

Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on PE2059: Ensure pedestrian crossings cannot be disabled without an equivalent safety measure in place, submitted by Lachlan McDowal

Background

Currently, there is no requirement for a temporary replacement to be provided where a permanent light-controlled pedestrian crossing is suspended.

However, there are established processes in place for the maintenance of pedestrian access through road and street works (road works being works to improve the road and street works being works within the road – such as the maintenance of gas, electricity, and telecommunications infrastructure). The UK-wide [Safety at Street Works and Road Works: A Code of Practice](#), which provides guidance to those planning and carrying out such works, states:

“Where footways and pedestrian areas are affected by street works and road works, it is your responsibility to make sure that pedestrians passing the works are safe. This means protecting them from both the works and passing traffic.

You must take into account the needs of children, older people and disabled people, having particular regard for visually impaired people.”

The Code of Practice goes on to state that anyone undertaking works that require a pedestrian crossing to be suspended must “agree with the highway authority what, if any, alternative arrangements will be provided for users of the crossing prior to suspension”. Guidance to those involved in streets works on the use of temporary pedestrian crossings is set out in [Guidance on the Use of Portable Traffic Signals](#), produced by the Association for Road Traffic Safety and Management (ARTSM).

Away from road and street works, any decision to temporarily suspend or permanently remove a pedestrian crossing is a matter for the roads authority. That is the relevant local authority for public roads and Transport Scotland for trunk roads. In deciding whether to suspend or remove a light-controlled pedestrian crossing, the roads authority must take account of its statutory duties to all road users, such as the duty to manage and maintain public roads under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, to manage road and street works under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, and equalities duties under the

Equality Act 2010. More information on these duties can be found in [Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice](#), published by the UK Roads Liaison Group.

Government Action

The Scottish Government has not considered this issue in any detail.

Scottish Parliament Action

To date, the Scottish Parliament has not considered this issue in any detail.

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29 January 2024

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