

M6 junction 16 to 19

Smart motorway project newsletter

October 2018



Welcome to the M6 junction 16 to 19 smart motorway project newsletter.

Closing in on completion

We're getting closer to completing your new smart motorway after passing several key construction milestones during the summer.

We brought forward carriageway resurfacing for the middle two lanes (lanes 2 and 3) between junction 16 at Crewe and 19 at Knutsford. This fixed the deteriorating road surface and potholes, creating a smoother driving experience and a major reduction in incidents and punctures. As work continues into autumn and the colder

winter months, we'll continue to monitor the condition of the road and carry out repairs whenever necessary.

In the coming weeks we will resurface what will become the left-hand lane and inside middle lane (lanes 1 and 2, which are the current hard shoulder and lane 1). In order to do this, we will have to remove the temporary safety barrier so we'll need to fully close the carriageways at quieter times to ensure the safety of drivers and our workforce.



Super-span gantry installed

The super-span gantry between junction 18 at Holmes Chapel and junction 19 has also been installed. This gantry spans both the north and southbound carriageway and is the largest new structure installed on the project. Weighing over 20 tonnes and with a width of 40 metres, the structure was escorted onto the network by the police during an overnight full carriageway closure. You can see a short video detailing its installation at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/m6j16to19>.

The gantry was hoisted into position by a large crane with the help of a team of experts in harnesses that fixed it into place. It took several hours to position and secure the structure.

Over the coming months all gantries will have the new electronic signage installed and will undergo a period of testing. Once operational, the gantries will display both mandatory speeds and the red X signs to alert drivers to a closed lane ahead.

At the southern end of the project, between junction 16 and junction 17 at Sandbach, the last of the 'piles' – which create the foundations for new structures such as gantries – was installed.





“The completion of the piling works is a key project milestone, especially considering the challenging ground conditions encountered on this project. We have had to adopt different engineering solutions to get around this issue. Now the piling works have finished, we can progress gantry installations down from junction 18 to 16.”

Andy Brown, Assistant Project Manager





What's left to do?

From autumn into early 2019 we expect to complete resurfacing, finish installing gantries and verge works (drainage, vehicle barrier installation, cabling) and install all new signage. Much of this will be done overnight during full carriageway closures when the roads are quieter.

Andy Brown from the project team said: “We appreciate that people using the diversion routes, and the residents that live on them, can become frustrated with the inconvenience. We’re doing our best to ensure we complete as much as possible when closures are in place to avoid having to close it again.”

A smart motorway gets its name from the technology used to power it; from the electronic signage to the 24/7 CCTV coverage. Once construction is complete, we will be removing the

current narrow lanes so we can test the newly-installed technology. During this process, all new cabling, signage and communications equipment will be checked so we’re ready to open by spring 2019.

The scheme will be completed in phases starting with the northern section between junctions 18 and 19, with all of the roadworks due to be removed by spring 2019.

During August and September, we held three events so local communities could find out more and understand the remaining work, why overnight closures are needed and where the diverted traffic will go. We thank you for your feedback and we have now introduced signage on diversion routes requesting drivers show consideration for residents and an increased police presence when diversions are in place.

