[Government paves the way for self-driving vehicles on UK roads](#)

- first types of self-driving vehicles could be on UK roads by the end of this year
- journeys of the future could ease congestion, cut emissions and reduce human error
- Automated Lane Keeping Systems are a first example of self-driving technology, and will be limited to speeds of up to 37mph on motorways

Motorists could see self-driving vehicles on British roads for the first time later this year, the Department for Transport has announced today (28 April 2021).

Following a landmark [call for evidence](#), the government has set out how vehicles fitted with Automated Lane Keeping System (ALKS) technology could legally be defined as self-driving, as long as they receive GB type approval and that there is no evidence to challenge the vehicle's ability to self-drive.

Designed for use on a motorway in slow traffic, ALKS enables a vehicle to drive itself in a single lane, while maintaining the ability to easily and safely return control to the driver when required.

The technology could improve road safety by reducing human error, which contributes to over 85% of accidents. The driver will be able to hand control over to the vehicle, which will constantly monitor speed and keep a safe distance from other cars.

Today's announcement comes as a [consultation on The Highway Code rules](#) is launched to ensure the first wave of this technology is used safely and responsibly. This consultation will conclude on 28 May 2021.

Transport Minister Rachel Maclean said:

> This is a major step for the safe use of self-driving vehicles in the UK, making future journeys greener, easier and more reliable while also helping the nation to build back better.
>
> But we must ensure that this exciting new tech is deployed safely, which is why we are consulting on what the rules to enable this should look like. In doing so, we can improve transport for all, securing the UK's place as a global science superpower.

Self-driving technology in cars, buses and delivery vehicles could spark the beginning of the end of urban congestion, with traffic lights and vehicles speaking to each other to keep traffic flowing, reducing emissions and

improving air quality in our towns and cities.

Not only are automated vehicles expected to improve road safety, the technology could also improve access to transport for people with mobility issues and lead to more reliable public transport services, helping to level-up access to transport in historically disconnected and rural areas.

As we build back better, connected and autonomous vehicle technology could create around 38,000 new jobs in a UK industry that could be worth £42 billion by 2035. Over 80% of these jobs are expected to be in professional, technical and skilled trade occupations.

SMMT Chief Executive, Mike Hawes, said:

> The automotive industry welcomes this vital step to permit the use of automated vehicles on UK roads, which will put Britain in the vanguard of road safety and automotive technology. Automated driving systems could prevent 47,000 serious accidents and save 3,900 lives over the next decade through their ability to reduce the single largest cause of road accidents – human error.
>
> Technologies such as Automated Lane Keeping Systems will pave the way for higher levels of automation in future – and these advances will unleash Britain's potential to be a world leader in the development and use of these technologies, creating essential jobs while ensuring our roads remain among the safest on the planet.

The UK is already a world leader in connected and self-driving vehicle innovation, and British companies are working on and developing the next generations of automated vehicles.