Coyrle er Ymmyd y Ghaelg er Cowraghyn Ellan Vannin

Guide to the use of Manx on Isle of Man signage

DESTINATION FIRST

INTRODUCTION

This is the first guide of its type to lay out how to incorporate Manx into **new or replacement** public signage in the Isle of Man. Demand for its creation has come from Local Authorities and individuals who have been seeking support, guidance and direction.

Manx is protected under the **European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML)**, with the Isle of Man Government applying Part III of the Charter in 2021.

A Tynwald resolution in 1985 established the opinion that "Manx Gaelic should be supported and encouraged by all agencies of Government and Boards of Tynwald so far as they are practically able". It addressed the official and legal standing of Manx, stating that all official oaths could be made in either Manx or English, that Manx placenames should be protected and that bilingual place names in Manx and English should have equal standing.

In December 1995 the Department of Education produced a report on the Future Development of the Manx Language, which was received by Tynwald. It gave a commitment to support and promote the language, building upon previous resolutions and leading to more formal programs and educational institutions in the subsequent years.

The guidance clarifies that British Standard BS EN 17210:2021 'Accessibility and Usability of the Built Environment' applies to Manx wording as well as English wording.

It is pleasing to introduce the guide during Blein ny Gaelgey - the Year of the Manx Language, which features a wide range of events, projects, and activities to promote and celebrate the language across the Isle of Man and internationally and provide a lasting legacy. This simple guide supports these aims.

GUIDE TO THE USE OF MANX ON ISLE OF MAN SIGNAGE

GUIDANCE

Road & Place Names

1. If a Manx name is being used as the main place description, then **NO** English translation is required e.g. Ballabeg.

2. Where English is currently used, or being proposed, a Manx translation **should be included**, e.g. for [Birch Drive], the translation would be [Imman Beih].

Footpath Signage

PRoW footpaths with existing Manx names such as the Raad Ny Foillan and Bayr Ny Skeddan do not require a translation. Where there is an English name, the Manx should be included also. A QR code with a link to pronunciation and English meaning may be added.

Countryside Codes & Litter Codes/Campaigns

Both English & Manx **should be included**.

Directional & Brown Tourist Signs

Both English & Manx **should be included**.

Regulatory Signage (Rules of the Road)

The inclusion of the Manx language on regulatory signage is currently outside the scope of this guidance but may be considered separately in future. It is noted that bilingual regulatory signage is used frequently in other parts of the British Isles.

DESIGN & STYLE CONSIDERATIONS

Manx Positioning on Sign

Where both languages are displayed, it is recommended that Manx is positioned above or before the English text.

Prominence

Typographic hierarchy organises text in a way that guides the reader's eye to what is most important.

Manx and English should be presented with equitable prominence, while maintaining optimum legibility, accessibility and wayfinding functionality.

This can be achieved through appropriate and carefully considered choices of font, type size, leading, kerning, position, colour and tone without compromising legibility and consistency.

Font Style

Regulatory signage should use the standard UK road sign font - Transport. For street and road signs a sans serif font such as Arial, Helvetica or Verdana should be used as they are easy to read.

Font Colour

Black for both languages is preferred for consistency and legibility. Alternative colour schemes may be used where both languages maintain equal prominence and sufficient contrast with the background.

Case

Research consistently shows that sentence case, title case and mixed case are easier to read than large blocks of all capitals.

Accessibility

Consider Braille, tactile and other accessible information formats where appropriate.

SIGN LAYOUT

Bilingual Signs

Bilingual street nameplates should display the Manx name above the English name, with both languages given equal visual prominence.

A minimum letter height of 75mm is recommended for residential streets, increasing to 100mm where greater viewing distance is required. Plate dimensions should be increased as necessary to accommodate both languages, rather than reducing the size or prominence of either language.

Straid Mylvreeshey
Bridson Street

Reayrt ny Baie
Bay View Road

BALLABEG

Suggested Dimensions

Suggested dimensions for a standard residential street nameplate:

- Overall plate width: variable, usually 900-1200mm depending on name length
- Overall plate height: approx. 250-320mm
- Top margin: 35-45mm
- Manx text height: 75mm
- Gap between language lines: 20-25mm
- English text height: 75mm
- Bottom margin: 35-45mm

GUIDE TO THE USE OF MANX ON ISLE OF MAN SIGNAGE

VISUAL GUIDE FOR 'WELCOME TO ...' SIGNAGE

Manx Positioning on Sign

Manx positioning to be decided by each Local Authority or public body. It is recommended that Manx should ideally be placed before the English.

Prominence

Typographic hierarchy organises text in a way that guides the reader's eye to what is most important.

Manx and English should be presented with equitable prominence, while maintaining optimum legibility, accessibility and wayfinding functionality.

This can be achieved through appropriate and carefully considered choices of font, type size, leading, kerning, position, colour and tone without compromising legibility and consistency.

Font Style

A sans serif font such as Arial, Helvetica and Verdana should be used, without italics, as they are easy to read.

Font Colour

Black for both languages is preferred for consistency and legibility. Alternative colour schemes may be used where both languages maintain equal prominence and sufficient contrast with the background. Remember BS EN 17210:2021 applies to Manx and English wording.

Case

Upper case lettering for original versions of place names.

'Welcome to' and other wording should use sentence case capitalisation only for both languages.

Example

- ☑ The positioning of the Manx is at the discretion of the Local Authority.
- ☑ The Manx and English are given equal prominence through appropriate use of colour, tone, size and position. Where the name is to be in Manx only, upper case can be used.
- ☑ For legibility, the font for both languages should be sans serif such as Arial, Helvetica and Verdana, with neither language italicised. Do not use decorative or historical fonts for Manx.
- ☑ If an alternative colour is used for one language, both languages should retain equivalent legibility throughout the sign's lifespan, with neither colour fading significantly faster than the other.
- ☑ Upper case lettering can be used for place names. 'Welcome to' and other wording uses sentence case capitalisation only.

.

GUIDE TO THE USE OF MANX ON ISLE OF MAN SIGNAGE

SUPPORT

Translation Services

Culture Vannin
translations@culturevannin.im

Translation response times: Culture Vannin's Translation Service recommends allowing a lead time of two working weeks.

Quality Assurance

Manx Language Officer (MLO), DESC
Robert.Teare@sch.im

To advise on policy, offer guidance and perform final checks before signs are produced.

Guidance to Property Site Developers

Manx Language Officer (MLO), DESC
Robert.Teare@sch.im

To advise on potential place and street naming, taking account of the local environment, history and heritage.