

Press release: New approach for roadworks in Kent

Hundreds of millions of pounds are being invested in road improvements in the coming years, including four major improvement schemes, thousands of maintenance and renewals projects and measure to increase the road network's resilience to disruption.

Now, business, civic and community leaders from across Kent have been invited to form an advisory group that can advise Highways England, Kent County Council and Medway Council on their priorities and help make sure that roadworks across the county are well coordinated and communicated.

The work is part of a new team, the Kent Corridor Coordination Group, which is made up of Highways England and their delivery partners and local highway authority officers from Kent County Council and Medway Council.

Already the group has helped to benefit drivers by collaborating to rescheduling a planned footbridge replacement to minimise disruption and by facilitating routine maintenance using the same roadworks as major schemes.

Civic, business and transport leaders from across Kent gather at County Hall

Karen Davies, chair of the Kent Corridor coordination group said:

There is a massive amount of investment going into Kent's road network – bringing significant benefits, but also meaning it is more important than ever that all the work is coordinated closely.

Taken separately or together, the improvements we are delivering in Kent will help to make the county a better place to live, visit and do business in. They represent a huge investment in Kent's economy, and each project will help to keep journeys safe and reliable.

We appreciate that roadworks can be frustrating, and we are working hard to keep disruption to a minimum and make sure that all the different sets of road works are closely coordinated. The work of this group will help us do just that and we look forward to a productive partnership.

Kent County Council Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste Mike Whiting said:

Kent is the gateway to Europe and the stresses and pressures on our roads are unique.

By working together it gives us the best chance to make sure Kent's

road users and communities are kept safe, informed and can make their daily journeys with confidence.

The amount of investment planned for Kent is fantastic, but the potential to cause disruption to Kent's communities and businesses is very real.

This group has already started to demonstrate and to deliver sensible decisions and actions that have made a positive impact to Kent's roads and communities.

I am confident that the group will be able to build from these early successes and to make a real long term difference.

We at Kent County Council are proud to be an active partner of the group.

Dover District Councillor Nigel Collor said:

Dover District Council was pleased to take part in this event as we have some unique issues with the Highways England roads, the A2 & the A20, running through our District.

As anticipated traffic grows works currently in hand, including the Lower Thames Crossing, will effect the traffic flows into and out of the Dover area thus local needs require consideration with some urgency. With this in mind Dover District Council has nominated a representative to work with the Group as the coordination moves forward.

Tom Cotton, Head of Licensing and Infrastructure Policy at the Road Haulage Association said:

The RHA welcome improvements to the network, improving journey time and reducing congestion on good quality roads. The RHA advocate faster improvement times, so that the economic benefit can be realised earlier to all road users, even if this is more costly.

The RHA will play a full role in this new advisory panel and ensure that we put the views of our members directly to the people making decisions about roadworks.

South East Coast Ambulance Service Paramedic and Operational Team Leader Ian Heskett said:

SECamb welcomes the opportunity to be involved in this group and discussions aimed at improving planning and lessening the impact of roadworks across the region. We look forward to working closely

with Highways England and other key stakeholders as well as liaising closely with our colleagues in the wider NHS.

Ruth Du Lieu, Medway Council's Assistant Director of Frontline Services, said:

We will be working in partnership with other highways authorities in the Kent Corridor co-ordination group to ensure that roadworks across these areas cause minimum disruption to road users.

Road improvements under construction include creating a new junction on the M20 near Ashford, upgrading the M20 to a smart motorway between [junctions 3 and 5](#) and work to improve the resilience of the M20 to cross channel disruption. In addition, detailed plans have been published to upgrade two junctions on the A2 and a new flyover for the [M2 at junction 5](#) near Stockbury.

And in the longer term, a new [Lower Thames Crossing](#) – the biggest road project in a generation – will create a brand new link between Kent and Essex, spur growth and relieve the congestion at the Dartford Crossing.

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.