

Press release: Highways England's intelligent network of the future

In a vision of the future outlined today the government company said an intelligent network coupled with connected vehicles would improve how efficiently roads are maintained and at the same time improve safety. In another development drones could also be used to fly overhead and report back on incidents, improving response times.

In its [Strategic Road Network Initial Report](#), published today (13 December 2017), the company says technology will play an increasingly major role in keeping people moving, and the country connected.

It also stresses the importance of keeping existing roads properly maintained, and that it does so in a way which minimises disruption to road users and local communities. The report will be used to inform the government's next road investment strategy which begins in 2020.

Highways England Chief Executive, Jim O'Sullivan, said:

We are delivering a record £15 billion of government investment to give people safe, efficient and reliable journeys, and provide businesses with the links they need to prosper and grow.

Because people's journeys are important to us we are setting out our high level aspirations which will help ensure the network continues to drive economic growth, jobs and prosperity, and keeps traffic moving today, and into the future.

We encourage people to read our report and feedback through the Department for Transport's consultation, which is also launched today.

Since it was created in 2015, Highways England has completed 18 major road improvements and has a further 15 currently in construction.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

This government is making people's journeys better, faster and safer to give people better access to jobs, schools and their community.

We are planning to spend more than ever before to upgrade England's motorways and major A roads from 2020 through to 2025.

The Initial Report outlines eight aspirations for the next road period:

- focus on operations, maintenance and renewals
- build the smart motorway spine of the network
- roll out expressways
- undertake transformational investments
- deliver a balanced programme
- renew focus on small schemes
- deliver through refined designated funds
- prepare for the future

The Department for Transport has also today launched its consultation, into Highways England's Initial Report. Their consultation will run until Wednesday, 7 February 2018.

The results of it will be used by the department to help develop the next Road Investment Strategy which the government is expected to publish in 2019. It is then that detail on specific road projects will be outlined.

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.