

Parallel Crossings – Questions and Answers (Q&A)

1. Q- Why are we building new Parallel Crossings?

A- Essex Highways is providing these new crossings which are designed to make journeys easier and more reliable for people who cycle. Parallel Crossings are a key part of Essex County Council's efforts to get more people cycling in Essex more safely and more often by making cycling more attractive. Better design will help to encourage more people to ride a bike by joining up sections of cycle routes, removing interruptions.

2. Q- How will they help cyclists?

A- Journeys for people who cycle will be quicker and easier. People riding a bike are not required to dismount when crossing the road, and vehicles on the road must give way to them. Parallel Crossings are used to join up sections of existing or new cycle routes.

3. Q- Why are they not yet in the Highway Code?

A- The Highway Code is revised periodically by the Department for Transport, but Parallel Crossings are fully legal and recognised in the Department's documents, such as the official guidance on appropriate signs and layout at TSRGD Schedule 14, including Part 1, Section 18, 21, 25, and Part 2 sections 31 and 53. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2016/362/schedule/14/made>

4. Q- Are these crossings safe for cyclists?

A- Yes. However, just like a zebra crossing for pedestrians, they are safest if used correctly. Drivers may not all be immediately aware of the new type of crossing and that cyclists have priority. So a cyclist approaching the Parallel Crossing must slow down, just as a pedestrian should at a zebra, to ensure that traffic on the road has had a chance to notice them and to slow down ready to stop for them as they set out riding across the road on the crossing.

5. Q- How will a car/van/truck driver or motorcyclist (or indeed a cyclist on the road) know they should give way to cyclists on the crossing?

A- Just as with all road signs and rules, drivers are expected to obey legal road rules. All Parallel crossings are built parallel to, that is alongside, a zebra crossing, so drivers should in any case always be approaching cautiously. The Belisha beacons at the crossing now extend to cover the area with the crossing markings for cyclists too. Some crossings, where appropriate, will be built on raised "tables" to add to the slowing effect on approaching traffic.

6. **Q- Why can't cyclists just dismount and walk across the road with their bikes on the zebra crossing?**

A- Cyclists do have that option if they prefer. However, Essex County Council is determined to act to increase cycling over the use of cars for local personal transport and some light goods delivery vans. Cycling is healthier in that it provides exercise and the more people cycle the less motor vehicles are contributing to congestion and pollution. Parallel crossings make cycle journeys quicker by avoiding having to dismount. Just as pedestrians, logically, legally and according to the Highway Code, always have priority to make their journeys safer and quicker, so at these particular points joining sections of cycle routes, people on bikes are favoured.