

BSGA welcomes publication of BS 559-2:2026, completing the framework for the lifecycle management of signs

The British Sign and Graphics Association (BSGA) announces the publication of BS 559-2:2026 Interior and exterior signs - Part 2: Inspection and maintenance - Specification, completing the BS 559 series alongside BS 559-1:2023, which covers the design, manufacture and installation of signs.

The new British Standard extends the framework for good practice across the lifecycle of a sign, addressing what happens post-installation and providing a structured approach to its ongoing inspection, maintenance and management.

Once installed, signs are exposed to weather conditions and other factors that can affect their condition over time. Fixings can weaken, supporting structures can deteriorate and changes to the building itself can affect the safety of the installation.

Defects are not always visible from ground level. Faults affecting the sign, its fixings, foundations, electrical systems, supporting structure or the surface to which it is attached can compromise the stability and safe operation of the installation. Regular physical inspection is therefore important to identify these issues and ensure they are addressed before they become a safety concern.

The extent and frequency of inspection are informed by the type, location, age and condition of the sign, its exposure to the environment, accessibility and the risks associated with the installation.

The standard covers illuminated and non-illuminated signs, fixed and portable signs, digital displays and electronically changeable signs. Road traffic, fire safety, railway trackside and airside airport signs are excluded, as these are covered elsewhere.

A more structured approach to inspection and maintenance:

BS 559-2 takes a risk-based approach to inspection, with the level and frequency informed by the individual sign and its circumstances. It establishes the importance of physical, on site inspections, with a recommended minimum annual inspection requirement, or within 12 months of installation or the previous inspection.

The standard recognises that those carrying out inspections need the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience for the sign and the work involved, including but not limited to, working at height, electrical safety and structural inspection. They must also have the appropriate equipment to carry out the inspection safely.

For existing signs, where the installation date, service life or previous inspection records cannot be established, the standard provides for an enhanced inspection regime to assess their condition and identify any risks.

Responsibility beyond installation:

One of the important aspects of BS 559-2 is the concept of the sign holder – the person or organisation that assumes legal responsibility for a sign once it is in place. Depending on the circumstances, this could be a building owner, occupier, tenant or another appointed party.

Where responsibility is shared, for example between a landlord and tenant, arrangements for sign safety, inspection and maintenance need to be clearly established in writing, such as through a lease or management agreement.

The standard also highlights the importance of knowing what signs an organisation is responsible for, where they are located, how they are constructed, when they were installed and their condition. This information is essential to understanding what needs to be inspected and maintained and who is responsible for doing so.

At handover, the principal contractor and/or supplier should provide details of the recommended inspection frequency, scope of inspection and maintenance requirements. Keeping records of inspections, findings and maintenance also helps build a history of the sign, providing useful information for those responsible for its ongoing management.

The BSGA has played an active role throughout the development of BS 559-2, with representatives contributing technical expertise and industry knowledge to help ensure the standard reflects the practical realities of the signage industry.

David Derbyshire, Convenor for BS 559-2, said:

"Having spent over 40 years in the signage industry, I have always believed that our responsibility for a sign should not end the day it is installed.

Our industry has made considerable progress in the design, manufacture and installation of signs, but the ongoing inspection and maintenance of those signs has not always received the same attention. That was one of my main motivations for helping to develop BS 559-2:2026.

Seeing the standard published is a proud moment for me personally. I hope it will make a lasting contribution to our industry by encouraging a more consistent and responsible approach to sign safety.

I would also like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of my fellow committee members, whose knowledge, experience and commitment have helped bring this standard to fruition. Ultimately, this is about creating something practical that benefits sign companies, the businesses and property owners responsible for signs, and the members of the public who rely on their safety."

Linda Edwards, Managing Director of the BSGA, said:

“The publication of BS 559-2 completes an important part of the standards framework for our industry and is a very positive step forward for the signage sector. It recognises that the responsibility for a sign extends well beyond its design, manufacture and installation, bringing greater focus to the ongoing inspection, maintenance and management of signs.

I believe this standard has an important part to play in raising standards across our industry, encouraging best practice and reinforcing the importance of competence, compliance and good governance. It provides an opportunity for businesses and those responsible for signs to take a more informed and consistent approach to managing them.

We are grateful to David and the committee for their commitment and contribution to developing the standard. The BSGA looks forward to supporting members and the wider industry stakeholder community with practical guidance to help them understand its requirements and what they mean for their businesses."

Supporting the industry:

In preparation for the publication of BS 559-2, the BSGA produced a four part podcast series exploring British Standards, the BS 559 series and the practical implications of inspection and maintenance for the signage industry.

The series covers the development of British Standards, how BS 559-2 builds on BS 559-1, the requirements for inspection and maintenance, and the responsibilities associated with managing signs after installation.

The podcasts remain available through the BSGA's YouTube channel, with supporting articles published separately: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUg5r0jT0ow

The BSGA is raising awareness of BS 559-2 through industry press, social media, the BSGA Bulletin and engagement with its wider stakeholder community.

The BSGA will continue to build on this work, providing further guidance and briefings to help members and the wider industry understand the standard and its implications for the inspection, maintenance and ongoing management of signs.

For further information about BS 559-2, visit our BS 559 Guidance Centre or contact a team member:

ask@uksigns.org

https://uksigns.org/member-events-education/

BS 559-2:2026 is available from the British Standards Institution (BSI): https://standardsdevelopment.bsigroup.com/projects/2025-01518