

STREET CLUTTER



KEEP LEFT SIGNS

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



Commonly seen unsightly traffic signs



Unnecessary guard rails and Keep left sign



The 1997 pelican crossing regulations allow the option of not installing Keep left signs



Informal crossings at the DfT supported Walworth Road safety scheme have no Keep left signs

Most traffic intersections, be they at roundabouts or traffic signals, are quite unsightly. They are too cluttered. Yet the guard rails and Keep left signs are usually unnecessary. Signs and bollards also need continual power supplies and costly maintenance.

The law is regularly confirmed by Law Lords' decisions: "Drivers of vehicles must take the highway network as they find it..." and drive accordingly.

Traffic signs are only required by law to enforce a traffic management order. "Keep to the left unless directed by traffic signs..." Highway Code.

At pedestrian crossings Keep left signs are not mandatory.

Statutory Instrument 1997 No 2400. The Zebra, Pelican and 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) or 611 (Pass either side) in Schedule 2 to the 1994 (now 2002) Regulations may only be placed on a refuge for pedestrians or a central reservation...."

The point is that the signs **may** be placed, but equally **may not**, or need not. It is for the highway authority to decide.

The traffic safety scheme at Walworth Road, south London, was completed in 2008. It is one of a series of such schemes supported by the Department for Transport and put in place across the country.

At one point there is a long pedestrian central refuge, which allows people to cross the road when they feel it is safe. This is in addition to the formal pelican crossings which are more convenient for people with disabilities or for those who feel more comfortable at controlled crossings.

The informal refuge has virtually no kerb and no keep left sign or bollard.

The total effect is neat, tidy and safe.