Smart motorways at CarFest

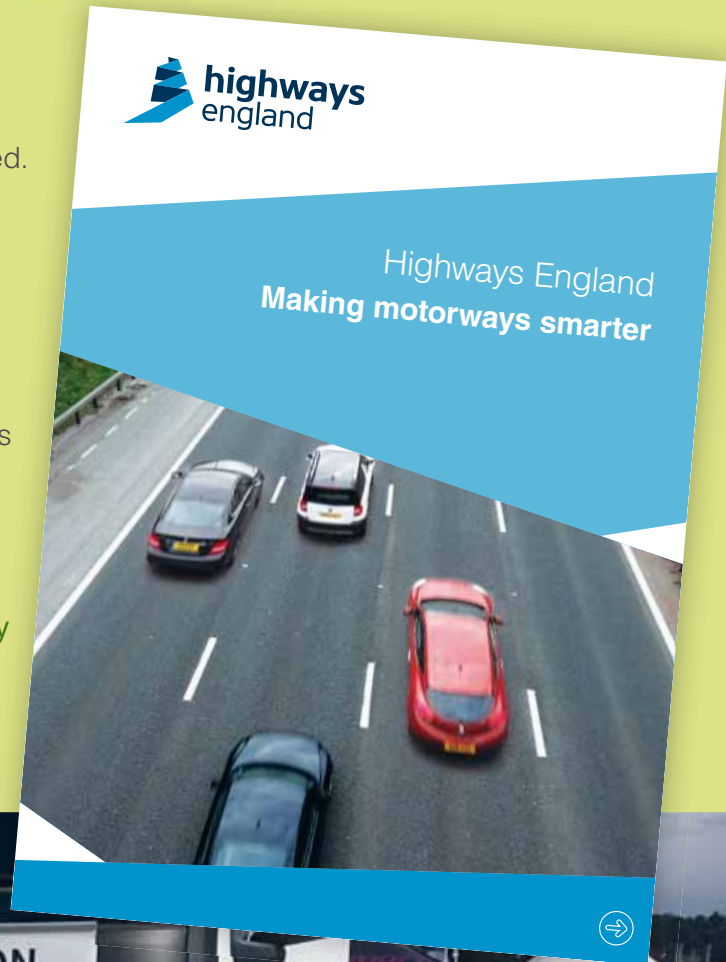


The M6 junction 16 to 19 scheme was part of Highways England's large exhibition stand at this year's CarFest North held at Bolesworth Castle in Cheshire.

The annual event was founded by the radio presenter Chris Evans in 2012, and raises funds for Children in Need.

Our M6 junction 16 to 19 project team, customer experience team and traffic officers and traffic police were on hand to speak with interested visitors. The focus was on HGV safety with advice being offered to both hauliers and non-HGV drivers on best practice and the importance of driving safely. There were lots of giveaways and competitions for the younger visitors with the project answering questions on smart motorways and handing out 'How to drive on a smart motorway' leaflets.

www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-drive-on-a-smart-motorway



Our plastic pollution pledge

Improving the environment is really important to us and our ambition is to have a road network that works more harmoniously with its surroundings.

Plastic pollution is a huge environmental concern for everyone. We have made a pledge to gather all empty plastic bottles from across the working area on the M6 junction 16 to 19 and dispose of them in a specially-made bottle bank.

The pledge aligns with the current worldwide focus on helping to minimise plastic pollution in our oceans and United Nations' own plastic pollution reduction objectives.

To encourage everyone to participate, the scheme made a promise to donate £500 to a local wildlife charity once the bottle bank was full.

“A display of the detrimental effect plastic pollution is having on the environment was at the heart of our pledge to help raise awareness. We encouraged team members to join in by collecting any plastic bottles they came across out on the network and to increase their home recycling.”

“After one month of collecting the bottle bank was full and the contents sent off for recycling. We donated a total of £780 to Lower Moss Wood Educational Nature Reserve & Wildlife Hospital in Knutsford, which protects and treats local wildlife in and around the reserve.”

Andy Brown, Assistant Project Manager



Don't be a Space Invader – stay safe, stay back

says Highways England

New figures have revealed the extent - and impact - of tailgating on the country's major roads and motorways.

One in 8 of all road casualties are caused by people who drive too close to the vehicle in front, with more than 100 people killed or seriously injured each year.

While a small minority of tailgating is deliberate, most is unintentional by drivers who are simply unaware they are dangerously invading someone else's space.

To raise awareness, we have launched the 'Don't be a Space Invader - stay safe, stay back' campaign using the well-known Space Invader video game character to alert drivers to the anti-social nature and risks of tailgating.

A Highways England survey reveals that tailgating is the biggest single bugbear that drivers have about other road users. And in-car research - using dashcams, facial recognition, emotion tracking and heart monitors - reveals that a driver's typical reaction to someone who tailgates them is surprise, anger and contempt, with a spike in heart rate.

Nearly 9 out of 10 people say they have either been tailgated or seen it. And more than a quarter of drivers admitted to tailgating. On the M6 junction 16-19 scheme, there is particular concern over car and HGV drivers not driving to the conditions – for example, narrow lanes which are required as part of construction.

The campaign is supported by one of the world's best drivers. Former Formula 1 world champion Nigel Mansell, who is President of the Institute of Advanced Motorists RoadSmart, said: "Tailgating is a driving habit I utterly deplore. Not only

is it aggressive and intimidating, but it can lead to a crash with a tragic outcome.

