

# [Press release: Find out more about plans to improve the M621 in Leeds](#)

The planned Highways England improvements will provide additional capacity and improve journey times and safety while supporting economic growth in the region.

The options being explored to improve this busy commuter route include improvements between junction 1 and 7, additional lanes at points along the route and more signage which will improve the information drivers receive.

The project is expected to cost around £55m and is due to start in 2020, subject to achieving all the necessary approvals.

A consultation is now taking place which will run for six weeks, from Monday 4 September to Sunday 15 October, for people to give their views.

A series of events are also being held for people to come along, meet the team and find out more about the scheme.

These will be held on Friday 8 September from 1pm until 8pm at the Hillside Enterprise Centre, Beeston Rd, Leeds LS11 8ND; Saturday 9 September from 10am until 4pm at the same venue and on Saturday 16 September from 10am until 4pm at St Matthew's Community Centre, St Matthew's Street, Leeds, LS11 9NR.

Highways England project manager Sarah Kearns said:

This is an exciting scheme that will help improve motorist's journeys and cut congestion in Leeds.

We look forward to people coming along to these events to find out more and have their say.

For more information please visit the [scheme webpage](#) or email the project team [M621J1to7@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:M621J1to7@highwaysengland.co.uk).

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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# Press release: £300 million road projects to improve journeys in Merseyside and Cheshire

Highways England has set out its preferred options for upgrading the key route to the Port of Liverpool and creating a new junction on the M56 near Runcorn following public consultations earlier this year.

A new 3-mile dual carriageway between the motorway network and the port will take freight away from residential areas on the A5036, which has been identified as being the tenth most congested road in England.

The bypass will serve the existing port as well as the new £300 million deep-water container terminal, which is expected to triple the port's volume of goods by 2030.

The new junction 11a on the M56 will also play a vital role in supporting the region's economy by providing a new link to the Mersey Gateway bridge between Runcorn and Widnes, and improving local access to the motorway.

Tim Gamon, Highways England's regional delivery director for the North West, said:

Both these major road schemes will help to bring significant economic benefits to the North West and we're now at the stage where we can set out our preferred options for the projects.

The new bypass will take the existing traffic away from the A5036 as well as managing the significant increase in vehicle numbers that are anticipated with the port's growth. We're also committed to making improvements to the existing A5036 as part of the scheme that will benefit people who live and work in the area.

The new junction on the M56 will also benefit local residents by taking traffic away from residential areas as well as providing a new route to the Mersey Gateway bridge – an important new link between Cheshire and Merseyside.

The new £250 million dual carriageway bypass through the Rimrose Valley will connect Princess Way to Broom's Cross Road.

A new roundabout, controlled by traffic lights, will also be built at the junction connecting Broom's Cross Road, Brickwall Lane and the new bypass. And Broom's Cross Road will be upgraded to a dual carriageway from the new roundabout to Switch Island, where the A5036 connects with the M57 and M58.

The new £60 million M56 junction will be built between junctions 11 and 12,

and will provide a more direct route to the M56 from south Runcorn as well as connecting to the Mersey Gateway bridge.

The junction will link to a new crossroads for the A533 Southern Expressway and Murdishaw Avenue, north of the motorway. The crossroads will replace the existing roundabout and be controlled by traffic lights, which will use sensors in the road to respond to changes in traffic levels.

M56, junction 11a

Detailed designs for both major road projects will now be developed, with construction work due to start by spring 2020.

Funding for the schemes is being provided as part of the government's £15 billion Road Investment Strategy (RIS), and will help boost the Northern Powerhouse by improving transport connectivity and reliability to help the economy of the North.

More details on the projects are available on the road projects pages for the [A5036 Port of Liverpool Access](#) and [M56 New Junction 11A](#).

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## [News story: Immigration deadline for Grenfell Tower residents extended](#)

Foreign nationals affected by the Grenfell Tower tragedy will have more time to access leave to remain in the UK, the Home Office announced today.

A policy on leave to remain outside the Immigration Rules for residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk was introduced in July to ensure victims of the tragedy get the access they need to vital services, irrespective of immigration status.

### **Support and assistance**

The policy means individuals directly affected by the Grenfell Tower fire who contact the Home Office via a specified process will be given a 12-month period of limited leave to remain in the UK with full access to relevant support and assistance if they meet the eligibility criteria.

