

## **News story: Data released on appeals for 2016 GCSE and AS and A level exams**

The report shows that there were 355 appeals against results made in 2016, compared to 466 in 2015 – a decrease of 24%.

This reduction is in the context of a drop in the number of GCSE, AS and A level unit entries and drop in the number of requests for reviews of marking in 2016 compare to 2015.

In 2016 211 (3.2%) of all grades challenged at appeal led to a grade change. This compares to 2015 where 49 (0.7%) of grades challenged under appeal were changed. An appeal can relate to more than one student.

This increase in successful appeals, from 31 in 2015 to 46 in 2016, follows a pilot run in 2016 to test new grounds for appeal in 3 subjects. For AS and A level geography, physics and religious studies the grounds for appeal following a review were extended to allow an appeal on the grounds of a marking error that was not corrected during the review. Traditionally, exam boards have only accepted appeals on the grounds of a procedural error.

Sally Collier, Chief Regulator, said: “The appeals pilot in three subjects is part of a set of wider changes we are making to the marking reviews and appeals system. The changes aim to make the system as fair as it can be for all students and to make sure students get the grade their performance deserved.

“We are evaluating the pilot before deciding whether to extend the additional grounds to other subjects.”

An appeal can be requested once a school or college has gone through the review of marking and moderation process if they are dissatisfied with the outcome.

The full statistical release, [Appeals for GCSE and GCE: summer 2016 exam series, can be read here](#)

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## **Press release: UK House Price Index (HPI) for January 2017**

The January data shows an annual price increase of 6.2% which takes the average property value in the UK to £218,255. Monthly house prices have risen by 0.8% since December 2016. The monthly index figure for the UK was 114.5.

In England, the January data shows an annual price increase of 6.5% which takes the average property value to £234,794. Monthly house prices have risen by 0.7% since December 2016.

Wales shows an annual price increase of 4.2% which takes the average property value to £145,933. Monthly house prices have fallen by 0.6% since December 2016.

London shows an annual price increase of 7.3% which takes the average property value to £490,718. Monthly house prices have risen by 3% since December 2016.

Sales during November 2016, the most up-to-date Land Registry figures available, show that:

1. The UK House Price Index (HPI) is published on the second or third Tuesday of each month with Northern Ireland figures updated quarterly. The February 2017 UK HPI will be published at 9.30am on 11 April 2017. A [calendar of release dates](#) is available.
2. Data for the UK HPI is provided by Land Registry, Registers of Scotland, Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and the Valuation Office Agency.
3. The UK HPI is calculated by the Office for National Statistics and Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. It applies a hedonic regression model that uses the various sources of data on property price, in particular Land Registry's Price Paid Dataset, and attributes to produce estimates of the change in house prices each month. Find out more about the methodology used from [ONS](#) and [Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency](#).
4. The first estimate for new build average price (April 2016 report) was based on a small sample which can cause volatility. A three month moving average has been applied to the latest estimate to remove some of this volatility.
5. Work has been taking place since 2014 to develop a single, official HPI that reflects the final transaction price for sales of residential property in the UK. Using the geometric mean, it covers purchases at market value for owner-occupation and buy-to-let, excluding those purchases not at market value (such as re-mortgages), where the 'price' represents a valuation.
6. Information on residential property transactions for England and Wales, collected as part of the official registration process, is provided by Land Registry for properties that are sold for full market value.
7. The Land Registry dataset contains the sale price of the property, the date

when the sale was completed, full address details, the type of property (detached, semi-detached, terraced or flat), if it is a newly built property or an established residential building and a variable to indicate if the property has been purchased as a financed transaction (using a mortgage) or as a non-financed transaction (cash purchase).

