# Road closure signing compliance and bespoke sign requests

Recent feedback and reports suggest that standard “road ahead closed” signs can sometimes feel unclear, particularly where they do not explain which road is closed or how far ahead the closure starts.

It is understandable that road users would welcome clearer information, especially where a closure affects local access, diversion routes, or journey times. However, any temporary sign placed on the highway must still be legally compliant.

For Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders and utility works, signing must follow the relevant requirements of the *Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions and the Traffic Signs Manual*, including *Chapter 8 guidance for road works and temporary traffic management.*

This means signs should be clear, consistent, correctly positioned, and based on prescribed designs or permitted variations. Signs are there to warn, inform and direct road users, but they must do that within the approved signing framework.

Utility companies, contractors and event organisers should not be instructed to create or place “bespoke signs” for a road closure where those signs fall outside the approved layouts or permitted wording. A non-prescribed sign can only be used where the appropriate authorisation has been obtained from the relevant highway authority or national authority.

Where extra information is needed for drivers, this should be achieved through compliant signing options, agreed wording within the permitted sign types, advance communication, or other approved traffic management measures.

## Examples of compliant signing options include:

- “Road ahead closed” signs, used in advance of the closure where permitted and positioned correctly.
- Road works warning signs with an approved supplementary plate showing distance, location or the nature of the works, for example “Road works ½ mile ahead”.
- “Road closed” signs placed at the closure point, supported by barriers, cones and lamps where required.
- Approved diversion signs and direction arrows used where a signed diversion route has been agreed.
- Permitted access wording, such as “Access only”, where this is appropriate and allowed within the signing arrangement.

In short, the aim should be to improve clarity for road users without asking utility companies to use signs that may not be lawful, enforceable, or consistent with national signing standards.

We are working with all works promoters to improve road closure signing, below is a recent example where a works promoter (Southern Gas Networks) did agree to our request for an additional sign to clarify the closure details. Whilst on site, we witnessed its effect, rather than road users “chancing it” and driving past the road ahead closed signs, they followed the diversion. The Network Management team will continue to work closely with all works promoters to provide clearer information to road users on road closures.




## Reporting issues and enquiries

Residents can report highway issues online: https://live.eastsussexhighways.com/ or by phone: 0345 60 80 193

You can also visit our information hub, an interactive map showing what has been reported, its current status, and as well as upcoming planned work across the county.

***All reports are investigated, but not all reports lead to repairs.***