It was due to close to new cases today (31 August) but the Home Office

confirmed it will be extended until 30 November 2017. The extension will give further opportunity for people to come forward and speak to the department.

Immigration Minister Brandon Lewis said:

The welfare of survivors of the Grenfell Tower fire is a priority for this government.

We believe that extending this policy for a further 3 months gives survivors further opportunity to come forward, both to receive support for the exceptionally traumatic events they have experienced and to provide essential first-hand accounts of the fire.

I also hope this extension will help to dispel people's fears about coming forward to assist the inquiry into this horrific and unprecedented incident due to their immigration status.

The policy is aimed at giving survivors the time they need to deal with the extremely difficult circumstances in which they find themselves and start to rebuild their lives whilst considering their future options, as well as assisting the police and other authorities with their enquiries about the fire.

## **No immigration checks**

The Home Office will not conduct immigration checks on survivors and those coming forward to assist the authorities. No fees will be charged by the Home Office in respect of cases granted leave under the policy.

Anyone who believes they are eligible for the scheme can speak face-to-face to a specialist Home Office team at The Curve, 10 Bard Road, Nottingdale, West London, W10 6TP from 10am – 8pm.

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## **[Press release: UK cracks down on modern slavery in Nigeria](#)**

The UK is cracking down on the barbaric crime of modern slavery, International Development Secretary Priti Patel announced from Nigeria today, as she called for a world free from this abhorrent trade.

During a visit to a safe house – home to child victims as young as seven – Ms Patel met survivors of modern slavery and announced increased support to provide alternative jobs and livelihoods for potential victims of trafficking

and modern slavery, including support for those who become victims to help them reintegrate into society and to protect them from re-trafficking – reducing a crime that directly affects the UK.

Nigeria is the fourth largest source of human trafficking to the UK, and the International Organization for Migration estimates that approximately 80% of girls arriving to Europe from Nigeria through irregular migration are potential victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

During a joint visit to Nigeria alongside Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, Ms Patel raised the issue of trafficking at the highest levels in government and challenged the political and cultural acceptance of modern slavery, a trade which earns more for criminals around the world than any other, apart from the illegal drug trade.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

It is shameful that in the 21st Century the evil crime of modern slavery lurks in every corner of the globe, including on the UK's streets, destroying the lives of young men, women, and children. We will not stand aside and ignore this barbaric and often invisible crime, which all too often reaches our shores and is damaging for everyone except the perpetrators.

The UK is a global leader in stamping out modern slavery, pressing the international community including the Nigerian Government to tackle this crime at source, bringing perpetrators to justice and protecting victims who have been subject to unimaginable horrors.

Our support is offering vulnerable girls and women an alternative life to slavery and exploitation and helping them reintegrate into society, stopping vicious cycles of abuse and creating a more prosperous and secure future for thousands, as well as for us at home.

The Prime Minister Theresa May has made clear that tackling modern slavery is a top priority for the UK, creating the world-leading Modern Slavery Act in 2015 and establishing the cross-government taskforce, which includes the International Development Secretary.

According to latest figures, 875,500 Nigerians are living in modern slavery worldwide, including in the UK, and Ms Patel heard from counsellors at a safe house in Lagos, run by Nigeria's National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), who have helped some of these vulnerable people.

In the safe house, Ms Patel saw children – some as young as seven years old – who have been trafficked across the world, including to the UK, Europe, Libya and other countries across Africa. She vowed to challenge the cultural acceptance of human exploitation; often young girls and boys who end up trapped in this abusive trade are encouraged by their families to risk their

lives in search of money and a better future.

This new package of support builds on progress already being made by the UK in Nigeria and across the world. The UK's existing support to Nigeria is helping to support investigations and bring perpetrators to justice, as well as providing protection for victims.

The British Government is driving reform within the international system to coordinate a more effective and focused approach to stamp out this exploitation.