8. Repossession data is based on the number of transactions lodged with Land Registry by lenders exercising their power of sale.
9. For England this is shown as volumes of repossessions recorded by Government Office Region. For Wales there is a headline figure for the number of repossessions recorded in Wales.
10. The data can be downloaded as a .csv file. Repossession data prior to April 2016 is not available. Find out more information about [repossessions](#).
11. Background tables of the raw and cleansed aggregated data, in Excel and CSV formats, are also published monthly although Northern Ireland is on a quarterly basis. They are available for free use and re-use under the Open Government Licence.
12. As a government department established in 1862, executive agency and trading fund responsible to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Land Registry keeps and maintains the Land Register for England and Wales. The Land Register has been open to public inspection since 1990.
13. With the largest transactional database of its kind detailing more than 24 million titles, Land Registry underpins the economy by safeguarding ownership of many billions of pounds worth of property.
14. For further information about Land Registry visit [www.gov.uk/land-registry](http://www.gov.uk/land-registry).
15. Follow us on Twitter [@LandRegGov](#), our [blog](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#)

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**[Press release: Planned roadworks in the North West: summary for Monday 20](#)**

## [to Sunday 26 March 2017](#)

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of Friday 17 March and could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible. Drivers looking for roadworks information (such as overnight carriageway closures) for individual schemes should now [visit Traffic England](#). Some of our larger schemes have project pages giving other information. These can now be accessed from a [dedicated regional page](#).

### **M53 junctions 1 to 2 (Wallasey to Upton)**

Work to upgrade the safety barrier in the central reservation between junctions 1 and 2 on the M53 started on Monday 6 February. Lane closures will be in place overnight, with some full carriageway closures later in the project.

### **M56 junctions 10 to 11 (Stretton to Preston Brook)**

Work to upgrade the safety barrier and paint new road markings on the M56 near Warrington started on Monday 30 January. Lane closures will be in place overnight between 8pm and 5am, Monday to Friday. The project is due to be completed by the end of March.

### **M6 junctions 16 to 19 (Cheshire smart motorway)**

Work is underway to upgrade the M6 to a smart motorway between Crewe and Knutsford, converting the hard shoulder to an extra lane and introducing new variable speed limits. Narrow lanes and a temporary 50mph speed limit are in place for the safety of drivers and workers. Overnight lane closures are in place this week on both carriageways.

### **M6 junction 21a/M62 junction 10 (Croft Interchange)**

Construction work is taking place on a major project to tackle congestion and improve the flow of traffic between the M6 and M62 at Croft Interchange. A 50mph speed limit, backed by average speed cameras, will be in place along main carriageways of both the M6 and M62 and interchange link roads. Some overnight slip road closures will also take place.

### **M6 junctions 21a to 23 (Croft Interchange to St Helens)**

The northbound carriageway will be closed for resurfacing work on Saturday 25 March between 10pm and 7am. A diversion will be in place.

## **M6 junctions 29 to 30 (M65 to M61 interchanges)**

Overnight resurfacing work is taking place on the M6 between 8pm and 5am, Monday to Friday. Clearly signed diversions will be in place, and the scheme is due to be completed in May.

## **M6 junction 33 to 34 Lancaster**

Lancashire County Council's new link road between junction 34 of the M6 and Heysham has now opened but finishing work will require lane and hard shoulder closures along the M6 through junction 34 to continue for the time being.

## **M60 junction 8 to M62 junction 20 (Sale to Rochdale)**

A major smart motorway scheme is taking place to cut congestion and improve journey times on parts of the M60 and the M62 in Greater Manchester. The scheme involves overnight slip road and carriageway closures, with narrow lanes and a temporary 50mph speed limit in place for the safety of drivers and road workers. Details on overnight closures are available at <https://www.facebook.com/smartmotorwaysmanchester>.

## **M602 junction 2 Eccles**

The westbound entry slip road will be closed for three nights from Monday 20 March for maintenance work.

## **A556 Knutsford to Bowdon**

A new £192 million dual carriageway linking junction 19 of the M6 at Knutsford and junction 7 of the M56 at Bowdon opened on Monday 6 March. The following overnight closures will be in place while work takes place to complete the scheme:

- the southbound carriageway of the new A556 from M56 junction 7 at Bowdon to M6 junction 19 will be closed from 9pm to 5am on for 4 nights from Wednesday 15 March, along with the slip roads at junctions 7 and 8 of the M56
- the northbound carriageway of the A556 from M6 junction 19 to M56 junction 7 at Bowdon will be closed overnight from 9pm to 5am for 3 nights from Wednesday 15 March, along with the southbound exit slip road at junction 19 of the M6

## **A585 West Drive to Fleetwood Cycleway**

Work is taking place on a new shared footpath and cycleway between West Drive and Fleetwood. Narrow lanes and a temporary 30mph speed limit are being used along the route to help provide a safe space for workers constructing the new shared paths. Work will take place between 7am and 7pm each day with

occasional overnight work. The project is due to be completed by the end of March.

