

Q21: I need to work on a footway. How do I decide what provision for pedestrians is required?

A21: There is an implicit hierarchy for footway work within the code giving the order in which you should consider the options. The safety code says that you should always try to enable pedestrians to remain on the footway and that the remaining width available to them should ideally be a minimum of 1.5m, so that is the preferred option and it is therefore the first in the hierarchy. If there is not enough room for 1.5m, you should then consider the next option, and so on. The basic rule is that you should not choose an option without good reason if the one above it would work. The hierarchy is as follows:

- 1 Works partially obstruct footway, 1.5 m minimum width remaining for pedestrians.
- 2 Works partially obstruct footway, 1.0 m minimum width remaining for pedestrians.
- 3 Footway closed, 1.2 m minimum width walkway provided in the carriageway.
- 4 Footway closed, 1.0 m minimum width walkway provided in the carriageway.
- 5 Footway closed, no walkway in the carriageway, pedestrians expected to use footway on opposite side.

Whichever option is chosen, it should be accompanied by an appropriate site risk assessment. Note that the above are minimum widths, **not widths to aim for**. For example, if you have to resort to option 3 because options 1 and 2 won't work, don't go straight to 1.2 m if there is room for a wider walkway.

Where the existing footway is narrower than 1 metre, you are not required to provide an alternative footway wider than the existing footway, but you should consider whether this is possible. Similarly, where there is no existing footway, you are not required to provide one. However, if a risk assessment determines that the presence of the works in such situations significantly increases risks to pedestrians using the route, then it may be necessary to make specific provision for them even though none existed before.