

Press release: North West traffic officers featured in Channel 5 documentary

Three North West traffic officers will be featured in a new Channel 5 series which shows the work involved in keeping the roads moving during the winter months.

A film crew from Winter Road Rescue has spent several shifts with Highways England traffic officers Jason Williamson, Mike Caffrey and Barry Connolly this winter, following the incidents they respond to on some of the England's busiest stretches of motorway.

Jason, Mike and Barry are among over 1,000 traffic officers who respond to over 200,000 incidents every year. They are based at Newton-le-Willows – one of 33 traffic officer outstations on the motorway network – and their patch includes both the M62 and M6.

They can be called out to a wide range of incidents – from minor breakdowns to major collisions – and some of the recent incidents they have attended will be shown in the new series of Winter Road Rescue at 8pm on Channel 5, starting on Monday 13 February.

Jason Williamson, 48, has been a traffic officer for 7 years. The married father-of-three from Macclesfield spent several years with the Royal Air Force Police before signing up as a traffic officer. Jason said:

I was pleased that we were asked to get involved with Winter Road Rescue as we were able to show some of the work we do to keep the roads moving.

Drivers often only see us when we've finished dealing with an incident and the road's reopened. They don't see us helping drivers, moving badly-damaged vehicles or clearing up spillages that would otherwise cause hours of delays, so I hope some of that comes across in the programme.

The new series of Winter Road Rescue will also feature Highways England's North West regional control centre in Newton-le-Willows, where incidents are monitored on CCTV cameras and responded to 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Mike Caffrey, 27, from Warrington, joined Highways England as a traffic officer in September last year. He said:

I really like the variety of the job and the fact that it's such an unusual role. When I applied to become a traffic officer, it

sounded different to anything else I'd done and has definitely lived up to expectations. Every day is different.

I get a buzz coming to work as you never know how your shift is going to play out. We perform a vital job on the motorway network and I feel lucky to be a part of a role helping members of the public to be safe and to arrive at their destination safely.

To be able to make a positive difference to someone's day, no matter how small, is a real enjoyment.

Highways England is urging drivers to adapt their driving to the changing conditions on the road this winter after the latest annual figures revealed that travelling too fast for the conditions is a factor in 1 in 9 of all road deaths in Great Britain.

A new safety campaign is warning drivers that 'when it rains, it kills' after the figures also showed that people are 30 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured on the roads in rain than in snow.

It generally takes at least twice as long to stop on a wet road as on a dry road because tyres have less grip on the surface. In wet weather you should:

- slow down if the rain and spray from vehicles is making it difficult to see and be seen
- keep well back from the vehicle in front as this will increase your ability to see and plan ahead
- ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually if the steering becomes unresponsive as it probably means that water is preventing the tyres from gripping the road

A new road safety video, showing rain falling inside the home of a family imagined to have been involved in a serious road collision, is available to [watch on our YouTube channel](#).

General enquiries

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Media enquiries

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Press release: Weekend closures for final phase of £192m dual carriageway project

Drivers in Cheshire are being reminded the A556, M56 junctions 7 and 8 and M6 junction 19 will all be closed next weekend as work to open the new £192 million Knutsford to Bowdon dual carriageway gets underway.

Highways England, which is replacing the A556 between the 2 motorways with the new dual carriageway, today confirmed the new road is currently on course to open for the first time on Monday 6 March – after the second of 3 full weekend closures of the existing A556 and 2 motorway junctions.

The first weekend closure, which will be in operation from 9pm next Friday night (17 February) and 5am on the following Monday morning (20 February) – a total of 56 hours – will allow preparations for the old road to be sealed off to through traffic and for the motorway junctions to be tied into the new dual carriageway.

Work over the 3 weekend closures includes linking the southern end of the new dual carriageway (top centre) with the roundabout at junction 19 of the M6 at Knutsford and sealing off the existing A556 (top right)

Highways England project manager Paul Hampson said:

We're delighted to be able to confirm that we can start work next week on preparations to open the new road with the first of these 3 scheduled weekend closures.

