and intersections
- warn of hazards and less accessible routes.

**Local knowledge:** Increase knowledge of local resources to promote local interest and public support for maintenance and enhancement of your site.

- include anecdotal information from long term residents, this provides an intimate feeling for the site and enhances local opinion.
- Inventory best sites for interpretative signs
- Develop a brochure keyed to site locations along path networks

**Management** ; Design interpretative signage with public education and user responsibility information

- Encouraging/Engaging the public rather than laying strict rules and regulations will be more effective
- Educate to explain management activities and help build support for your site



**Confusion:** Reduce the risk of confusion to the path/location user  
– Co-ordinate the local Access Forum to develop signage that uses similar symbols and contains similar design themes and images for similar meanings.

- use nationally/internationally standard symbols and signs where these exist.

**Sign design:** Design signs so as to not detract from natural beauty of area

– Co-ordinate with local and national area signage design. Local Access Forums could lead the way by producing a standard for local signage.

- Retain natural character by limiting signage and displays

- Be aware of locating signs in tactful places

- Use natural materials in construction, use colours which match natural tones of vegetation, soils and rocks (always remaining aware of the need for people to be able to identify the sign against it's background)

**Sign location:** Keep interpretative structures to scales that blend with that of main features in the environment

- Locate on periphery of landscape features where appropriate (e.g. on edge of meadow, not in middle)

– do not place them where they could cause congestion along routes.

- Grouping of interpretative signs together, especially at path heads, rest areas, and path facility locations. Bulletin boards or kiosks work well for this. At the start of a path into remote country, where users need to be aware of the level of experience and equipment required.

- Maintaining adequate distance between signs to allow users time to read and respond to the differing messages.

- Where hazards may not be obvious, such as gaps in bridge planking where bicycle or wheelchair tyres could be caught

- In any situation where visitor expectations about the safety of an activity may not match reality (for example in camping areas where tree limbs may fall without warning), or, where incoming tides may cause a rapid change in water levels.

**Sight lines** are also important.

- Legibility distances are of no use if the sign is obscured.

- Signs should be placed where obstacles such as vegetation, parked cars or buildings will not block the sign from view.

**Vandalism:** - Use sign construction more resistant to vandalism

- Locate signs in less vandalism prone areas (away from unsupervised path heads)

– cattle can also be a problem using signs to scratch their itches and knocking the sign over. Select sites with this in mind.

– use materials which are easily cleaned and repaired.

**Warning signs:** use standard warning, caution and danger signs and symbols

- Once the sign has been designed it should be placed in a position that optimises the chance of it being noticed and acted upon. For example, in tourism settings involving animals, warning signs should be placed where visitors are most likely to look (paths, picnic areas and viewing platforms)
- warnings rarely work if visitors think the required behaviour is difficult, inconvenient, expensive or when the risk of injury seems remote. To encourage responsible behaviour managers should provide
- facilities that make it easy for visitors to adopt the behaviour (e.g. bins for food scraps);
- information that persuades visitors that they are personally at risk;
- evidence that adopting the required behaviour reduces the risk.
- path route which encourage users to stay with the path rather than taking short cuts.

## 2 Sign Design

### 2.1 General Considerations

Pick material that is appropriate to the subject. For example, wood frames resembling mining shaft braces would be effective for mine interpretation.

- Choose resilient materials which will be more resistant to vandalism.
- Consider the extreme weather conditions to which the signs will be exposed.
- Blend sign colours and materials with the site. With due regard for sign identification and reduction of tripping hazards.
- Consider construction and maintenance costs. Failure to consider maintenance and upkeep costs during the initial planning is one of the main causes of poor signage at venues and along path networks.

Regular inspection walks should be made by management to check sign condition and locations. A sign pointing in the wrong direction is less than helpful.

- The base is just as important as the sign itself. Consider using stones, metal or attractive wood framing.
- It is difficult to read signs with bright sunlight behind them -





check whether outdoor paths are best walked clockwise or anti-clockwise and whether this varies during the day.

