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Helping you stay safe at level crossings

There are over 7,000 level crossings, and several different types, across the UK railway network. This leaflet will help you recognise the different level crossings you may find (we've grouped them to make it easy for you) and understand how best to use them. So when you cross at a level crossing, you'll now know you're crossing safely.

Section 1: Barrier and gated crossings

Barriers

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- 4 Automatic half barrier crossing

Gates

- 5 Gated crossing operated by railway staff

User worked crossings

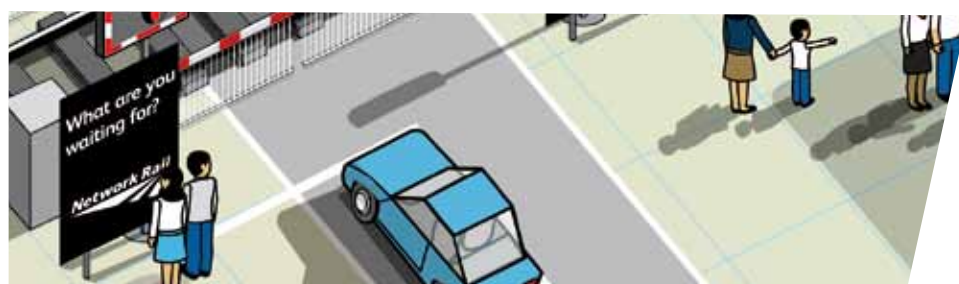
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Section 2: Open crossings

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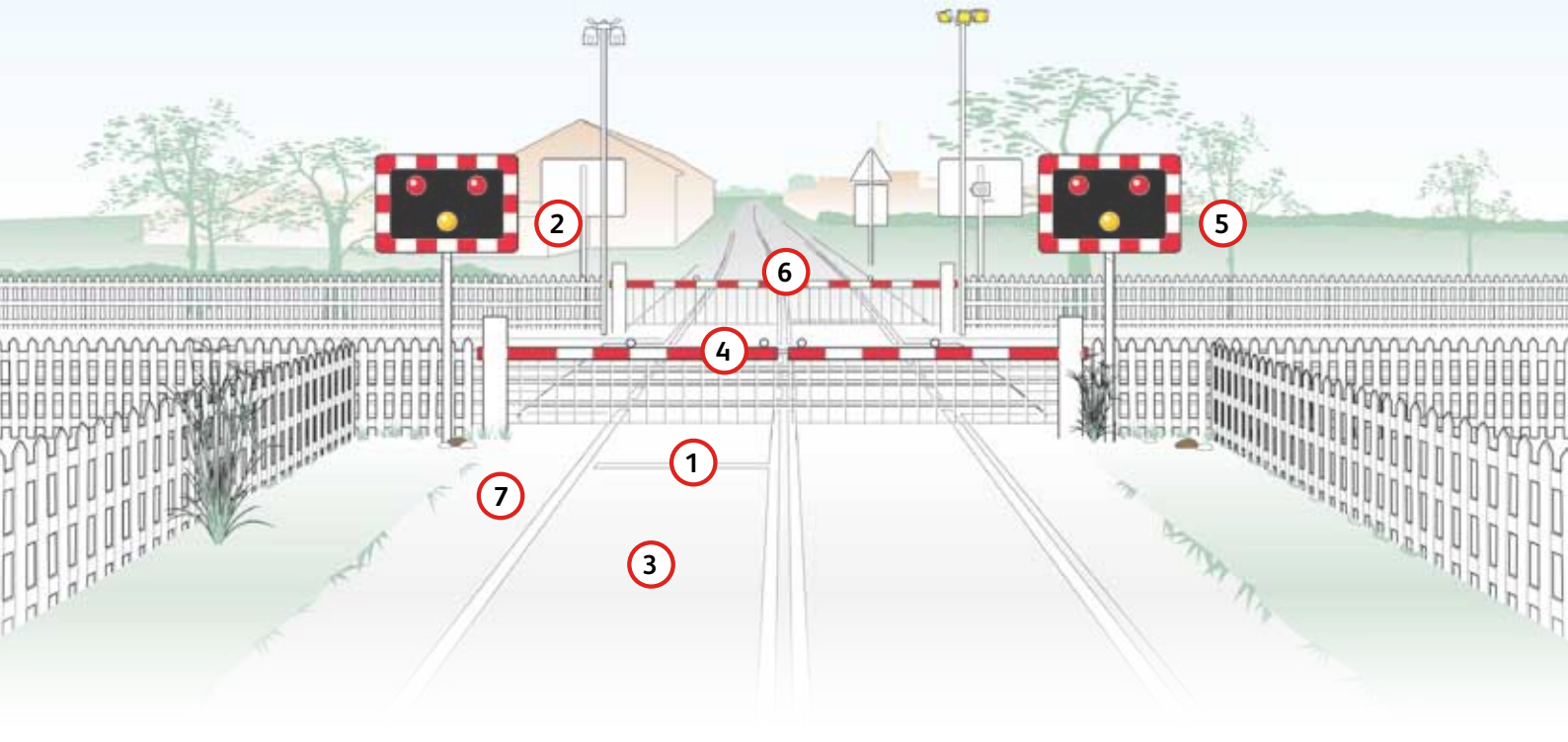
Full barrier crossing

What it looks like

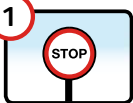
This type of crossing has barriers on both sides of the railway and warning lights.


