

Press release: Major A21 upgrade complete

The upgrade to the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury has built a new dual carriageway, to speed up journeys, improve safety, reduce congestion and boost the economy.

Two new junctions have been built as part of the project, as well as better, safer access to the A21 for the homes and businesses along it and dedicated new facilities for pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists.

Highways England Regional Investment Programme Director David Haines said:

This is another missing link in the country's road network filled in. For decades, the single carriageway section of the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury has been a source of daily congestion, delaying drivers and frustrating business who depend on the road. That changes today. These A21 improvements are another great achievement for Highways England's delivery of the first Road Investment Strategy, the biggest road investment for a generation. I hope the people of Kent enjoy driving on their new improved A21.

The improvements were formally opened today by Tom Tugendhat MP for Tonbridge and Malling.

Work started on the scheme in spring 2015. Over the last few months drivers have been benefitting from a phased opening of the improvements, starting with the new flyover at Longfield Road, which partially opened in July 2017. The road layout has also been improved for properties along the A21 with a new junction to provide safer access.

George Pargeter, Balfour Beatty Project Director for the A21 Tonbridge to Pembury Project, said:

We are delighted to announce the completion of the A21 project, enabling the local community and travelling public to enjoy the benefits of the new dual carriageway. This has been a complex project which presented a number of challenges, however our expertise and collaboration with Highways England has enabled us to successfully and safely deliver a high quality, more streamlined route connecting Hastings and London.

The A21 improvements have not just been about building a new road; the project team have taken great care to protect the exceptionally beautiful and protected countryside alongside the road. 18 hectares of new woodland has been created as part of the project – twice that needed for construction,

with cutting edge translocation techniques, to preserve its ecological make up. New areas of heathland have been created and an ancient barn has been carefully taken down and is now being reconstructed and preserved at a heritage museum.

An ancient barn is being preserved at a museum

As well as improving the road, a new path along the A21 has been completed. Kent County Council will provide additional links to Tonbridge Station and Pembury Hospital to benefit the local community thanks to additional funding from Highways England.

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.