- Check that angled sign boards with Perspex protective faces are not likely to be made unreadable by glare from reflected sun light.
- Signs in bright light are easiest to read if they have light coloured lettering on dark backgrounds, while those in darker areas are most visible if they have dark lettering on light backgrounds.
- Be careful printing text on transparent surfaces. If the lighting creates shadows or sun is directly visible the text will be virtually impossible to read.
- Central and consistent placement of signs and labels can significantly increase the amount of time visitors spend looking at displays and attractions.
- Illustrations make your signs attractive, easier to read and more memorable. Illustrations are particularly useful for:
  - \* describing objects, people or places mentioned in the text;
  - \* representing abstract structures (e.g. water cycles);
  - \* showing spatial relationships (e.g. solar system),
  - \* showing underground geological structure;
  - \* maps and way finding;
  - \* demonstrating instructions (e.g. how to operate an interactive display);
  - \* putting unfamiliar topics into context (e.g. recreations of ruined buildings, showing life style in the middle ages);
  - \* emphasising key points.
- The decision about whether or not to include illustrations should be based on the following 'rules':
  - Illustrations must be relevant to the topic. If the link between the text and the accompanying illustrations is not obvious, visitors are likely to become confused and may not read any further.
  - Illustrations should be simple and not require extra text (other than a label/caption) to explain them. Remember a picture should paint a thousand words!
  - It is easier to read labels than legends or keys especially on larger boards
  - Illustrations should demonstrate one main idea.
  - Illustrations should be positioned so signs are balanced and not too crowded
  - text should not be placed over illustrations and changes of colour

Although listed separately many of the following elements to improve inclusiveness for one group will also enhance the visitor's experience for the other.

### 2.1.1 Elements for older and disabled visitors

Design elements that include and not exclude visitors:

- Position lights to minimise reflection from signage, displays and protective glass shields;
- Position displays so visitors gradually move from light to dark areas;
- Provide seating, particularly at interactive exhibits, viewing platforms and areas where considerable time may be required to read signage or view exhibits; Also at intervals along connecting routes combining seating with signage provides engagement while resting.
- Ensure exhibits take into account limited ability to bend down or to manipulate interactive displays;
- Write clear instructions for interactive displays;
- Displays and exhibits that are three dimensional, tactile and easy to clean and do not have sharp edges or places where fingers can become trapped ;
- Exhibits and signs that have rounded edges;
- Models and full-scale replicas of display items that can be handled;
- Good colour contrasts and large texts;
- Easy access;
- Objects that are mounted against simple backgrounds;
- No shadows on display items or guide's faces;
- A limited number of objects staggered from front to back;
- Auditory information such as portable sound cassettes or 'in situ' audio presentations.  
Provision of hearing loops or other hearing amplification devices; This input should be detailed enough to provide visually impaired visitors with a detailed 'mental image' of the items or concepts being exhibited; amplified sounds related to the exhibit (e.g. the "whuunh" sound of a working horse breathing);
- Elements that stimulate other senses (e.g. Textures, odours).
- Ensure that any information presented audibly is also presented visually;
- Text captioning of any audio-visual displays;
- Ensure that displays which rely on sound to convey meaning are accompanied by additional graphics; and
- Design attractions so that the sound from separate exhibits do not overlap or interfere with each other.



### 2.1.2 Child Elements

Many displays are too high and too complex for children, and parents soon tire or may not be capable of lifting them to view displays that in some cases are too difficult to explain!

Design elements that combat access problems include:

- Displaying items placing labels and text at 'child-friendly' heights; on large boards place information likely to attract children on the lower half of the board
- Providing a viewing platform for children to stand on; Ensuring that safety barriers or provided where necessary and that the platforms do not become a tripping hazard.
- Cutting 'peep' holes into the front of exhibits at various levels to allow viewing by children of different heights; make sure that holes are smooth edged and that children cannot become wedged.
- Creating 'discovery holes' for children to crawl into; always ensuring that the child can be rescued if they become afraid or lost.
- Incorporating display boxes in the floor (this is particularly good for displaying models of ground-dwelling creatures, relief maps, archaeological ruins etc). Ensuring that the surface is strong enough to support anyone likely to step on the cover and that the surface is not a slip hazard especially when wet.
- Agility, balance and co-ordination activities can be incorporated into or alongside paths by building low level balance beams, swinging bridges, climbing frames and flying foxes.
- Another example you could hide some 'treasures' such as carvings, numbers, animal statues, fake jewels (whatever fits within your theme) along the route for children to search for. Ensure these are clearly pictured at the beginning of the trail so that adults as well as children know what they are looking for!
- Varied activities (e.g. dance, drama, mime, drawing, craft)
- Use relevant illustrations to improve comprehension and reinforce messages.