How it works


The barriers are normally kept raised. When a train approaches, a warning will sound and the lights will show amber and then flash red. Then the barriers will close across the whole width of the road. Some barriers are automatic, while others are operated by railway staff.




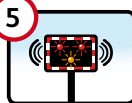
How to use the crossing


1  Drive carefully up to the crossing and be ready to stop behind the white line.


2  If the amber light is on or the red lights are flashing you must stop behind the white line.

3  If you have already crossed the white line when the amber light comes on, keep going.

4  Never reverse onto or over the level crossing.

5  If the red lights keep flashing after a train has passed, wait – another train is coming.

6  Only cross when the barriers are fully raised and the lights go off.

7  If you are on foot, stop in a safe place until the barrier is raised and the lights go off – there will often be a white line showing you where to wait. Some crossings have tactile paving so if you are blind or partially sighted you know where to wait.

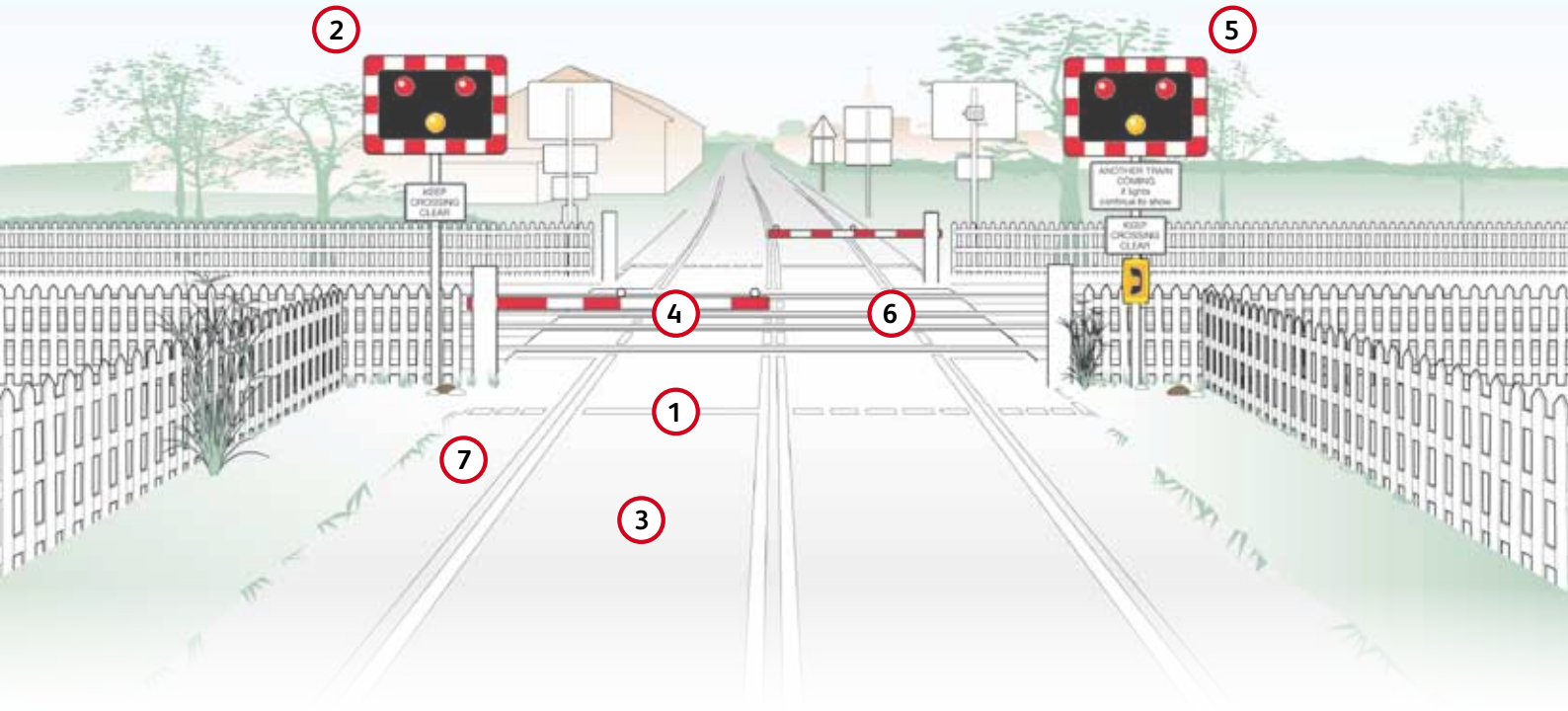
Automatic half barrier crossing

What it looks like

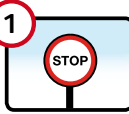
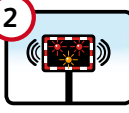


This type of crossing has a half barrier on both sides of the railway and warning lights. When down, the barriers only go across half the road, blocking the entrance to the crossing and leaving the exits clear.

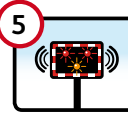


How it works

When a train approaches, a warning will sound and the lights will show amber and then flash red. Then the barriers will close across the entrance to the crossing, leaving the exit clear.



How to use the crossing

-  Drive carefully up to the crossing and be ready to stop.
-  If the amber light is on or the red lights are flashing you must stop behind the white line.
-  If you have crossed the white line when the amber light comes on, keep going.
-  Never reverse onto or over the level crossing.

-  If the red lights keep flashing after a train has passed, wait – another train is coming.
-  Never zig-zag around the barriers – only cross when the barriers are fully raised and the lights go off.
-  If you are on foot, stop in a safe place until the barrier is raised and the lights go off – there will often be a white line showing you where to wait. Some crossings have tactile paving so the blind and partially sighted know where to wait.