## **A585 Amounderness Way, Thornton**

Temporary traffic lights will be in place between West Drive and Bourne Way until Saturday 8 April for maintenance and inspection work.

## **A590 Lindal in Furness**

Work is being carried out to tackle flooding between Pennington Lane and Bank End Cottages. 24hr temporary traffic lights are now in place until late March.

## **A590 Brettargh Holt to Newby Bridge**

Lane closures will be in place 24 hours a day while junction improvement work is carried out by the A5074. The scheme is due to be completed by the end of March.

## **A590 Foulshaw Moss**

There will be temporary traffic lights in place while construction work is carried out at the junction. The scheme is due to be completed by the end of March.

## **A66 Bassenthwaite Lake**

A contraflow system is in place while work is carried out on the embankment in the central reservation next to Bass Lake. The scheme is due to be completed in the spring.

## **A66 Thornthwaite (Osprey Site)**

Flood resilience work is continuing with overnight carriageway closures in place between 8pm and 6am until the end of March. Clearly-signed diversions are in place. During the day, temporary traffic lights are in use along with a 40mph speed limit.

## **A66 Marron Bridge**

Maintenance is underway on Marron Bridge, between Broughton Cross and Bridgefoot. Overnight closures are in place between 9pm and 5am, with a clearly-signed diversion. Due to the temporary bridging plates, a 30mph speed limit backed by speed cameras is required during the day. The project is due to be completed in March.

## **A66 Brough**

Resurfacing and drainage work is taking place on the eastbound carriageway at Brough. Overnight slip road closures will be in place between 8pm and 6am, along with lane closures 24 hours a day.

## **B6167 Lancashire Hill (M60 junction 1 to 27 Cycleway improvement scheme)**

A 24 hour lane closure and footpath closure will be place on the B6167 Lancashire Hill between the junctions of Nicholson Street and Knightsbridge from 8 March for ten weeks for a cycle improvement scheme.

### **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.

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## **[Press release: Planned roadworks in West Midlands: weekly summary for Monday 20 March to Sunday 26 March 2017](#)**

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 17 March 2017 but could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible.

### **A38 – Alrewas to Toyota: carriageway repairs**

Southbound carriageway and all associated slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 23 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A38 – Claymills to A50 Wood End Lane: carriageway repairs**

Southbound carriageway and all associated slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A449 – Gailey roundabout to Brewood Road: carriageway repairs**

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A449 – Gailey roundabout to Brewood Road: carriageway repairs**

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A46 – Kenilworth exit slip road to Stivichall roundabout: carriageway repairs**

Southbound carriageway closed overnight for one night from 8pm 21 March until 6am the following morning (22 March). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A5 – Gledrid roundabout and all approaches: carriageway resurfacing**

Roundabout and all approaches closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A5 – M54 junction 7 to Preston Boats island: carriageway works**

East and westbound carriageway closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 27 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A50 – Meir tunnel to Stanley Matthews Way: carriageway repairs**

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.



## **A50 – Heron Cross to Stanley Matthews Interchange Burton Road entry slip: carriageway repairs**

Westbound carriageway closed 24 hour 7 days a week until 7 July. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A50 – Meir Interchange exit slip road to Catchems Corner: carriageway repairs**

Eastbound carriageway and slip road closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 25 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A500 – Wolstanton entry slip and Porthill exit slip roads: carriageway works**

Northbound entry and exit slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A500 – Porthill entry and Wolstanton exit slip roads: carriageway works**

Southbound entry and exit slip roads will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A500 – M6 junction 16 to Alsager exit and entry slip roads: carriageway repairs**

Southbound exit and entry slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **A500 – M6 junction 16 to Talke exit slip road: carriageway repairs**

Southbound carriageway and associated exit slip road closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 24 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M40 – junction 15 to M42 junction 3a: carriageway works**

Northbound carriageway and associated slip roads will be closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M40 – junction 16 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound entry slip road closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M40 – junction 15 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound entry slip road will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M40 – junction 3a M42 to M40 link road: carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M42 – junction 1 exit and entry slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound exit slip road will be closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M42 – junction 6 exit slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound exit slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 20 March until 19 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M42 – junction 5 entry slip to junction: carriageway works**

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 13 March until 25 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M42 – junction 5 entry and exit slip roads: carriageway works**

Northeast exit slip road and southwest exit and entry slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M42 – junction 2 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound entry slip road closed overnight for one night from 9pm 23 March until 6am the following morning (24 March). A diversion route will be clearly

signposted.