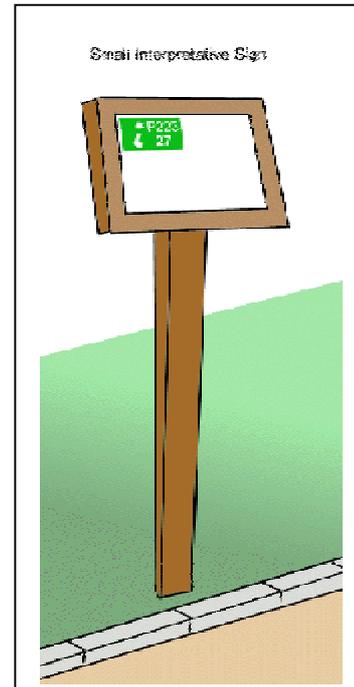
## 2.2 Small signs

These are small signs intended to provide point information about specific features of the site. This will normally contain a picture (photo or sketch) and brief information.

- 850 mm tall, single post 75 x 75 mm
- display board single A4 and A3 sized
- Portion of post in ground (600 mm) treated with preservative.

### 2.2.1 Typical Board Materials

- Corners mitered and glued (waterproof)
- Stainless Steel Screws
- Carriage Bolts to hold frame to back board
- Back Board made of treated Plywood, Wood Stained
- Non-glare Plexiglass/Perspex sealed to frame with clear silicone



### 2.2.2 Text (typical for smaller signs)

- Large text to be 20 point (or larger) e.g. headings
- Sub-headings 18 point
- Information text 14-16 point print.
- Text to contrast with background

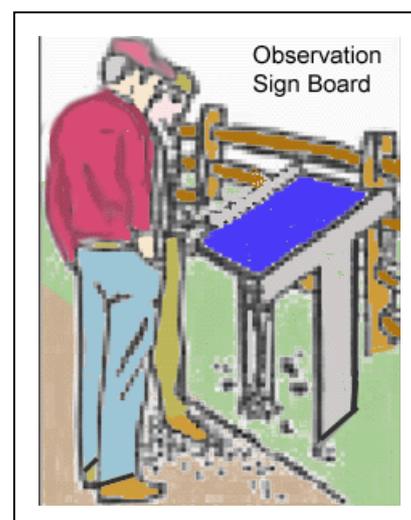
### 2.2.3 Landing Area

1500-2000 mm wide level landing full length of sign with approach from path allowing space for people to read sign without obstructing the path width.

## 2.3 Observation Signs

Similar to Small Signs above, but providing more detailed information about a feature, location or species.

- Size two A3 sheets
- 850 mm tall, single post 75 x 75
- Portion of post in ground (600 mm) treated with preservative.



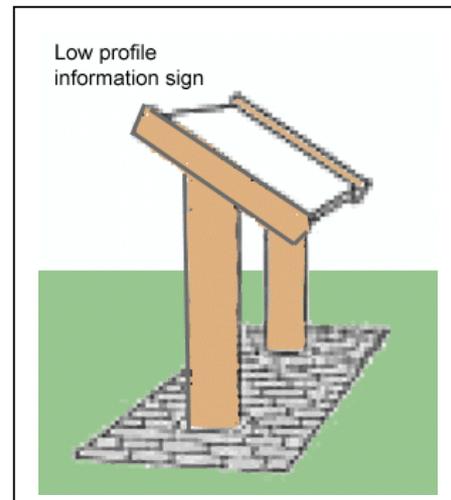
## 2.4 Information Signs

These are larger signs at view points etc., providing more detailed information, pictures and possibly 3D samples, e.g. section of tree trunk.

- Angled table any width by 750 mm high. Front of display 730 mm ground clearance, rear of sign at 900 mm height.

