



# IS YOUR SIGNALISED CROSSING UP TO SCRATCH?

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. We want to create a walking nation where people of all generations enjoy the benefits that this simple act brings, on streets fit for walking.



# IS YOUR SIGNALISED CROSSING UP TO SCRATCH?

Everyone should be able to cross the road safely, directly and without delay. But does your local crossing make the grade? This handy checklist will help you assess any signalised crossing.

In the explanatory notes you will find further information in relation to the questions where relevant.

**1. What type of crossing is it? You can check which crossing it is here.**

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(Space for notes)

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**2. Record your wait time**

- Up to 30 seconds (our recommendation)
- 31 – 90 seconds
- 91 – seconds to 120 seconds
- + 120 seconds

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**3. Check the crossing time**

**Results**

- Speed is  $>0.8\text{m/s}$  but  $<1.2\text{ m/s}$
- Speed is  $>1.2\text{m/s}$  or more

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**4. Is the green man signal near or far?**

- Far-side green man
- Nearside green man

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**5. Does the crossing have (a) sensor(s)?**

- Sensors – our recommendation
  - No sensors
- (Space for notes)

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**6. Is your crossing suitable for everyone?**

- Tactile paving – this looks like little buttons on the pavements and is normally a different colour to the pavement.
  - Rotating cone (found under the push button) – this is a small normally silver cone which rotates when the green man turns on. It can help visually impaired people to know when it is safe to cross.
  - Audible signals – this is the beeping sound which can be found at some crossings and it helps visually impaired people to know when the green man is showing.
  - Dropped kerb – this can help people to go up and down on to the road more easily than stepping straight off the kerb and on to the road.
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**7. Assess whether the crossing is in the right place?**

- a) Is the crossing in the right place for people to reach any schools, shops, health centre, bus stops, tube stations (trip attractors) on either side of the road?  Yes  No
- b) Are people crossing away from the crossing?  Yes  No
- c) Can people cross in one go or do they have to wait at a second crossing for the green man to show?  Yes  No
- d) If there is a refuge in the middle, do people have to turn and cross the road away from where they started (dog leg design)?  Yes  No

Often this will also have guard railing to dictate where people have to go to cross the road.

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**8. Are pedestrians visible enough?**

Is there unnecessary street clutter, e.g, broadband box (in the wrong place), parked cars, bollards, bins?  Yes  No

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## 9. Is the crossing and pavement wide enough?

Is there enough space on the crossing and on the pavement when they are waiting for the amount of people crossing the road at busy times  Yes  No  
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Now that you have gathered this information you can accurately describe what is wrong with the crossing and ask your council to make changes. For example, to :

- Reduce waiting times
- Increase the time to cross
- Make sure the green man is clearly visible
- Make sure that it is working properly (audio signals and the cones are really important for blind and partially sighted people)
- Put a crossing where people want to cross the road
- Allow enough space and visibility for all the pedestrians to cross safely.

## Explanatory notes

### 2. Waiting time

Maximum waiting time for signalised crossings varies between two minutes according to DfT guidance and 90 seconds for Transport for London. Evidence<sup>1</sup> has shown that after 30 seconds of waiting at a crossing encourages risky behaviour such as crossing before the green man comes on. We recommend a maximum waiting time of 30 seconds.

### 3. Check the crossing time

Check how long your crossing gives you to cross. Do you feel rushed or do the lights turn green to traffic before you or other pedestrians are able to cross?

The assumed walking speed used to calculate how much time pedestrians have to cross is 1.2m/s. UCL recommend an assumed walking speed of 0.8m/s as a result of their research which found that most older people are unable to cross the road in time. We recommend the assumed walking speed should be 0.8m/s.

To work out if your crossing meets the Department for Transport guidance you will need to measure the road (!) and have timed how much time there is to cross.

To measure how much time there is to cross you should include time when:

- The green man is static
- The green man flashes
- There is no green or red man (ie a blackout)
- There is a pedestrian countdown

<sup>1</sup> A.Martin, Factors Influencing Pedestrian Safety: A Literature Review, TRL Limited

The time should be continuous.

Write the time in seconds here:

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Measure the road width. You could measure your average stride in metres and then count how many strides you take to cross the road. Or you could use a measuring wheel.

Write the length in metres here:.....

Then divide the width of the road in metres by the pedestrian phase time in seconds by the width of the road in metres. For example:

You have measured the road to be 10 metres. You measure that are given 7 seconds to cross the road. You divide 10 (metres) by 7 (seconds). The answer you get is 1.42.

This would mean that you would have to travel at 1.42m/s to cross the road in time. Given DfT standards and our recommendation this would be too fast for both.

#### **4. Near or far side signals**

Green man signals can be positioned opposite the pedestrian or near to you on the pavement you step off from. People have often said they prefer the far side signal as some find it difficult to see the nearside signal when there are lots of people waiting to cross as they may be stood in front of it. We recommend the far side signal.

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#### **5. Sensors**

Some crossings have sensors both that point on the pavement to detect if pedestrians are waiting and on the road to know if pedestrians are still crossing. You will find them at the top of the traffic signals. They are intelligent in that if they detect a pedestrian is still crossing when the normal pedestrian phase finishes they can extend the time available. We would recommend that all signalised crossings provide a detection system to make the crossing as responsive as possible.

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## 6. Accessible crossings

To make sure everyone can cross the road, some simple measures can be put in place. Here are some features that can make a difference to many pedestrians.

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Crossings should provide drop kerbs, not at a steep angle. In some places an effective speed hump is created so that pedestrians do not have to step down off the kerb to cross the road and then up the kerb to reach the pavement. This is called a raised table. It can help wheelchair users and those using buggies or prams ample access to cross the road. They also indicate pedestrian priority as cars have to slow down to go over them.

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## 7. Is the crossing in the right place and can you cross the road in one go?

We recommend that people are able to cross the road in one go so that they are not delayed by a second crossing point. However is the road is quite wide a refuge can help make is safer and easier to cross.

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## 8. Are pedestrians visible?

It's important that pedestrians are able to see and be seen by vehicles. Therefore unnecessary street clutter such as broadband boxes should not be placed where visibility would be reduced for able or disabled people.

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## 9. Is the crossing wide enough?

The crossing should be able to accommodate the number of pedestrians who want to use it. So if it's heavily used it should be extra wide. Use your



judgement. If at busy times some people are spilling over into the road or outside the designated area then there probably isn't enough space.

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