

Contraflow keeps motorway open as huge gantries installed for M6 upgrade

Press release

Six motorway gantries which will house up-to-date technology to improve safety have been put up on a section of the M6 without the need for any road closures thanks to the contraflow system now in place.



The gantry is lifted into place in the overnight works on the M6 upgrade.

In just seven days the gantries, which weigh between 13 and 32 tonnes each, were installed on the northbound carriageway between junctions 13 to 14 in Staffordshire as part of a motorway upgrade.

Seventeen miles of the M6 between junctions 13 (Stafford) and 15 (Stoke-on-Trent) are being upgraded and when the work is completed the gantries will house electronic signs to alert drivers to changes in the speed limit, lane closures and incidents ahead.

Thanks to the contraflow system in place – which runs for almost the length of the works – traffic was able to travel in that lane enabling workers to carry out the installations safely without having to shut the motorway. The contraflow system was introduced last year and will cut the length of time the roadworks will be running as well as reducing the number of motorway closures needed.

A major motorway upgrade will usually require up to 200 full motorway closures to complete construction work. However, by using a contraflow, the number of full closures needed on this scheme has been reduced by up to half, benefiting local people and drivers.

Drivers still go through the roadworks at the same speed but the contraflows create larger construction areas at the side of the motorway enabling more work to be safely carried out in one shift, speeding up the project. Contraflows allow more space for working to be created at the verge which means contractors can carry out bigger works, normally carried out overnight,

during the day.

Highways England Smart Motorways Sponsor Peter Smith said:

When completed, the upgrade of this congested stretch of motorway will bring much more reliable journeys. These gantries and the enhanced technology will give drivers better information to help with their journeys through Staffordshire and beyond.

We always try to get roadworks carried out as quickly as possible and with minimum disruption to road users so we are delighted that the contraflow is helping us to achieve that.

General enquiries

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

Media enquiries

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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