

Press release: What goes bump in the night?

With traffic speeds increasing by 10 per cent after dark, night time can be a particularly vulnerable time for Highways England's traffic officers.

In addition to faster traffic, officers have to contend with tired drivers and those struggling to adjust to road conditions after nightfall.

The final episode of ITV's Britain's Busiest Motorway, covers "things that go bump in the night", as traffic officers on the M25 have to help clear debris from a wardrobe and escort horses off the motorway.

One recent night time incident saw traffic officers narrowly avoid serious injury when an out of control car skidded across the motorway, smashing into the back of a van parked in the hard shoulder.

The crash happened around 8pm on Tuesday 8 March near junction 23 of the M25 clockwise.

Traffic officers Mark Cooper and Paul Graham had been speaking with the driver of the van following its break down, and were fortunate the crash did not happen a moment earlier when they were stood at the back of the van.

[YouTube video](#)

The passengers of the van also had a close call as they were sat on the hard shoulder when the crash happened, quickly leaping off and scarpering to safety following the impact.

After the crash, Mark and Paul attended the car to ensure the driver was not hurt, and medics were able to treat the driver who was fortunate to have just suffered minor injuries after the smash .

Caner Okanay, operations manager at Highways England, said:

This incident serves as a timely reminder of the need for drivers to pay extra attention when driving at night. With traffic moving faster and road users feeling tired, accidents are more likely to happen.

Safety is our top priority at Highways England, and we want to minimise the risks faced by both our traffic officers and drivers. This incident was a lucky escape for all involved – for the driver who was unhurt, for the traffic officers who moments before were behind the van, and for the passengers on the hard shoulder.

People do not realise how dangerous the hard shoulder is – these passengers were in danger by casually sitting on the barrier and

not paying full attention. The hard shoulder is for emergencies only, and those who do have to use it need to stay behind the barrier, to remain safe and remain vigilant.

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.