## **M5 – junction 4a to junction 5: carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway closed between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 21 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M5 – junction 5 to junction 4a: carriageway works**

Northbound carriageway including northbound entry slip at junction 5 closed on 20 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M5 – junction 6 to junction 5: carriageway works**

Northbound carriageway including northbound entry slip at junction 6 closed from 20 March to 24 March and on 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M5 – junction 5 to junction 6: carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway including southbound entry slip closed from 20 March until 24 March and 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M50 – junction 4 to junction 2: carriageway repairs**

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 25 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M50 – junction 4 to junction 2: carriageway repairs**

Eastbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 24 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M54 – junction 5 to junction 6: carriageway repairs**

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M54 – junction 5 entry slip road: carriageway repairs**

Westbound entry slip road closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M54 – junction 4 slip roads: carriageway repairs**

Eastbound slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 5am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M54 – junction 4 slip roads: carriageway repairs**

Westbound slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 5am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M54 – junction 4 entry slip road to junction 3: carriageway repairs**

Eastbound carriageway and entry slip road closed overnight for one night from 10pm 22 March until 6am the following morning (23 March). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 10 to junction 7 including junction 10 and 9 entry slip roads and link from M5: carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 11 entry slip road to junction 10 exit including M54 junction 1 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 25 March until 27 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 7 to junction 10 including junction 9 entry slip and link from M5 northbound: carriageway works**

Northbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 10 entry slip to junction 11 exit slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 25 March until 27 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 2 entry slip road to junction 4 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 24 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 8 southbound to M5 junction 1 southbound (Western Arm): carriageway works**

Southbound Western Arm closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 March until 25 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 7 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound entry slip road will be closed from 9pm 24 March ongoing until 6am 27 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 7 to junction 8: carriageway works**

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 9pm and 9am from 24 March until 27 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 8 to M5 southbound (Western Arm): carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 11 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound entry slip road closed overnight for one night from 8pm 20 March until 6am the following morning (21 March). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – Hilton Park Services exit and entry slip roads: carriageway works**

Southbound exit and entry slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 27 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 9 exit slip road: carriageway works**

Southbound exit slip road closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 9 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Southbound entry slip road will be closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20th March until 26th March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 15 entry slip road junction 16: carriageway works**

Northbound entry slip road to junction 16 will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 21 March until 24 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 16 to junction 15: carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 21 March until 24 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 13 exit slip road: carriageway works**

Southbound exit slip road closed overnight for one night from 9.45pm 22 March until 5.30am the following morning (23 March). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 2 exit slip road: carriageway works**

Southbound exit slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 24 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 4 to junction 3 including M42 junction 7a link and junction 4 entry slip road: carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway, link road and entry slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 25 March until 27 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M6 – junction 3 entry slip road to junction 2 exit slip including M69 link road: carriageway works**

Southbound carriageway including the slip roads and link road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 25 March until 27 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

## **M69 – junction 2 exit slip road: carriageway works**

Northbound exit slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 24 March until 26 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

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# **[News story: Prime Minister's statement on the death of Martin McGuinness](#)**

First and foremost, my thoughts are with the family of Martin McGuinness at this sad time.

While I can never condone the path he took in the earlier part of his life, Martin McGuinness ultimately played a defining role in leading the Republican movement away from violence. In doing so, he made an essential and historic contribution to the extraordinary journey of Northern Ireland from conflict to peace.

While we certainly didn't always see eye-to-eye even in later years, as deputy First Minister for nearly a decade he was one of the pioneers of implementing cross community power sharing in Northern Ireland. He understood both its fragility and its precious significance and played a vital part in helping to find a way through many difficult moments.

At the heart of it all was his profound optimism for the future of Northern Ireland – and I believe we should all hold fast to that optimism today.