

# Press release: Highways England is 'gearing up' to remove miles of roadworks in time for Christmas

Almost 400 miles of roadworks across England will be lifted and completed in December, leaving almost 99 per cent of motorways and strategic A roads roadworks-free in time for Christmas.

All roadworks will be lifted or completed by 6am on 22 December until 12.01am on 2 January to help people get away this Christmas with as little disruption as possible.

With the festive countdown well and truly underway, the UK's largest coach operator National Express, has praised Highways England for its role in helping people get to their destination on time.

Chris Hardy, National Express Coach Managing Director, said:

We'll be moving hundreds of thousands of passengers around the UK during the festive period, including on Christmas and Boxing Day when there are no rail services; and New Year's Day.

We work with Highways England round the year to support them in maintaining and improving the road network so that we can offer our customers a reliable and convenient service.

It's great that they've lifted road works during a busy time for travel, helping us to make sure we can get passengers where they want to be for Christmas.

And with thoughts turning to the all-important getaway, Highways England is also calling on motorists to do their bit before getting behind the wheel.

Highways England's customer service director, Melanie Clarke, said:

We're doing everything we can to make journeys as smooth as possible this Christmas and that's why we're keeping 99 per cent of the road network we manage, free from roadworks.

Safety is our top imperative and we know from experience that almost half of breakdowns are avoidable and these can easily be avoided with simple checks. Christmas is always a busy period on the road network and we'd urge all motorists to make sure they do their bit to check their vehicle is roadworthy before setting off over the festive period.

Highways England has also launched a special [festive animation](#) which shows Santa carrying out vital checks to his sleigh before embarking on the most important journey of the year – and he’s got a little help from his festive friends including Rudolph!

Some of Santa’s pre-flight checks include:

- checking that there is plenty of grip on his sledge – motorists should check their tyre tread to make sure it is within the legal limit
- making sure Rudolph’s nose is shining bright – always make sure lights on the vehicle are working correctly before setting off
- making sure the reindeer are full of fuel before travelling – make sure that you always keep your tank at least one quarter full to avoid running out of fuel on your journey

The animation can be found online at the Highways England YouTube channel. Latest statistics from Highways England show almost half of all breakdowns are caused by basic mechanical problems which could be avoided with simple checks.

Furthermore, nearly a quarter are caused by tyre problems; with more than 7,000 cases nationwide of vehicle breakdowns on the strategic road network due to lack of fuel over the course of a year.

Motorists can head online to the Think website where they can watch bespoke videos showing how to carry out basic vehicle checks.

Those wishing to find out more about driving on smart motorways can [go to our webpage](#) for further information.

Drivers planning to use the Dartford Crossing are reminded to pay Dart Charge in advance or by midnight the day after crossing.

More information can be found on our website or by calling our information line (0300 123 5000) they can keep up to date with conditions on the roads.

For more detailed information on how to carry out your vehicle checks, search Think!

## **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.