

[News story: £170 million plan to dual vital Somerset road](#)

The key route between Sparkford and Ilchester is being upgraded to relieve the over-congested road and create 30 miles of dual carriageway between Mere and South Petherton.

The £170 million plan is part of the [government's £15 billion investment in our motorways and major A roads between 2015 and 2020](#) – the biggest in a generation.

More than 26,000 vehicles use this stretch of road a day, double the number it was designed for. Dualling the route will cut journey times and new junctions will enhance safety.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Almost 4 million trips are made on the A303 every year and we are investing more than £2 billion to improve these motorists' journeys, making them quicker and safer.

Tackling congestion on this vital road will also help boost the economy in the south-west, unlock thousands of jobs and homes and promote tourism.

Work will include making junctions safer as well as providing better links for pedestrians and cyclists.

Highways England is consulting on the 2 routes and is urging residents to have their say on the plans. The consultation runs from 15 February to 29 March 2017.

The preferred route between Sparkford and Ilchester is due to be announced in autumn this year. Work is expected to start in 2020.

Highways England chief executive Jim O'Sullivan said:

This scheme will be really good news for people travelling to and from the south-west, particularly during the busy summer months.

Our consultation and public exhibitions will provide an excellent opportunity to explain further our plans and to hear feedback from people on our proposals to deliver the scheme.

A separate consultation on building a [tunnel for the A303 near Stonehenge](#) is also underway. This will further improve journeys on the main road between London and the south-west.

Further details on upgrading the A358 between Taunton and Southfields will also be revealed shortly.

Highways England is holding the following public information events:

- 12.00 noon to 8.30pm, Thursday 23 February: Sparkford Inn Function Room, Sparkford
- 10.00am to 5.00pm, Queen Camel Memorial Hall, High Street, Queen Camel, Yeovil
- 10.00am to 6.00pm, Friday, 10 March: Davis Hall, Howell Hill, West Camel, Yeovil