

Policy for the Planting, Sponsorship and Advertising on Roundabouts and Verges

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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Statement
3. Objectives
4. Principles
5. Advertising
6. Installing, Maintaining and Planting in the Highway
7. Roundabout and Verge Planting Without Signs
8. Sponsored Roundabout and Verge Planting With Signs
9. Installation of Post and Signs
10. Costs
11. Contacts

1. Introduction

Lincolnshire County Council supports all reasonable efforts to enhance the highway network wherever possible, including the sponsorship and planting of roundabouts and verges.

Advertising on roundabouts and verges is usually called sponsorship because the funds support the cost of maintaining these sites, fund flower displays and Britain in Bloom events.

Some Councils share this ambition and already operate sponsorship schemes. Lincolnshire County Council will continue to support these existing schemes. Requests from Parish and Town council's community groups, and commercial sponsors should also be considered.

All Councils have differing requirements regarding the application of roundabout and verge advertising and sponsorship and it is impractical to adopt a one size fits all policy. Lincolnshire County Council will encourage advertising and sponsorship requiring signs by issuing licences lasting up to 5 years for schemes and associated signs that meet highways safety standards and which have the required approval from the relevant Planning Department.

Lincolnshire County Council may enter into its own sponsorship scheme to cover those areas of the County where no other council scheme exists. A scheme that enhances the visual appearance of the highway would give added value to the attractiveness of working in and visiting the County.

2. Statement

Lincolnshire County Council will whenever possible support all Councils to improve and enhance the appearance of roundabouts and verges within the guidance contained in this policy and without compromising highway safety.

3. Objectives

- To ensure that the opportunity for roundabout and verge sponsorship and advertising is clearly defined and communicated
- To ensure that the agreements and licences utilised between Councils and Sponsors include the appropriate regulations that must be adhered to
- To encourage Councils that fund flower displays and Britain in Bloom events
- To allow businesses access to advertising opportunities
- To enhance the control of illegal signing and other activities on the highway network

- To improve the visual amenity of the area and promote local heritage, which may include approved installations

4. Principles

The introduction of any sponsorship scheme or advertising sign must be coordinated between all relevant Councils to ensure it is de-conflicted from any other Council's scheme.

Lincolnshire County Council reserve the right to veto a licence with any business or entity that is in legal or financial conflict with the Council or which connects the Council with any political party, pressure group or which conflicts with the aims of this policy. The Council will not accept advertising and sponsorship from companies who are in contract negotiation with the Council where this may be viewed as an endorsement of the bid.

5. Advertising

The Council abides by national guidance published by the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) - the UK's independent regulator of advertising across all online and offline media. The central principle for all advertising (marketing communications) is that advertising content should be:

- Legal, decent, honest and truthful
- Have due responsibility to consumers and society
- Be aligned to the accepted standards for fair competition in business.

Lincolnshire County Council does reserve the right to refuse any requests for licencing if the content is considered inappropriate or that fail to meet the requirements that ensure highway safety.

Content that is not permitted for advertising includes, but is not limited to, advertising that contains, infers or suggests any of the following:

- Advocacy of, or opposition to, any politically, environmentally or socially controversial subjects or issues
- Disparagement or promotion of any person or class of persons
- Promotion or incitement of illegal, violent or socially undesirable acts
- Promotion or availability of tobacco products, weapons, gambling or illegal drugs
- Advertising of financial organisations and loan advancers with punitive interest rates
- Promotion or availability of adult or sexually orientated entertainment materials
- Advertising that infringes on any trademark, copyright or patent rights of another company

- Claims or representations in violation of advertising or consumer protection laws.

Lincolnshire County Council shall also reserve the right to withdraw any licencing agreement where it is deemed that the advertiser has suffered a reputational loss due to its conduct, when such conduct is inconsistent with the Councils aims and objectives.

6. Installing, Maintaining and Planting in the Highway

The Highway Authority will consider as part of an application that the Health and Safety aspects of both installation and maintenance, with the expectation that such requirements are satisfactorily implemented. This will also include all relevant indemnity cover and workforce accreditations.

Anyone undertaking planting in the highway will be required to have public liability insurance to an indemnity level of £5 million and agree to safe methods of working with the Highway Authority prior to commencing works.

7. Roundabout and Verge Planting Schemes - without Signs

Under Sections 64 and 96 of the Highways Act 1980, Lincolnshire County Council may carry out planting schemes on highway land, including roundabouts and verges, as it sees fit. The Highway Authority will approve Planting Schemes that meet highway safety requirements and licence the use of highway land, up to a maximum of 5 years. Planting schemes do not include signs. Any Council within the County may apply to Lincolnshire County Council for a Planting licence.

8. Sponsored Roundabout and Verge Planting with Advertising Signs

The legal requirements that cover advertising and sponsorship signs are contained in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (hereafter known as the Regulations).

Small sponsorship signs are liable for Planning Permission as they are not covered by Schedule 1 of the Regulations; however some District Council Planning Departments in Lincolnshire currently apply discretion for low level, small signs (sometimes referred to as deemed consent).

Regardless of the sign design the relevant District Council Planning Department must be consulted prior to installation to gain the necessary permission. All signs must also be approved by the Highway Authority.

9. Installation of Posts and Signs

All Councils / sponsors will have to consult with the County Council Highway Authority prior to commencement of any works. Consideration of such installations

will require the supply of full technical specifications of ground works, posts, sign dimensions, materials, advertising content, and accurate sign location(s).

Whilst a specific size of sign cannot be guaranteed to gain Highway Authority or Planning Department approval, sponsors and applicants could apply for signs measuring 920mm x 460mm.

10. Costs

There will be a general presumption that the sponsor bears the full cost of all planting schemes, including maintenance, associated signing and returning the highway to its original condition on termination of any licence. Cost sharing will be encouraged between all Councils and their sponsor partners.

11. Contacts

Potential sponsors may find the following contact details useful, including District and County Council websites. E-mails should contain "Sponsorship of Highways roundabouts and verges" in the title.

Lincolnshire County Council

Planting licences are obtainable from:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/transport-and-roads/highways-licences-and-permits/plant-within-the-highway/35517.article>

Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) website

This website has links to Lincolnshire County Council and District Council websites:

<http://www.lalc.co.uk/useful-links/>

Parish and Town Council Search Tool

Contact details for Parish and Town Councils can be found through this link:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/community-leisure-and-events/find-your-town-or-parish-council/>