

£93 million for road upgrades as Transport Secretary pledges to build back better across the country

- vital road upgrades announced in North Yorkshire, Hampshire and the Midlands
- new and improved transport links will boost connections between key economic hubs across the country while making journeys safer and more reliable for motorists
- funding reaffirms government promise to level up transport infrastructure and build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic, improving access to jobs and opportunities

As part of the government's commitment to fuel the economic recovery from coronavirus (COVID-19), the Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has today (30 January 2021) pledged £93 million for major road upgrades across the country.

The [Northern Powerhouse](#) is set to receive over half of the funding, with up to £56 million for a dramatic overhaul of the Kex Gill section of the A59 in North Yorkshire. This will significantly improve connectivity between the historic northern towns of Harrogate and Skipton. The proposed new road will divert traffic away from the landslip-prone Kex Gill part of the route, helping to remove traffic from nearby villages and offering more reliable journeys to thousands of people in the region every day.

The West Midlands will benefit from a £24 million investment to reduce congestion at Birchley Island, situated at the intersection of the M5, A4123 and A4034 – which is expected to boost employment, improve air quality and increase the region's manufacturing output. The proposed scheme will widen the existing carriageway on the roundabout and introduce additional lanes, all of which will improve connectivity between the Midlands and the national motorway network. Pedestrians and cyclists will also see improved facilities for greener travel at the intersection.

Elsewhere, Hampshire is in line for £13 million worth of crucial upgrades to the Redbridge Causeway bridges over the River Test, which carry roughly 60,000 vehicles a day. The bridges provide important access for local businesses and hauliers to the Port of Southampton, and link the New Forest waterside area to Southampton. Today's funding follows ministers' agreement to speed up delivery of the proposed maintenance work, which will ensure journeys in the region remain safe and reliable for tens of thousands of road users while more disruptive works – hampering people's ability to use the vital route – aren't needed in the future.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps, said:

I am delighted to announce this significant funding package, which

will ensure millions of people can continue to travel easily and safely. It's further proof of this government delivering on its promise to level up the country – putting transport at the heart of our efforts to build back better from COVID-19.

The projects will help people access work and education, as well as ensuring vital connectivity for local businesses.

While everyone will see the benefits of these schemes in time, for now, it's important to remember to only travel for the permitted reasons while we continue to prioritise protecting public health and preventing the spread of the virus. Through staying at home, you can help stop the virus and save lives.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury Steve Barclay said:

Upgrading the country's roads doesn't just help drivers – it'll mean more jobs, safer journeys and more reliable access to things like education and work.

This government is pressing ahead with our commitment to level up the country – even through this pandemic – ensuring that everyone has equal opportunity to get on in life regardless of where they live.

The total cost of the 3 schemes is expected to reach £107 million, with local councils providing the remainder of the funding following the Department for Transport's £93 million investment – pending the completion of all legal processes.