

# Domestic Vehicle Crossings

## Information Guide for Applicants



**Walsall Council**

April 2024

**The following information is for a new or extended Domestic Vehicle Crossing and is to help you in the preparation of your application form. If you have any specific questions concerning your crossing application please email:  
trafficmanagement@walsall.gov.uk**

## Domestic vehicle crossings

### 1) What is a Domestic Vehicle Crossing?

A Domestic Vehicle Crossing is the formal name given to a “dropped crossing” allowing people to drive a vehicle on and off their property over the highway footway or grass verge. The crossing involves the lowering of the kerb stones (preventing vehicle damage) and changes the construction of the footway to ensure it can support the weight of a vehicle to protect the footway and the utility company’s apparatus underneath such as gas, electricity, or water mains.

Driving over a footway without a properly constructed dropped crossing i.e. bumping up the kerbs or placing wood / concrete in the kerb line is illegal and the Council will consider enforcement action if this occurs.

### 2) How do I apply for a Dropped Crossing

The process for applying for a dropped crossing is broken down into three stages:

Stage 1 - Before a dropped crossing can be installed you will need permission from Walsall Council who are the Highway Authority for the borough. The application form to request a dropped crossing is available online by visiting the Council’s website [Walsall Council](#) A non-refundable fee is charged as part of this application process. Once the assessment is done you will be advised by email. If your application is refused the reasons will be stated and if you can provide further information to justify your application, we would reconsider the decision.

Stage 2 – If your application has been approved you will then need to apply for a Road Opening Permit to allow work on the dropped crossing to be undertaken. Unless you are using a private contractor a full quotation for the works will be provided by the Council’s Highways Maintenance contractor.

Stage 3 – Once the Road opening permit is issued you will need to pay in full the construction costs as detailed in the quotation. This payment needs to be made prior to the works. Once this payment is received an order will be raised with our contractor and your dropped crossing programmed in for construction. Unfortunately, there are no discounts or grants available to cover the cost of the dropped crossing.

### 3) What additional Permission(s) do I need?

If your property is owned by a Housing Group or a private landlord, written confirmation from the owner approving your request to have a dropped crossing will need to be included in your road opening permit application.

Sometimes it is necessary to cross a grass verge or privately owned land which is not part of the highway. If it is owned by a Housing Group, you will again need written permission from them to be included in your road opening permit application. Several grass verges are owned by Walsall Council's Asset Management Team, and you will need to get an easement agreement to permit access over this land, email [assetmanagement@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:assetmanagement@walsall.gov.uk) for further information.

Whilst we encourage residents to legally park off the road to help maintain traffic flow and minimise congestion there are occasions where a dropped crossing application will have to be refused i.e. at a junction, on a sharp bend or close to traffic signals or pedestrian crossings.

#### 4) Planning Application

If your property is on an A or B classified road, in a conservation area or divided into several properties (i.e. flats) you will be required to obtain planning permission from the Council's Planning Department before a dropped crossing can be introduced. For full information visit the planning department pages on the Council's website [Walsall Council](#)

If you wish to confirm the classification of your road, please contact the Traffic Management & Coordination Team.

#### 5) What size does my driveway need to be?

For a dropped crossing to be installed a hardstanding / driveway must be constructed to a minimum of 4.8 metres long, measured from the front of your house to the boundary of your property, and 2.8 metres wide. This is the minimum size to ensure that a vehicle can be parked fully on a private driveway without protruding onto the highway (which is an offence under the Highway Act 1980). Whilst your current car may be smaller than these dimensions, this size is required as restrictions cannot be imposed later if the property was sold, or you purchase a larger vehicle.

The driveway **must** be introduced before the dropped crossing will be installed and will need to be constructed to the existing footway level. It is recommended that you arrange its introduction after all the necessary permissions have been given and you have been allocated your Road Opening Permit.

#### 6) How wide will a Dropped Crossing be?

A standard width dropped crossing consists of 3 dropped kerbs and 2 tapered kerbs (that change the footway height). Each kerbstone is 900mm in length creating an overall width of 4.5 metres. A dropped crossing can be installed at a greater size or extended to a maximum of 5 dropped kerbs and 2 tapers, with an overall width of 6.3 metres.

Under current Council policy a dropped crossing will not be installed or extended to a size larger than this specification. Although you may wish to have the entire frontage of your property accessible by a dropped crossing, unless exceptional circumstances dictate, this will not be authorised if the dimensions are more than the above specification. This could cause future complications when multiple properties in proximity wish to have this work undertaken and would lead to an unacceptably long dropped crossings being installed. If you wish to request a dropped crossing greater than our normal standard, please provide supplementary information on the application form.

## **7) Utility Apparatus**

As part of the construction process the Council will collect information from the Utility companies to ensure that the installation of the dropped crossing will not cause damage to their network. In most cases, our contractor can undertake minor work to move or lower service boxes that may be present in the footway and the cost will be included within your quotation. However, if the service boxes are owned by British Telecom, Virgin Media, or National Grid you will need to contact them direct for the boxes to be moved / strengthened as our contractor is not legally allowed to undertake this work. Please note that the companies will charge for this work, and it will need to be funded by the applicant in addition to the dropped crossing installation costs.

## **8) Street Furniture**

If there is a street lighting column that requires repositioning, a quotation will be carried out by the Councils' contractor, Amey Limited. If there is a bus stop pole that requires removal, we will discuss this application with Transport for West Midlands as they will need to agree the location for a new pole siting. Any relocation costs will need to be met by the applicant and will be included within your quotation.

## **9) Highway Trees**

If there is a tree in front of your property located in the highway or grass verge, the application will need to be considered by the Council's Clean & Green Services to ensure that no damage occurs to the tree. A dropped crossing cannot be installed within 1 metre of a tree to protect the tree's root. If it is necessary, consideration will be given to removing the tree however permission is not always granted, especially with mature trees. In such circumstances a dropped crossing will not be permitted.

If the tree does require removal our policy is that two replacement trees are provided with all costs to be met by the applicant.

## **10) Who owns / maintains the Dropped Crossing?**

All dropped crossings within the highway are owned and maintained by Walsall Council as the Highway Authority. Although you will have a right of access over the dropped crossing you will not own the land itself. The fee you are paying is for the construction of the dropped crossing only and not the purchase of the land.

## **11) Can vehicles park over the Dropped Crossing?**

It is illegal for any vehicle to park over a dropped crossing as this is creating an obstruction and is therefore in breach of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986. Walsall Council do not actively enforce against obstructing a dropped crossing to any off-street property unless you subscribe to a free scheme, please email our Parking Operations Team on [parkingoffice@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:parkingoffice@walsall.gov.uk) for full details.

## **12) Can I hire a private contractor to undertake the work?**

Once you have obtained approval for the crossing you can appoint a private contractor to undertake the work on your behalf if they complete the necessary application form. A third-party licence can be granted that includes an inspection of the works. As part of this application process Walsall Council will need to see information relating to the contractor's public liability insurance along with copies of the Supervisors and Operatives NRSWA Street Works qualification cards (required under national legislation to undertake work on the highway).

If you wish to receive the private contractor application form, please contact the Traffic Management & Coordination Team.

### **13) How do I pay for the Dropped Crossing**

All payments for the application process, road opening permit and for the construction of the dropped crossing must be made by phone by contacting our administration team on 01922 652620.