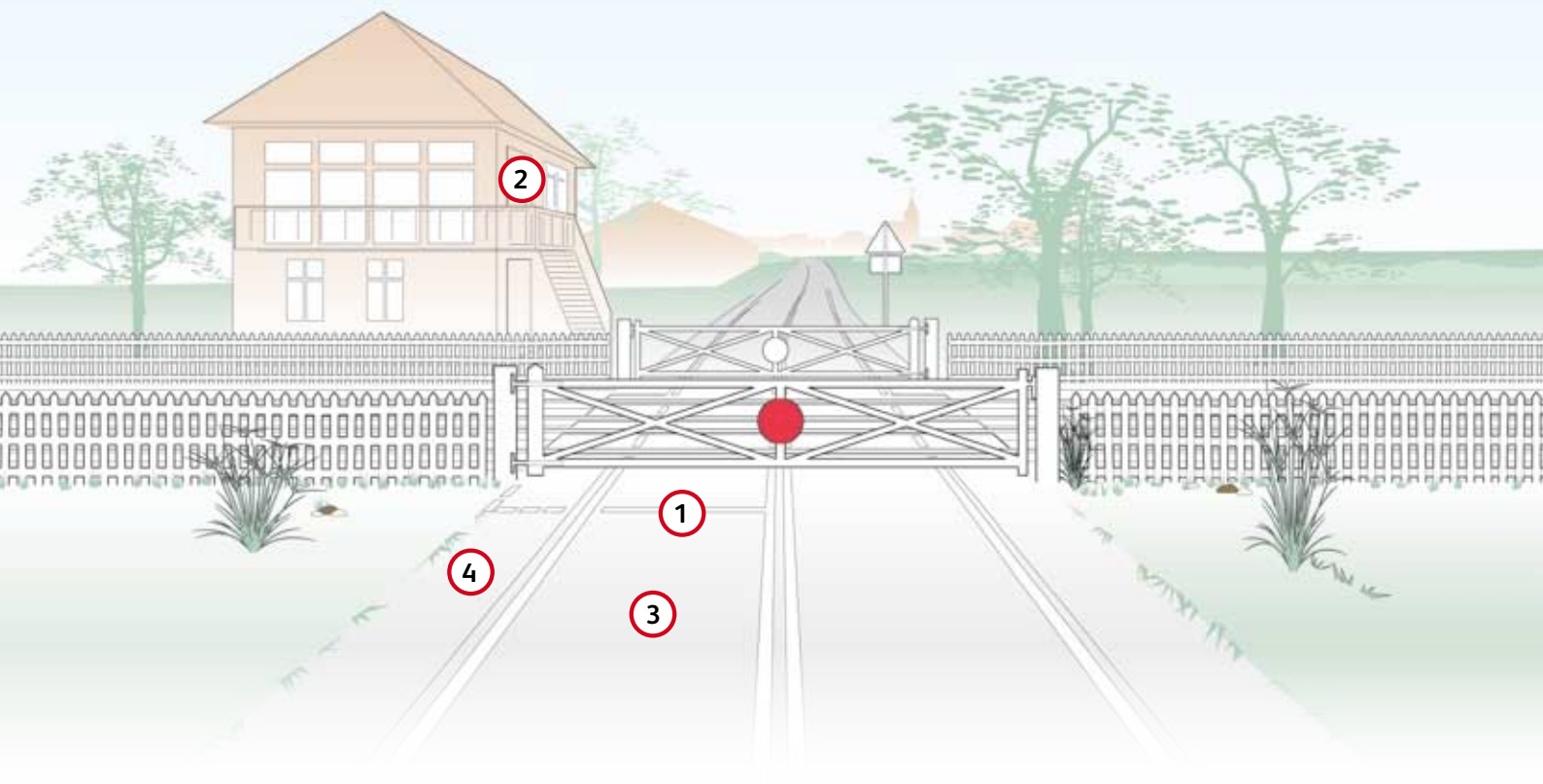
Gated crossing operated by railway staff

What it looks like

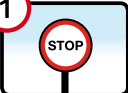
This type of crossing is protected by gates on both sides of the railway. The gates are normally closed across the railway so the road is kept clear.


How it works


The crossing is operated by railway staff in the signal box next to it. When a train is coming, they close the gates across the road.




How to use the crossing

1  Drive carefully up to the crossing and be ready to stop.

2  A railway employee will close the gates if a train is coming.

3  Wait until the railway employee has fully reopened the gates before crossing.

4  If the gates are across the road, wait in a safe place until the railway employee opens them. If there are no gates across the road, cross without stopping.