### 2.4.1 Support design

- 2 or 4 legged dependent on weather exposure
- Solid frame 50 x 75 mm timber
- Leg posts 2 legged 100 x 75 mm timber, 4 legged 75 x 75 mm timber
- Portion of post in ground ( 600 mm) treated with preservative



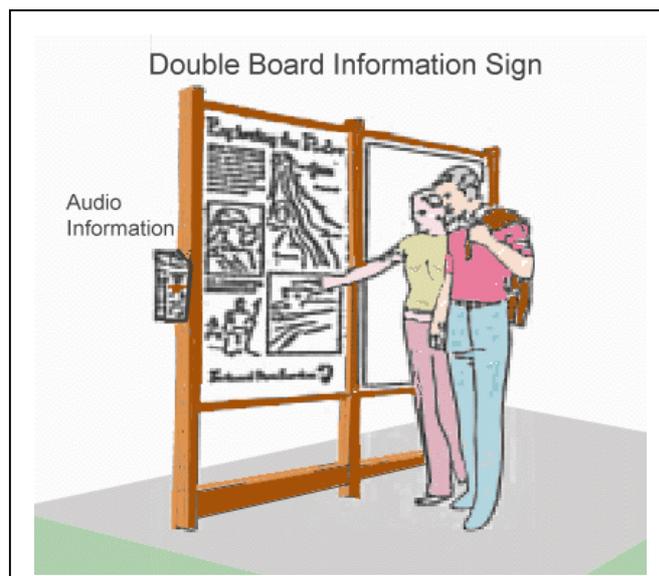
### 2.4.2 Board design

- Corners mitered and glued (waterproof)
- Stainless Steel Screws
- Carriage Bolts to hold frame to back board
- Back Board made of treated Plywood, Wood Stained
- Non-glare Plexiglass sealed to frame with clear silicone

## 2.5 Large signs e.g. Path Heads

These are signs which provide information and orientation for visitors by using vertical display boards' information can be presented on both sides.

- The Length of the board is dependent on the total information the site management wishes to provide.
- Highest text to be 1750 mm above the surface and the lowest 750mm.
- Consider placing a roof over the sign and ground space.





- Post and frame dimensions and sizes will depend on the size of the board and whether it is wood or steel construction.
- A 1500-2000 mm wide level, drained space should be provided on all sides of the sign.

### 2.5.1 Text

- Large text to be 24 point (or larger) e.g. headings
- Sub-headings 20 point
- Information text 16-18 point print.
- Text to contrast with background

## 2.6 Example Sign Content and Arrangement

Example content for Path Head, Service Area or Car Park signs

<p>Sign 1</p> <p>What is a wetland</p> <p>History of wetland</p> <p>Schematic overview and path routes</p>	<p>Sign 2</p> <p>Organisms</p> <p>water flow rates</p> <p>water samples</p> <p>nutrient fluxes</p> <p>chemistry</p> <p>biology</p>
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### Content for View Point Information Signs

<p>Surface flow</p> <p>-3 cells A4 size</p>	<p>Subsurface flow</p>
<p>Map of wetlands</p>	<p>Why Build a wetland</p>

### 2.6.1 Content

- Text needs order and hierarchy of importance or information. All emphasis is no emphasis. The title, subheads and captions should tell the general story.

- Focus on one theme per sign with only one or two ideas explored.
- Avoid unfamiliar terms, scientific or bureaucratic jargon. Make your text readable to a wide range of visitors.
- Evaluate the final content by applying a couple of questions: So what? Why should I want to know this information?
- Use conversational rather than formal language.
- Be concise, use as few words and be as simple as possible.
- Consider your visitor's language needs if you attract a large number of a particular language group as visitors consider signage in their language.



## 2.7 More on materials

Strengths and weaknesses of some common materials used for sign manufacture

Material	Strengths	Weaknesses
Aluminium (for frames)	Aluminium is preferable because it does not rust and can be powder coated.	Bright aluminium is reflective and can be difficult to see in small sections.
Aluminium Alloy (for directional signs)	Alloy is preferable to timber because it can be powder coated. Alloy is usually bent rather than broken by vandals and can be bent back into shape. Unlike timber, alloy cannot rot. In addition there are more fixing alternatives for an alloy sign	Is more expensive to buy than wood
'Cast' Vinyl (for lettering)	Premium high performance 'Cast' Vinyl e.g. - 3M (for lettering) Allows embossed (raised) characters Guaranteed for seven years	Can be expensive