We appreciate there will be some inconvenience for people wanting to use the A556 and the 2 motorway junctions over these weekends but we have worked hard to plan diversions for through traffic and local road users, which will be clearly-signed.

We're working to publicise these but road users can help by taking a little bit of extra care in planning journeys, especially if they are heading to Manchester Airport on any of the 3 weekends.

Motorway users will be diverted to alternative junctions to leave or join the M6 or M56.

Drivers on the northbound M6 heading for Manchester and Manchester Airport will need to stay on the M6, join the westbound M56 at Lymm Interchange (M6 junction 20) and then join the eastbound M56 at junction 10 (Preston Brook).

Drivers on the westbound M56 heading away from Manchester and wanting to join the southbound M6 will also need to travel to junction 10 at Preston Brook –

joining the eastbound M56 from there to travel back to Lymm Interchange and access the southbound M6 .

Local diversions , which will be strictly monitored, will also be in place with access to the A50, Chapel Lane and Mereside Road. A one way system, travelling southbound, will be in place at Bucklow Hill to allow access for residents and businesses located between the Bucklow Hill and Mere junctions along Chester Road. Vehicles must use Mereside Road and Chapel Lane to access Chester Road. Traffic marshalls will be at Mere and Bucklow Hill junctions to facilitate the local diversion.

Over the weekend, only the northbound exit slip road at junction 19 of the M6 will remain partially open – allowing drivers to access the southbound, local authority section, of the A556 towards Northwich.

Work during the 3 weekend closures also includes connecting the new dual carriageway at its northern end with junction 7 of the M56 using these new free-flow link roads, opened in December.

Drivers are advised to build in some extra time for the diversions and to check traffic conditions before setting out on journeys. Highways England provides live traffic information [via its website](#), local and national radio travel bulletins, electronic road signs and mobile apps.

Information is also available from Twitter via @highwaysNWEST as well as services in other regions. Providing they can do so safely, road users can also call the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000 to keep up to date with road conditions.

The current schedule for the 3 weekend closures – and the timetable for opening the new road – involves:

- next weekend's full closure of the existing A556 and associated M6 and M56 junctions (Friday 17 February to Monday 20 February)
- a full weekend closure of the existing A556 and associated M6 and M56 junctions from 9pm on Friday 3 March to 5am on Monday 6 March – with the new road opening to drivers for the first time that morning
- a final full weekend closure of the old A556 and new A556 between 9pm on Friday 10 March and 5am on Monday 13 March to finalise work to seal off the old road

Construction of the new A556 link road, between the M56 and the M6, started in November 2014 and is part of a £15 billion government investment in motorways and major A roads by 2021 which is being delivered by Highways England as part of the Northern Powerhouse initiative.

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[Press release: Plans for new M49 junction at Avonmouth announced](#)

Highways England announced the preferred option for the new junction, which is part of the government's £15 billion road investment programme. The junction will improve road access and provide a much needed connection into the Avonmouth and Severnside Enterprise Area from the motorway network.

Featuring a two bridge junction design, the proposal uses the existing bridge at Farm Lane with a second bridge being built immediately adjacent.

The two bridges will be incorporated into a single roundabout that spans the motorway with new access and exit slip roads built on both sides of the junction so that it connects fully with both northbound and southbound traffic.

Highways England South West Regional Director Andrew Page-Dove said:

We recognise the strategic importance of the Avonmouth and Severnside Enterprise Area as a key regional employment site and that is why we are helping to unlock economic growth in the area by building this new junction.

Over the last few months we have worked hard to identify the best possible design for the junction and we are excited to share our plans with local stakeholders, businesses and the community.

As well as boosting the local economy, the junction will also improve access to the regional road network and relieve traffic on local roads.

Three design options were shortlisted for the scheme and these were presented at an information event in July 2016, where members of the public, businesses and stakeholders were invited to give feedback. Highways England also worked closely with the local community before deciding on the preferred design.