"There is absolutely no upside to it – you will not get to your destination faster, you are not a skilled driver for doing it, and you are putting so many innocent people at risk. So I very much back this campaign to highlight the dangers of tailgating."

Drivers can find more information about tailgating and what they can do to stay safe at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/staysafestayback>.



If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

More smart motorways investment in the North West

As our region continues to see rapid growth, we are committed to ensuring our roads have the capacity to support it.

That's why we're creating over 100 miles of extra lanes to tackle congestion and improve journey times in the North West.

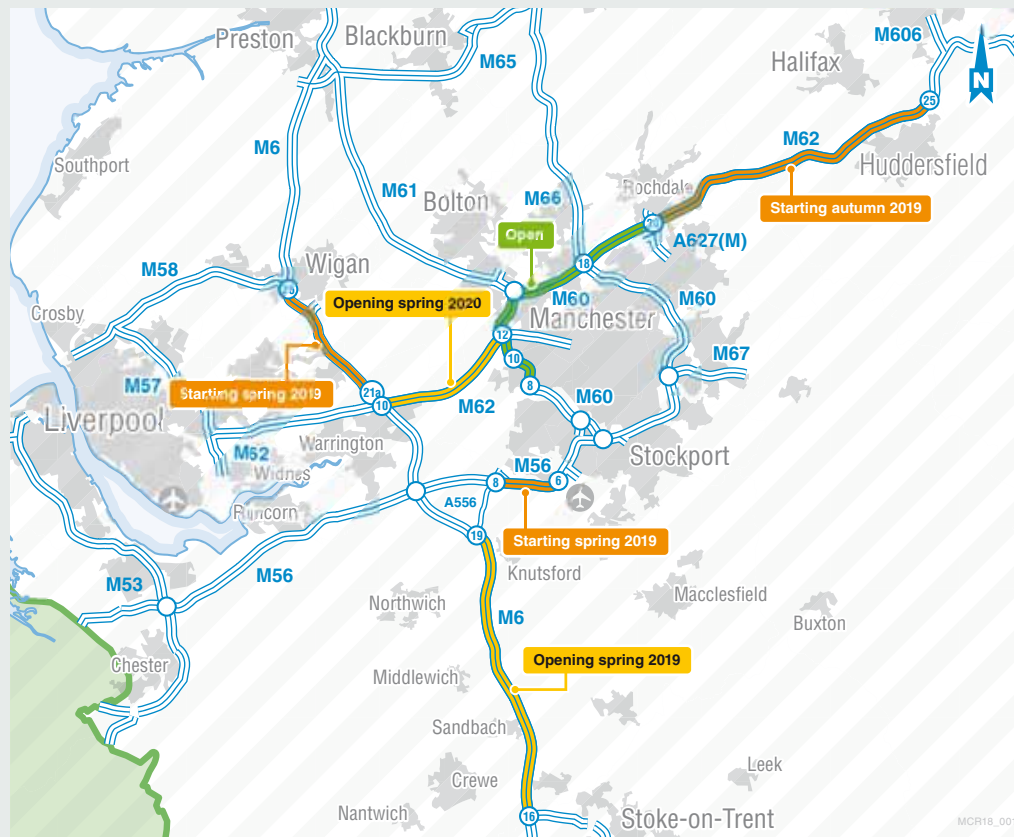
Now the Manchester smart motorway (M60 junction 8 to M62 junction 20) is fully operational and M6 junction 16 to 19 is almost complete, we are progressing with four new smart motorway schemes, which are worth around £500 million and start being built between summer 2018 and the end of 2019.

These include M62 junction 10-12, M56 junction 6 to 8, M6 junction 21a to 26 and M62 junction 20 to 25, which you can find out more about at <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/nw-smart-motorways>.

We recognise this means there will be a significant amount of work taking place within a short space of time but delivering it now will allow us to improve journey times for all road users,

reduce congestion and connect families, friends and businesses more quickly.

We will be doing everything we can to keep disruption to a minimum during construction.



Contact us

If you have any questions relating to the M6 junctions 16 to 19 smart motorway project, please get in touch by emailing:

M6J16-19SmartMotorway@highwaysengland.co.uk

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