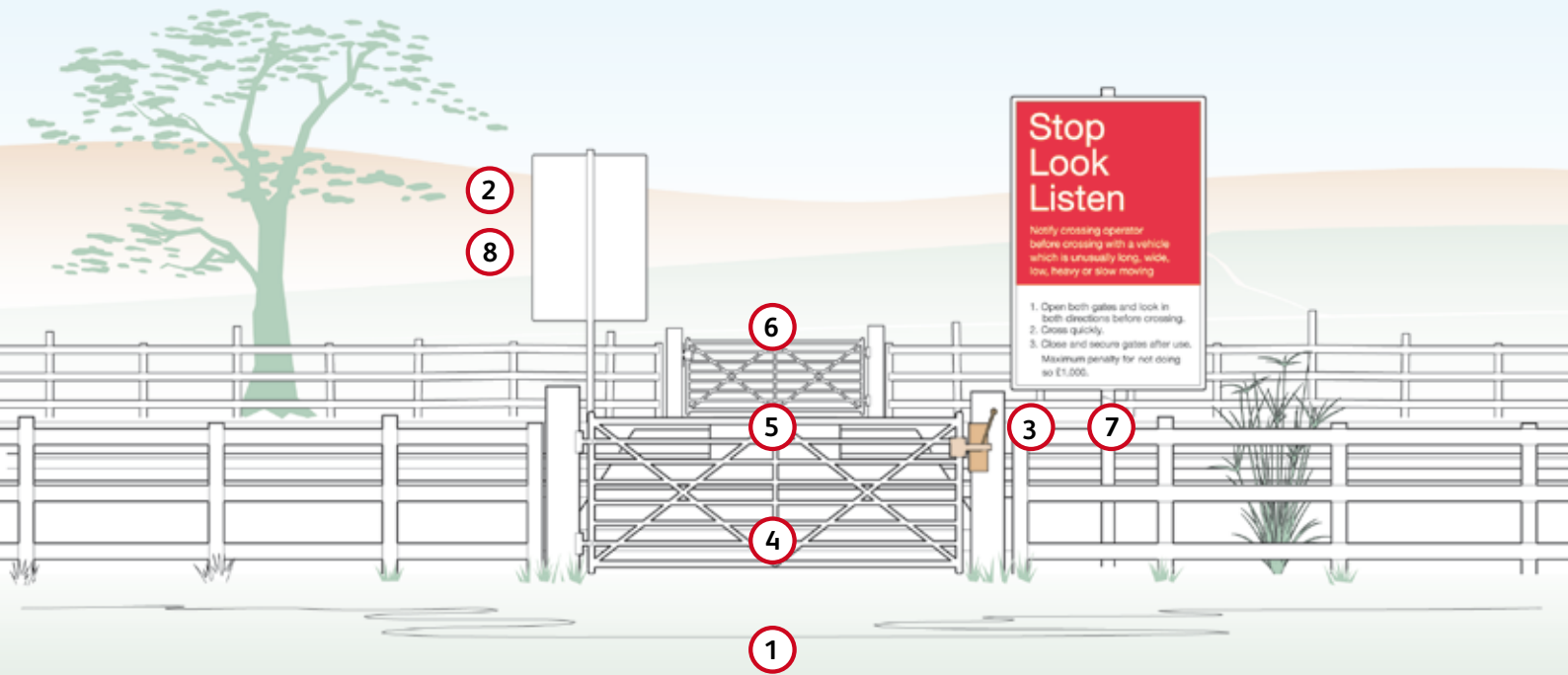
User worked crossing

What it looks like

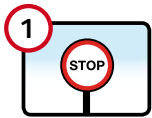
The road or path must be kept closed by gates or barriers on both sides. Some crossings have small red and green warning lights. Some have a telephone. This type of crossing is mainly used where the railway crosses a private road.

How it works

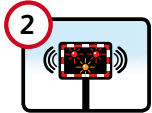
The gates or barriers are opened and closed by the person crossing. You will have enough time from initially seeing the train to cross safely.



How to use the crossing



1 If the crossing has lights, you must not cross when the red light is showing. Wait until the green light is on.



2 If there is a red light and it stays on after a train has passed, do not cross – another train is coming.



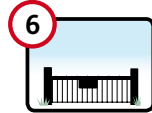
3 If there is a sign telling you to telephone before you cross, you must call to get permission to cross.



4 If you are crossing with a vehicle and if it is safe to cross, open the gates on both sides of the railway before driving the vehicle over the level crossing.



5 Cross quickly. If you are crossing on foot or in a vehicle you must look both ways and listen to check it is safe to cross.