Material	Strengths	Weaknesses
	against shrinkage and colour fading whereas 'calendar' vinyl can shrink and fade.	
Glass-fibre	Can simulate natural features such as rock walls and stone Cheap to make duplicates Good for detailed graphics Resistant to weathering Wide range of colours available	Colours fade over time Has limited resistance to vandalism
Metal	Can reproduce black & white photos Good for detailed graphics Resistant to fading and discoloration Resistant to weathering and vandalism	Expensive to duplicate Reflects bright sunlight
Porcelain enamel	Good for detailed graphics Photographs can be reproduced Resistant to weathering and vandalism Wide range of colours available	Expensive Susceptible to chipping and subsequent rusting
Powder Coating (for frames and directional signs)	Power coating is used because it will not fade, peel or crack as quickly as paint.	Green and blue colouring tends to fade in sunlight (UV).
Stone	Easy to maintain Good for black and white images Good for detailed line art Resistant to weathering and vandalism	Natural contours may make words difficult to read
Wood	Blends with natural environment Can be individually shaped and carved Can be painted Ages well	Difficult to carve detailed graphics Easy to vandalise



Material	Strengths	Weaknesses
	Easy to construct	
Screen Printed Signs	Signs are printed in fade-resistant colours capable of producing fine detail for photographs, maps and diagrams Spare copies can be produced cheaply for vandal replacement	Require Toughened glass and UV resistant materials with durable, vandal-proof frames ensure long lasting signs.
Computer Cut Vinyl Signs	This system is based on the intricate computer cutting of adhesive vinyl which can reproduce type, logos, background colours and bold graphics. Premium high performance "cast" vinyl is to be specified. It is guaranteed against shrinkage and colour fading for 7 years	Cheaper grades may shrink and fade

Regardless of the material chosen, on-going maintenance and upkeep (cleaning) is vital if signs are to remain effective. Regular preventive maintenance is cheaper than replacement of manufactured signs.

Poorly maintained signs are not only difficult to read, but also send visitors a message that you don't really care.

### 3 Sign Maintenance

Effective maintenance of signage is essential to ensure the ongoing quality of site usage. Signage can lose its effectiveness through normal weathering, accidental and animal damage, vandalism or being obscured by foliage.

The Management should have a maintenance program in place which should include regular site inspections, management of the repair process and follow up inspections to ensure that the identified work has been properly carried out.

The Management should ensure that sufficient funds for effective maintenance are included in the annual budget.

Periodic maintenance helps you avoid major reconstruction. Schedule your maintenance in relation to the amount and extent of use. You also should consider the safety or liability constraints of your users. Maintenance on disability-accessible trails should include controlling weeds, preventing excessive cracking, and protecting the surface against erosion.

## 4 Brochure

To reduce the need to maintain and replace signs, consider using numbered signs keyed to an accompanying interpretative brochure that can be updated inexpensively as forest conditions. See also our guides 'Access Guides for Museums' and 'Producing and Using Transport Access Guides'.

Path Network Brochures can effectively interpret the quality and extent of an area's cultural development, ecology or of its natural life forms, geology, hydrology, forces, and elements. Resources located on the path can be interpreted through brochure descriptions keyed to numbered posts or to recognisable landmarks, audio versions of brochure text, path sign panels, visitor-activated message repeaters, or by staff.

Self guided paths have the benefit of serving large numbers of users at their own pace without the need for continual staff attendance.

Providing signage or printed guides in Braille is encouraged, but they should not be labelled as "Braille Paths." Keep in mind that paths made accessible to people in wheelchairs are also convenient for visitors using baby buggies, crutches, or walkers.

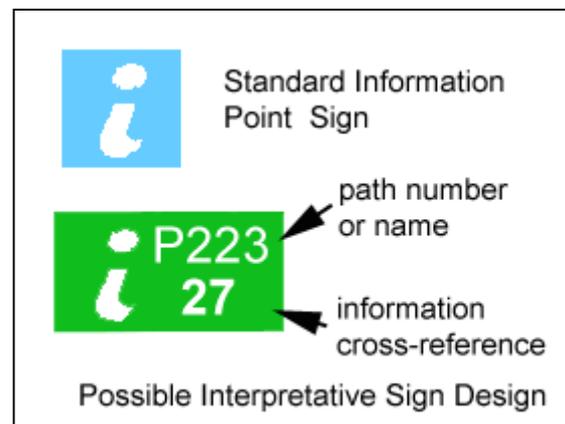
Brochures do not have to be expensive to produce a trifold A4 sheet can provide basic information.

