

[Press release: Extra lanes to open before Christmas on Manchester smart motorway](#)

Highways England is opening a permanent fourth lane in each direction between junctions 18 and 20 of the M62 as part of a phased opening of the Manchester smart motorway scheme – increasing capacity on one of England’s busiest stretches of motorway by a third.

Roadworks will be removed from the eastbound carriageway tonight (Monday 18 December 2017) and from the westbound carriageway tomorrow night (Tuesday 19 December 2017).

New electronic signs will also be switched on along this section of the M62 as well as on the M60 between junctions 8 and 10 near the Trafford Centre, providing drivers with journey time updates and details on incidents.

The opening of ten miles of extra lanes on the M62 are among almost 400 miles of roadworks across England being lifted or completed by Highways England in time for the Christmas getaway.

Almost 99 per cent of motorways and major A roads will be roadworks-free, meaning people travelling to meet up with families and friends can more easily reach their destinations.

Jon Stokes, Senior Project Manager at Highways England, said:

The extra lanes on the M62 will provide a significant increase in capacity on the busy stretch of motorway between Greater Manchester and Yorkshire, benefitting the 180,000 drivers who use the route every day.

We’re now at a stage where we can open the extra lanes in time to benefit both Christmas shoppers and people travelling to visit family and friends over the festive season.

Nearly 600 people are currently working to complete the smart motorway and we will open each section along the route as soon as possible, improving drivers’ journeys and supporting the economy.

Variable speed limits will be introduced on the M62 (junctions 18 to 20) and the M60 (junctions 8 to 10) in early 2018 which will automatically change in response to the flow of traffic. The speed limit will remain at 50mph while the new technology is being fine-tuned.

Construction work will continue between junctions 10 and 18 on the M60 in 2018 to complete the installation of over 350 electronic signs, over 100

traffic sensors and 50 CCTV cameras.

Resurfacing work will also take place along the entire smart motorway route using overnight carriageway closures. The project is due to be completed by summer 2018.

The scheme is Highways England's most complex smart motorway project, affecting the second busiest motorway in the country and covering 13 junctions – an average of one junction every 1.4 miles.

The full scheme stretches 17 miles between junction 8 of the M60 near Sale and junction 20 of the M62 near Rochdale.

More details on the Manchester smart motorway scheme can be found on the [scheme 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.