#### **Notes to Editors:**

- There are an estimated 46 million people living in modern slavery across the globe who have been trafficked, coerced or otherwise forced into terrible exploitation, labour or domestic servitude.
- The UK's £7 million announcement will work to tackle the root causes as well as the symptoms of modern slavery and human trafficking in Nigeria:
  - The programme will build evidence and trial interventions to prevent modern slavery and be ready to do what works.
  - We will provide credible alternatives for women and girls in the high risk demographic and help diversify economic activity in Edo State – Nigeria's trafficking hub – and other Niger Delta states.
  - We will improve the essential support for victims, which could include assistance to help them reintegrate into society, to prevent vulnerable people being re-trafficked and falling back into a cycle of exploitation.
  - DFID will challenge the Government of Nigeria to step up to tackle modern slavery and act as Champions who will help us advocate for reform.
  - This is a new allocation of funds from the DFID Nigeria budget towards explicitly tackling human trafficking and modern slavery.
- This funding is in addition to £5 million of the UK's Modern Slavery Fund, which the Prime Minister announced in July 2016, that has been allocated to Nigeria and which will build capacity of Nigeria law enforcement to crack down on the crime, help investigate prolific traffickers, and provide protection for victims.
- DFID has previously donated four vehicles to NAPTIP to support human trafficking investigations and to assist with the safeguarding and care of identified victims of trafficking.
- The ILO estimates that global trade in humans costs \$150 billion. Only profits reaped from illegal drugs earn more for criminals than forced labour.
- Trafficking for sexual exploitation alone costs the UK an estimated £890

million every year.

- IOM estimates that approximately 80% of girls arriving to Europe from Nigeria are potential victims of trafficking for exploitation – whose numbers have soared from 1,454 in 2014 to 11,009 in 2016.
- The Home Office estimates that there were 10,000 – 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK in 2013.
- In 2016, 3,805 potential victims of modern slavery were referred to the National Referral Mechanism; a 17% increase on the number of referrals in 2015.
- In December last year the International Development Secretary announced £8 million to double support to a special protection fund set up to keep women and girl refugees in the Mediterranean region safe from trafficking and exploitation.
- DFID is already working to tackle slavery. Our Regional Women and Girls Protection Programme will support 40,000 vulnerable women migrants in Libya to protect themselves from trafficking, forced labour and sexual violence in Greece and the Balkans.
- The announcement was made during a two day visit by the International Development Secretary Priti Patel and the Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, where they announced a new package of humanitarian support to help rebuild north east Nigeria, and saw how UK aid, defence and diplomacy are working together to build security and shared prosperity in Nigeria and at home.

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## **Press release: Foreign Secretary champions UK-Nigeria trade and partnership**

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has called for an intensification of trade between Britain and Nigeria on the second of a two day visit to the West African country, underlining the close friendship between both countries. He also dedicated a new Commonwealth war memorial, recognising the sacrifice of thousands of Nigerian troops in the First and Second World Wars, and

highlighted British military support for Nigerian efforts to protect international shipping in the Gulf of Guinea, now one of the most dangerous areas in the world for piracy.

UK bilateral trade with Nigeria is forecast to be £7 billion annually by 2030 but the Foreign Secretary has used a visit to Lagos, the country's commercial capital, to encourage more British investment in Nigeria. Mr Johnson visited Nigeria's Guinness brewery, majority owned by Diageo, which imports all of its barley from the UK and exports Guinness Extra across the world.

While in Lagos, Mr Johnson also met British service personnel, including Royal Marines, from the resident British Military Advisory and Training Team who in the last 12 months have trained more than 300 Nigerian Naval personnel, including members of the Nigerian Special Boat Service.

There were more than 120 pirate attacks reported in the Gulf of Guinea last year, costing around US\$800 million, and so far this year 43 hostages of various nationalities have been taken. More than £6 billion of West African trade with the UK and around 15% of oil imported to the UK moves through the Gulf of Guinea annually.

Earlier today in Abuja, Mr Johnson formally dedicated a new Commonwealth war memorial at the National Military Cemetery. Mr Johnson also held high level talks with Nigerian Vice President Yemi Osinbajo and urged the Nigerian Government to fulfil its responsibilities in the fight against Boko Haram.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

Nigeria is a country of huge promise and big ambitions. British businesses such as Diageo and Unilever are thriving here and I want to see even more British companies succeeding in Nigeria, and more Nigerian companies in Britain.

The potential of Nigeria's markets, people and natural resources is enormous and helping to secure a prosperous future for our two countries is a key part of our Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting next year.

He added:

Our military links are close and longstanding. I am honoured to have dedicated the new Commonwealth war memorial to the memory of the thousands of Nigerians who fought side-by-side with Britain in the First and Second World Wars.

And today, British military training is helping Nigeria to take on Boko Haram and to fight back against piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. This close military cooperation is the cornerstone of our joint efforts to defeat terror and to create the conditions for peace, stability and prosperity

The Foreign Secretary was travelling on a joint visit to Nigeria with International Development Secretary Priti Patel.