

Highways England announces £200m investment to improve roads across the south west of England

The announcement comes after Highways England invested a similar amount in the south west last year and follows the Government's continued drive to level up transport in regions right across the country.

Responsible for motorways and major A-roads, the company's investment will fund vital infrastructure and boost both connections and local economies as we build back better from the pandemic.

Well-known motorways and major A-roads including the M4, M5, A40 and A38 are all included in the package. Motorists, pedestrians and cyclists all set to benefit from the planned works, which include road resurfacing and maintenance, the creation of cycle lanes, improved signage and landscaping.

Funded from the Government's Road Investment Strategy, in total Highways England will spend £200 million during the financial year into more than 121 of these kinds of schemes across Bristol, South Gloucestershire, North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, Wiltshire, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall.

This is in addition to the multi-million A30 dualling scheme in Cornwall and A303 dualling scheme in Sparkford which are both under construction.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

This Government is committed to levelling-up transport right across the country, helping people get to work or education, and to see family and friends.

This multi-million-pound investment is a real reflection of that commitment. It will ensure road-users right across the south west enjoy safer, quicker journeys, and that the local economy can build back better from the pandemic.

Highways England Regional Director Andrew Page-Dove said:

Hundreds of thousands of drivers use our roads every day for work journeys, home deliveries and the movement of the goods and services, so it's essential we keep them in a good condition to ensure safety and reliability.

With this investment, Highways England will continue to deliver the essential maintenance and upgrades throughout the region to improve

safety and help keep drivers on the move.

Highways England has a comprehensive maintenance programme, with schemes including:

- M5 junction 11 Golden Valley – bridge refurbishment and resurfacing
- M4 junction 15 – additional lane to create improved access to housing and jobs
- M5 between junction 23 and 25 – introducing message signs, incident detection and signalling, queue protection, speed management and enhanced CCTV coverage
- A38 Mowhay bridge – widening the footpath for cyclists and pedestrians
- A40 in Gloucestershire – upgrading six miles of cycleway

It's not just motorists who will benefit either. Since 2015 the company has invested more than £85 million towards the creation of 160 new and upgraded cycle ways across England, providing safe, attractive and accessible facilities for people to cycle for work, shopping and leisure.

Recently, the company completed a local authority project to improve the National Cycleway Network between Cribbs Causeway and Severn Beach, with a scheme also nearing completion on the A36 in Salisbury, while the £2.89 million Mowhay project will see the current footbridge modified for both cyclists and walkers, and another project set to start on the A38 in Plymouth.

The Mowhay footbridge over the A38 will be widened to accommodate cyclists

This latest investment into the region's roads follows on from last year's essential maintenance programme which saw Highways England pump £200 million into road renewal and maintenance projects.

From April 2020 to March 2021, the company resurfaced nearly 200 miles of road throughout the region – the equivalent of nearly 16,000 double decker buses parked back-to-back.

This, along with the renewal of 42 miles of barriers, 950 miles of road markings and 31 miles of drainage, helped ensure motorists in the south west continued moving smoothly and safely.

Schemes like the M5 junction 11 will help keep the south west connected to the rest of the world, connect people and communities and support industry

Highways England's workers also helped light the way for drivers by laying more than 91,000 road studs, 150 lights and 29 new traffic lights, along with installing 93 new traffic signs.

To ensure the roads are safe for all, staff also inspected 22,000 road signs,

carried out 12,500 miles of walked inspections and inspected all electrical assets, alleviating the need for unforeseen closures.

With work taking place throughout several lockdowns, Highways England contacted 100,000 people in the region to ensure those who needed to make essential journeys in line with government guidelines, were kept well informed and able to do so.

Road improvements included:

- M4 junction 21 to junction 19 eastbound, resurfacing 13 miles of carriageway
- M4 junction 19 to junction 20 westbound, resurfacing 5 miles of carriageway
- M5 junction 11 to junction 13 southbound, resurfacing 6 miles of carriageway
- M5 junction 17 to junction 15 northbound, resurfacing 13 miles of carriageway
- A30 Fingle to Woodleigh westbound, resurfacing 7 miles of carriageway
- M5 junction 14 to junction 12 northbound, resurfacing 13 miles of carriageway

Along with resurfacing, the company also kept motorists safe with various winter precautions and treatments, and huge investment into driver awareness.

Over the winter months, Highways England undertook 3,829 precautionary treatments covering 252,000 miles, spreading nearly 14,000 tonnes of salt and potassium acetate and introduced 20 new of gritters to its fleet.

The company is investing £20m into a driver information scheme on the M5 between junction 23 and 25 that will deliver message signs, incident detection and signalling, queue protection, speed management and enhanced CCTV coverage.

Completing in October, the improvements will enable Highways England to monitor the network more effectively, warn drivers of road conditions, manage traffic speeds during times of congestion, provide improved network information and enable better management of incidents.

To keep up to date with the latest travel information on these projects and the work of Highways England, follow @HighwaysSWEST on Twitter or visit the [Highways England website](#).

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.