6 Close all the gates or barriers after crossing.



7 You must telephone once you have crossed, if you are asked to.



8 If there are no lights you must look both ways and listen to check it is safe to cross.

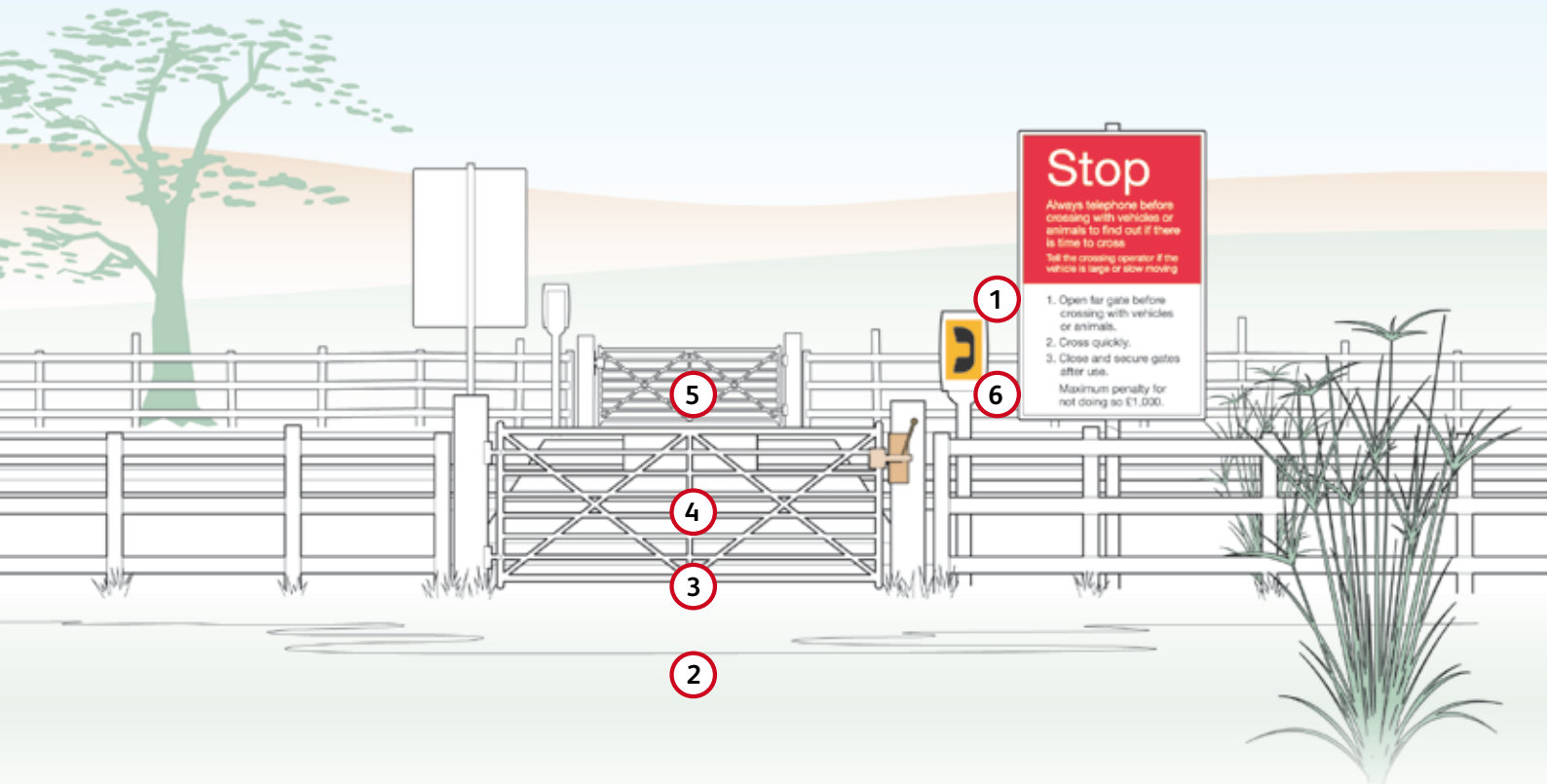
User worked crossing with telephone

What it looks like

At this type of crossing, the road or path must be kept closed by gates or barriers on both sides. There is a telephone on each side of the railway. These crossings are only on private land, usually in rural areas where people need to move agricultural vehicles or livestock over the railway.

How it works

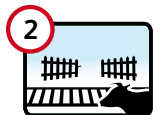
The gates or barriers are opened and closed by the person crossing.



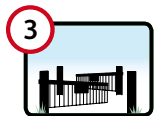
How to use the crossing



You must use the telephone to get permission to cross.



Tell the signaller if you are crossing with livestock or driving a large or slow moving vehicle.



When the signaller tells you to cross, open the gates or barriers on both sides of the railway (if you are crossing with a vehicle/livestock).



Cross quickly.



Close all the gates or barriers after crossing.



You must telephone when you have finished crossing if the signaller asks you to.

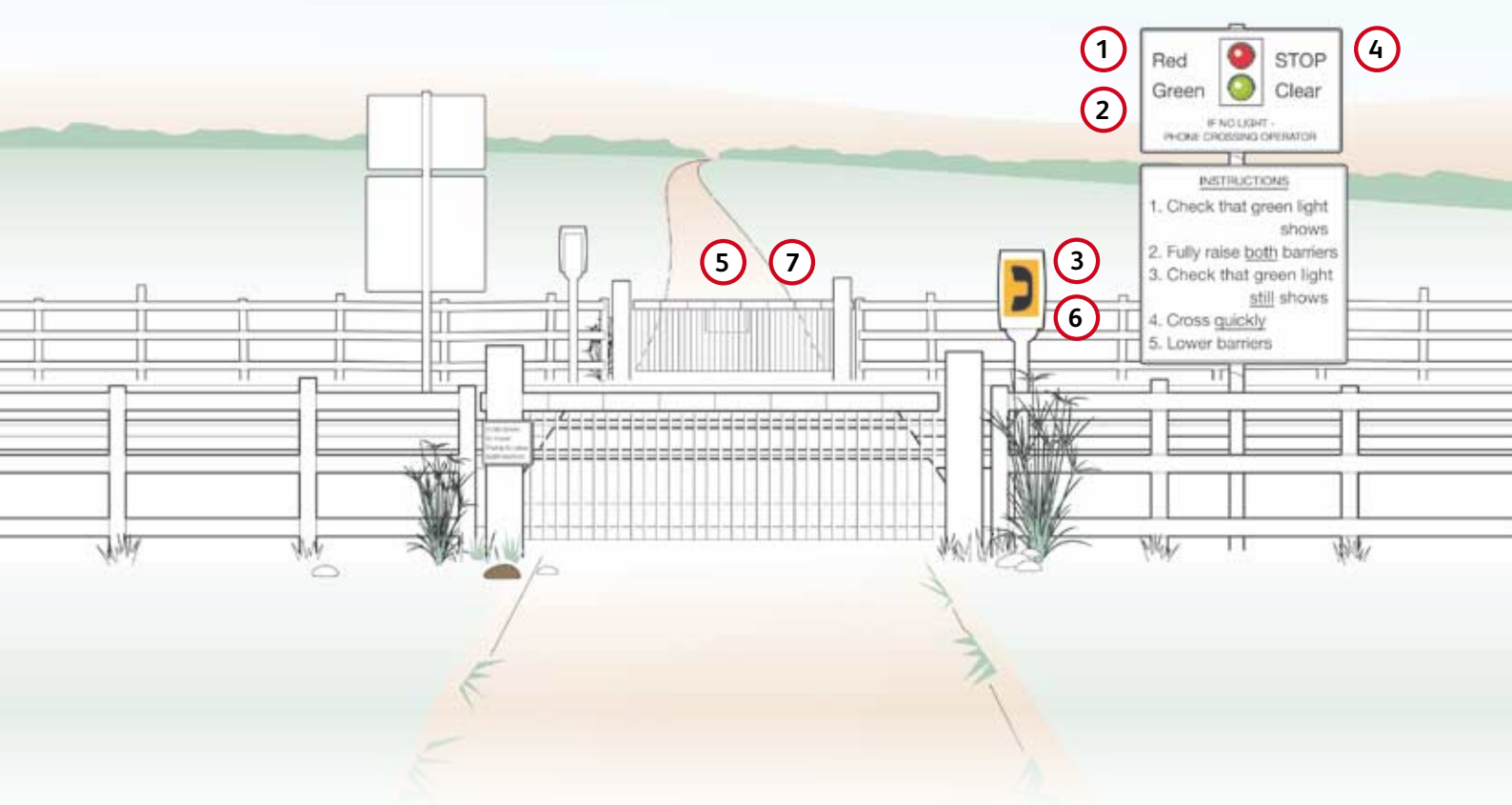
User worked crossing with warning lights