Good self-guided brochures have the following features:

- They are designed in the same format and style as other information in the exhibit/attraction or other related local guides.

- They include diagrams and/or maps to enable visitors to choose where to go and what to view.

- Information is clearly numbered and is easily matched to the feature being described. The path and location are consistently numbered with numbered signs. The signs should be placed where easily seen and logical to the subject.



- The use of the brochure is catered for in the overall design of the exhibit. In particular, there should be adequate space and lighting for visitors to stand and read without blocking the view and access of others. The provision of seating at key points in the exhibit/path to enable visitors to rest and catch up with reading is also recommended.



When designing your brochure consider:

### Audience

- Who is my target audience?
- What are their needs/desires?
- What information will they want?
- What messages will they respond best to?
- What potential problems and hazards do I need to warn about? (e.g. steep inclines and narrow paths can be a problem or older people and those using mobility aids)
- What alternate formats will I need? (large print, cassette tape, CD, VCR, simplified illustrated text, children's text)

### Objectives

- What do you want the brochure to do (e.g. attract more visitors to the site; encourage people to stay longer; provide information about surrounding areas/attractions)?
- Is there a range of objectives, and if so, which are the most important?

### Style

- What image are you trying to portray?
- What style of product will best suit these images (e.g. up-market products generally use heavier quality paper, thematic photographs and lower density per page)? (Glossy paper should not be used as it is reflective and often difficult to read)
- Display racks are often crowded - ensure your brochure is easy to identify and that the title is not in a place that will be covered by other brochures.
- Make the cover page appealing?
- Will the images on the cover page convey the intended message? Is the cover page relevant to the brochure content?
- Will the cover page stand out from those of competitors (i.e. attractive and appealing design).
- Headlines are fresh, provocative and reflect the content of the brochure. The use of analogies and word plays can be effective provided they are not too 'clever', jargony, or ambiguous.
- Are Logos are used consistently.
- Are themes carried throughout all promotional and signage materials.

### Content

See also RNIB Good print Guide in the Appendix for details on text style and word usage.



- The brochure content is relevant and appealing to the target audience.
- The headline attracts the attention of the desired audience.
- The headline summarises the major benefit/attraction of the venue.
- Text is written in short simple sentences using a conversational tone.
- Information is relevant and specific (e.g. directions, admission prices, times of opening, hazards, contact details).  
Always provide warning of hazards or potential problems with your location. There is nothing more frustrating (and damaging to your reputation) than travelling long distance to a venue then discovering you cannot access the route.
- The arrangement of typeface and illustrations is uncluttered.
- The text is logically presented and easy to read.
- Typeface, size and overall style is fairly consistent.
- Separate services/products/features are delineated by boxes, headings, lines and white spaces.
- Brochures that are mainly text need a large heading to attract attention;
- Illustrations will capture attention provided they are simple and large enough for people to decipher;
- Illustrations need to be useful and must relate to the content; and
- Photographs are particularly effective

## 5 Related tasks

- Researched topics individually and compile data.
- Send compiled data to project partners
- Layout design for all of the signs
- Decide which topics to include in signs
- Decide which topics to include in brochure.
- Divide up responsibilities of brochure/sign topics among the team members.
- Source pictures
- Research hydrology, chemistry and biology of wetlands
- Produce and edit brochure and sign content with geologists, hydrologist and ecologist input
- Finalize brochure
- Modify information



- Final layouts for signs and brochure
- Meet with construction team
- Compatibility between brochure and signs
- Location of signs
- Costs (laminating, paper, etc.) Investigate printing/duplicating possibilities based on quantity and financial capability.
- Tri-fold brochure for general visitors, provide in alternate formats. Consider having audio cassette/CD.
- Consider audio description at main sign boards with hearing aid link
- Consider making a documentary film of the area, including construction projects etc. for sale and as information centre display.

#### Ongoing tasks

- "Pollutant Progress Report"; Sample and analyze water samples.; Use past data of pollutants to compare any progress or regression in H<sub>2</sub>O quality
- Look at possible other projects (sampling) once finished, provided there is funding.

## 6 Further Information

- Beck, Larry and Ted Cable. 1998. Interpretation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture. Sagamore Publishing, Champaign, Illinois.

## Appendix RNIB's Clear Print checklist

The following is based on the RNIB clear print check list.

