

KEEP LEFT SIGNS

The law does not require keep left signs at every pedestrian refuge or traffic island



Commonly seen unsightly traffic



Unnecessary keep left sign and guard rails



The 1997 pelican crossing regulations allow the option for not installing keep left signs



Informal crossing at the DfT supported Walworth Road safety scheme have no keep left signs

Most traffic intersections are too cluttered with usually unnecessary Keep Left Signs and guard rails. Signs and guard rails also need continual power supplies and costly maintenance.

The law stated in the Highway Code is “Keep to the left unless directed by traffic signs...” Traffic signs are only required by law to enforce a traffic management order.

The law states in all cases, “Drivers of vehicles must take the highway network as they find it...” and drive accordingly.

Keep left signs at pedestrian crossings are not mandatory: *Statutory Instrument 1997, No 2400. The Zebra, Pelican & Puffin Pedestrian Crossings Regulations and General Directions 1997. Schedule 4, PART 1 Section 7.* Additional traffic signs. ‘A traffic sign of the size, colour and type shown in diagram 610 (keep left) ... in Schedule 2 to the 1994 (now 2002) Regulations **may** only be placed on a refuge for pedestrians or a central reservation...’

The word ‘**may**’, is key as it allows the highway authority to decide. The law is saying the use of a keep left sign optional, not mandatory. The highway authority can reduce clutter at junctions and choose not to have unnecessary signs while fulfilling their duty to be legal, adhering highway guidance and keeping the junction safe.

CASE STUDY: WALWORTH ROAD

The DfT supported the Walworth Road scheme in south London, to demonstrate clutter reduction in heavily trafficked urban area. The long pedestrian central refuge, allows people to cross the road when they feel it is safe. It has no keep left signs.

The scheme has pelican crossings, which are more convenient for people with disabilities or those who prefer controlled crossings.

The total effect is neat, tidy and safe.