What it looks like


At this type of crossing, the road or path is kept closed by gates or barriers on both sides. There are red and green warning lights to tell you when it is safe to cross.


How it works


The gates or barriers are opened and closed by person crossing. The warning light will go from green to red when a train is coming.





How to use the crossing


1  You must not cross when the red light is showing, only cross if the green light is on.


2  If the red light stays on after a train has passed, do not cross – another train is coming.

3  If there is a sign telling you to telephone before you cross, you must call to get permission to cross.

4  If the green light is on open the gates or barriers on both sides of the railway (if you are crossing with a vehicle).

5  Check that the green light is still on and cross quickly.

6  You must telephone after you have crossed if the signaller asks you to.

7  Close all the gates or barriers after crossing.

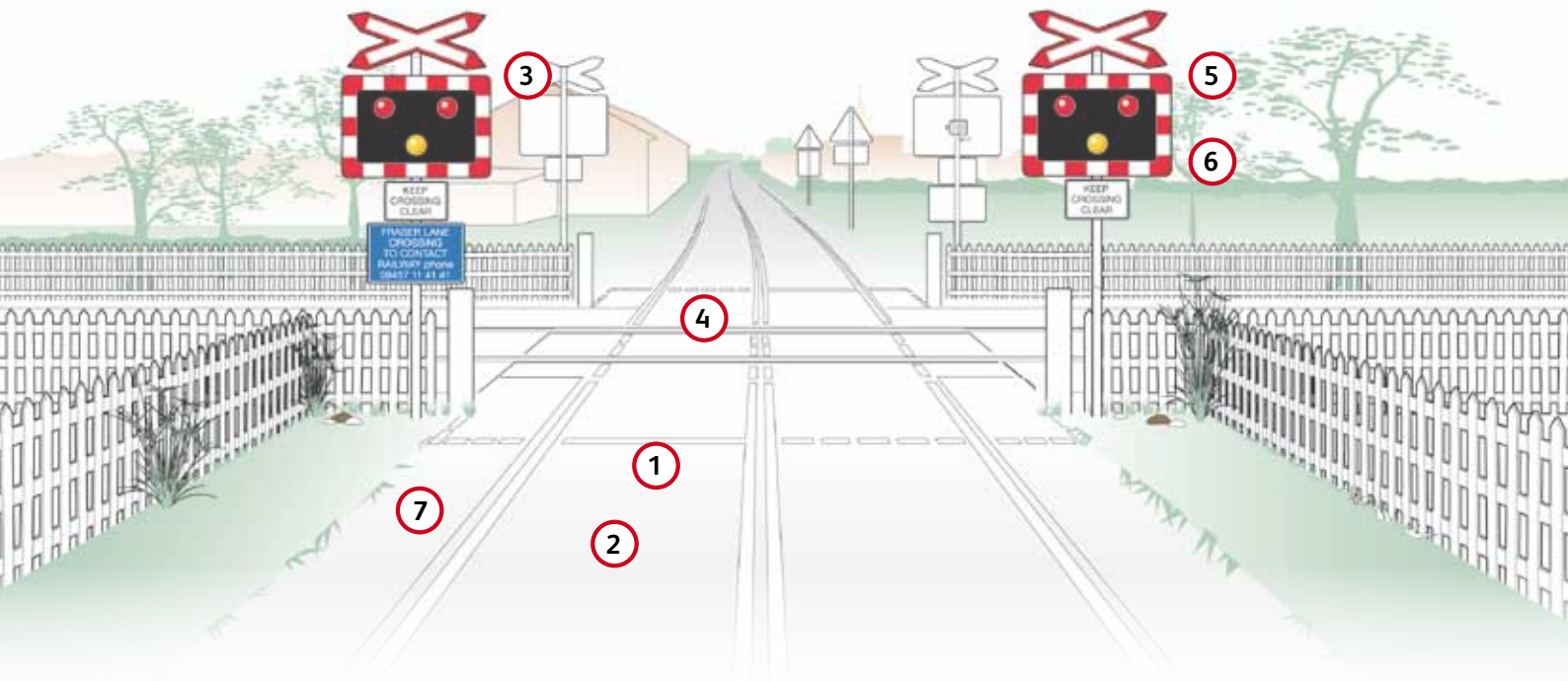
Automatic open crossing with lights

What it looks like

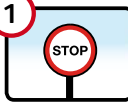



There are no barriers at this type of crossing, but it does have warning lights and an audible warning.