For those with visual impairment:

- Is the typeface at least 12 points or above
- Does the text contrast clearly with the background?
- If the type is reversed, does it contrast sufficiently with its background? Is it big enough? Reversed colour (**light text on dark background**) needs to be 2 points larger and/or bold to give the same readability.
- Avoid stretching or condensing print, italics and justification
- Is there enough space between each line of type and between paragraphs?
- Is the typeface either semi-bold or bold?
- Are sentences written in mixed case letters? (Sentence case should be used as some people identify whole words by their shape.)
- Are the numerals clear?
- Are any words split between two lines? (There should not be.)
- Is text unjustified, i.e. aligned to the left margin?
- Are there any uneven gaps between words or letters?
- Is any text centred? (Avoid central alignment except for titles.)
- Are there 60-70 characters per line? (Unless you are using columns.)
- Is there enough space between columns?
- Does text follow easily from column to column?
- Is the page layout clear and unfussy?
- Is there a contents list? (Any document longer than 10 pages should have a content list and/or index.)
- Are page numbers and headings consistent and in the same place on each page?
- Is there a space between paragraphs?
- Is text set horizontally?
- Have you set text around illustrations? ( this can be confusing.)
- If the reader needs to write on the page, is there enough space?
- If there are images, are they clearly defined and easy to read? (Preferably set to the right side of any text.)
- Are images clearly separated from the text? (text over pictures can be unreadable.)



- Use the paper matt? (Avoid very glossy paper the glare makes reading difficult for most people.)
- Is the page a size which is easy to handle? (Generally A4 is the largest suitable for people to carry about and read.)
- Do folds obscure the text or pictures?
- Can the document be flattened, so it can be placed under a scanner or screen magnifier?

### Recommendations for people with learning difficulties

- Do not use long sentences
- Include one main point, and one or two clauses in a sentence.
- Write in the active rather than the passive voice.
- Avoid abstract concepts.
- Use simple words without being patronising.
- Repeat difficult or unfamiliar words, and explain them.
- Do not use jargon
- Avoid abbreviations and acronyms.
- Avoid using the third person, addressing the reader as you is more user friendly
- Keep the line length short
- Align text left with a ragged right edge.
- Allow a good space between columns of text
- Avoid all capitals printing
- Avoid stretching or condensing print, italics and justification
- Use illustrations, cartoons, photographs to supplement the written words.
- Use standard symbols where these are commonly understood. Keep to standard colours for the symbol as using different colours can lose the symbol its meaning.
- Use MAKATON a symbol language system. (the system is expensive and not widely known, although recommended by various bodies)
- Audio visual presentations are good
- Use digits rather than write the word i.e. 7 not seven (this is opposite to those with visual impairment).

## Language

### Using plain English

The following are the recommendations of the RNIB for the production of clear plain language documents.

Using clear and simple text (known as plain English) with short sentences, simple punctuation and no jargon will help get your message across more effectively. Plain English, like Clear Print, benefits everyone but is essential for anyone with a learning disability. Here are some pointers:

- One sentence should express one idea.
- Use short paragraphs, grouping ideas on one theme in each paragraph.
- Never use a long word when a short one will do. For example consider using "home" rather than "accommodation", or "help" rather than "assistance".
- For signs use familiar terms such as 'WC' rather than 'Rest Room'.
- Eliminate unnecessary words; for example, use "now" instead of "at the present moment in time". Ask yourself whether phrases such as "it has to be said that" add anything to your document.
- Limit the use of jargon and technical terms unless you are certain that every reader understands them. If you have to use them, explain them.
- Try not to use abbreviations. Where you do use them, spell them out the first time, or if you haven't used them for a few pages.
- Punctuation should be simple but accurate. A well punctuated document is easy to understand.
- Think carefully about your tone of voice. For example, when you find yourself writing about "persons" instead of "people" you can be sure your writing is becoming distant from your audience.
- Be direct. For example, address the reader as "you" and refer to yourself as "I" or "we". Readers respond much more positively to this direct style of writing.
- Write in an active rather than a passive voice. For example, write "We will hold meetings..." rather than "Meetings will be held...".
- Avoid negatives as they tend to confuse people. For example, "You will limit your choice of course dates if you do not respond by..." is better expressed positively as "You will have more choice of course dates if you respond by".