How it works

The lights and warning sound are set off automatically by an approaching train. The train will cross when the driver can see that the crossing is clear and has received an indication that the crossing equipment is working normally.



How to use the crossing

-  Drive carefully up to the crossing and be ready to stop.
-  You must stop behind the white line, if the red lights are flashing.
-  If you have already crossed the white line when the amber light comes on, keep going.
-  Never reverse onto or over the crossing.

-  If the red lights are still flashing when the train has passed, wait – another train is coming.
-  Only cross when the lights go off.
-  If you are on foot, stop in a safe place until the crossing is clear – there will often be a white line showing you where to wait. Some crossings have tactile paving to show the blind and partially sighted where to wait.

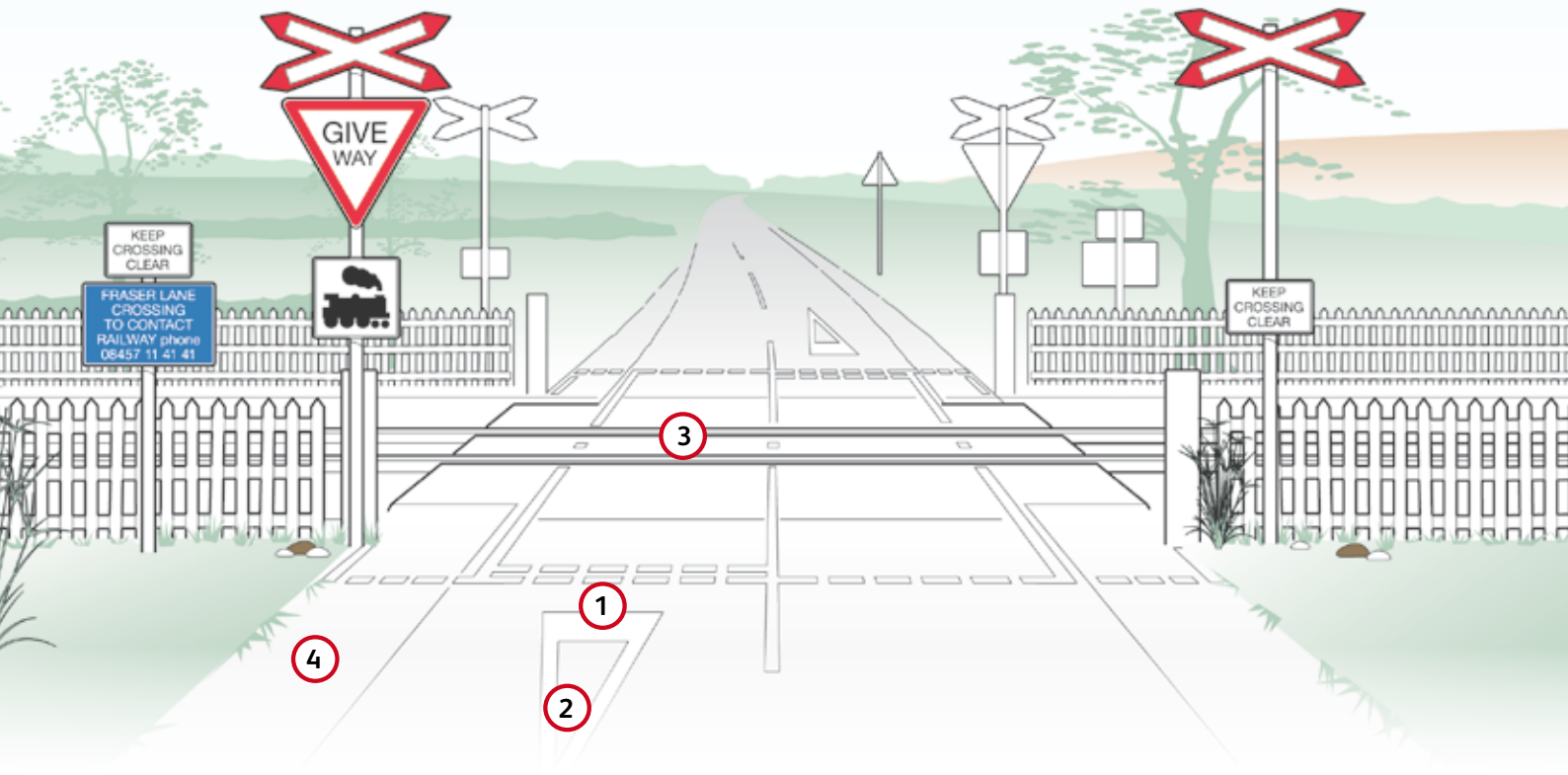
Open crossing

What it looks like

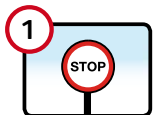
There are no barriers or warning lights at this type of crossing but there is a GIVE WAY sign.

How it works

You must check to see if a train is coming. You will decide if you can cross the railway safely, or if you need to wait in a safe place until the train has passed. Open crossings are only situated where there is enough time for you to see if a train is coming and cross safely.



How to use the crossing



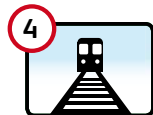
Approach the crossing carefully and be ready to stop.



Look both ways and check to see if there is a train coming.



Continue to look both ways and only cross if you can see it is clear.



You must wait in a safe place if you can see a train coming.

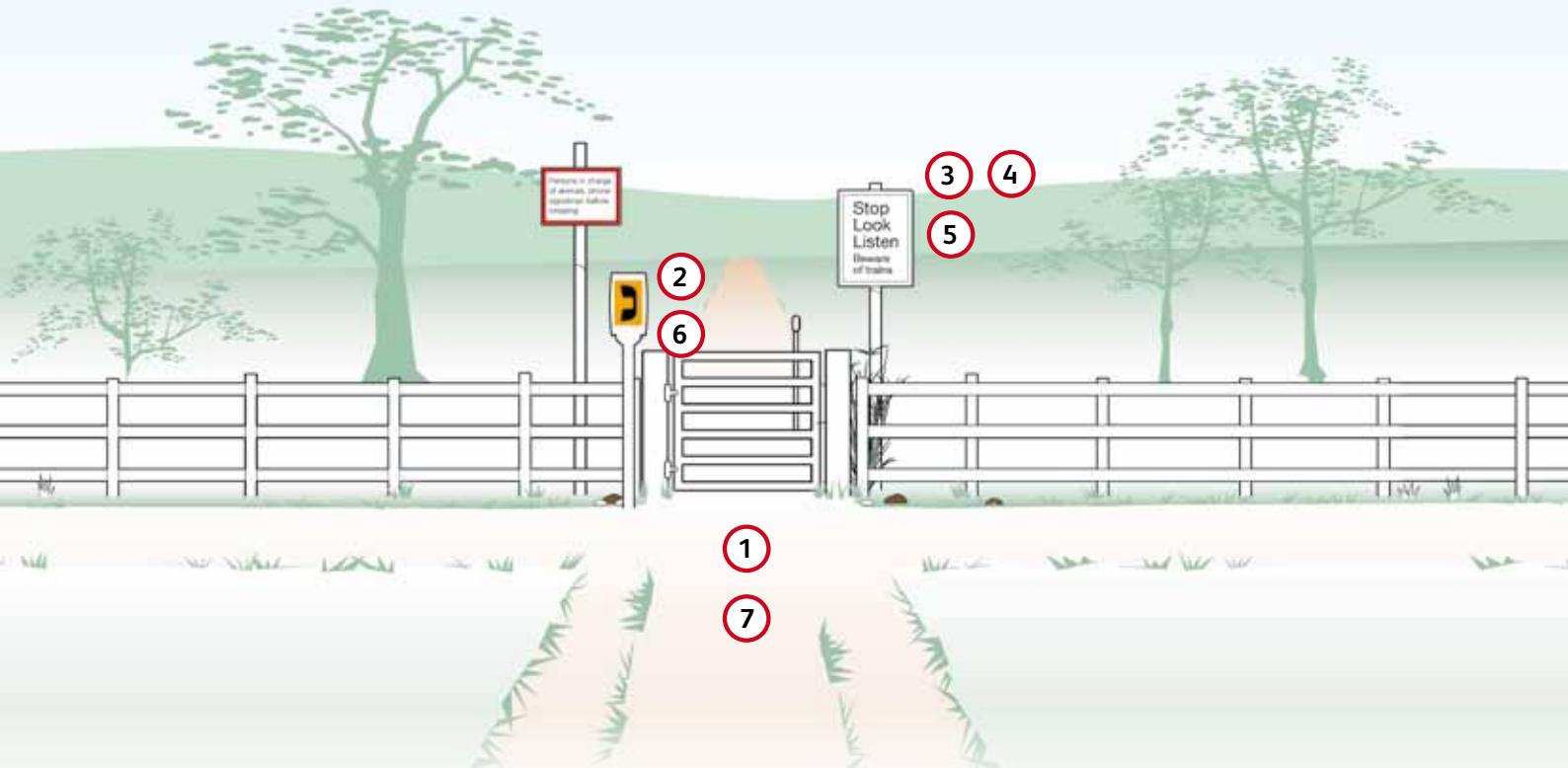
Footpath crossing (including bridleway and station crossings)

What it looks like

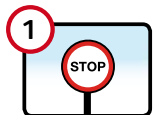
There are stiles or self-closing gates on both sides of the railway. Some crossings have warning lights.

How it works

If there are no warning lights, you must check to see if a train is coming. You will decide if you can cross the railway safely, or if you need to wait in a safe place until the train has passed. There will be enough time for you to see if a train is coming.



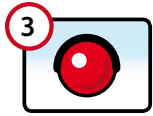
How to use the crossing



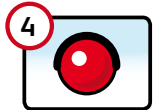
Always be ready to stop.



If there is a sign telling you to telephone before you cross, you must call to get permission to cross.



If the crossing has warning lights, you must not cross when the red light is showing.



If the red light stays on after a train has passed, do not cross - another train is coming.



If the crossing has warning lights, cross when the green light is on.



You must telephone when you have crossed if the signaller asks you to.



If there are no lights, look both ways and listen before you cross.

Network Rail
Kings Place
90 York Way
London N1 9AG
www.networkrail.co.uk/levelcrossings

If you have a problem with a level crossing
or have more questions please contact our
National Helpline on 08457 11 41 41