Simon Tothill, Property and Development Director for Robert Hitchins Ltd, who own the Westagte 296-acre employment site with Harrow Estates plc, said:

This will be a huge boost to the local economy and is a very welcome investment by Highways England.

It will change the profile of Westgate dramatically, and unlock a large and incredibly well located site which, already benefits from planning permission, for employment uses. It opens the door to significant economic activity and will provide for thousands of new jobs.

The design of the Farm Lane Two Bridge option will now be taken forward and will involve the detailed design of the new layout including drainage requirements, pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian access, as well as environmental improvements.

Subject to statutory approval under the Highways Act 1980 and approval from the Secretary of State, construction is planned to start by the end of 2017.

Another information event will be held before construction starts to ensure everyone understands details of the final proposal and the associated construction programme. The estimated cost of the scheme is £45 million. Additional information is also available on the [Highways England project website](#) which will be updated on a regular basis.

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[Press release: Planned roadworks in West Midlands: weekly summary for Monday 13 February to Sunday 19 February 2017](#)

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 10 February 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 – Claymills to Wood End Lane: carriageway repairs

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A38 – Alrewas to Toyota: carriageway repairs

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A449 – Gailey roundabout to Brewood Road: carriageway repairs

South and northbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Oversley to Shottery: carriageway repairs

Carriageway closed in both directions overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A49 – Wellington Marsh: carriageway repairs

Carriageway closed in both directions overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A49 – A44 Worcester Road: carriageway repairs

Carriageway closed in both directions overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A5 – Gledrid roundabout and approaches: widening scheme

Roundabout and associated approaches closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A5 – Wall Island to Muckley Corner: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 7pm and 6.30am from 13 February until 19 February. 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 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Heron Cross to Stanley Matthews interchange Blurton Road entry slip road: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed 24 hours 7 days a week from 8 February ongoing until 7 July. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Blythe Bridge entry slip road to Meir tunnel: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Heron Cross exit slip road to Foley Road Interchange: carriageway repairs

Eastbound Carriageway and all associated slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A500 – Talke island including exit slip roads and approaches: carriageway repairs

Eastside of the gyratory including all associated slip roads and approaches will be closed 24 hours 7 days a week from 11 January ongoing until 30 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 5 exit slip road: carriageway repairs

Northbound exit slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 3a to junction 5 including junction 4 entry slip: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway including junction 4 entry slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – M6 junction 4a to M42: carriageway works

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 5am from 13 February until 19 February. 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 17 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 5 to junction 6: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 17 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M50 – junction 2 to junction 1: major scheme works

Eastbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M50 – junction 4 to junction 2: major scheme works

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M50 – junction 1 to junction 2: major scheme works

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 5 to junction 6: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. 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 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 entry slip road to junction 6: carriageway works

Southbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 13 February until 19 February. 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 13 February until 19 February. 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 13 February until 19 February. 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 13 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 entry slip road: carriageway works

Northbound entry slip road closed 24 hours 7 day days a week from 12am 17 February ongoing until 12am 24 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 to junction 8: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 17 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A45 Stonebridge Highway eastbound: carriageway works

Carriageway will be closed between Stivichall junction and Tollbar roundabout between 8pm and 6am on 13 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A45/A46 Tollbar underpass westbound: carriageway

works

Carriageway will be closed between 8pm and 6am on 13 and 14 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 junction 4a to 5 southbound: major scheme works

Carriageway will be closed between 8pm and 6am from February 13 to February 17 and February 19. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 junction 5 to 4a northbound: major scheme works

Carriageway including northbound entry slip at junction 5 will be closed between 8pm and 6am from February 13 to February 17 and February 19. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 junction 6 to 5 northbound: major scheme works

Carriageway including northbound entry slip at junction 6 will be closed between 8pm and 6am on February 19. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

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M1 junction 28 to 35a, Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire/Yorkshire: smart motorway

There are various restrictions in place on the M1 between junctions 28 and 35a to allow for the construction of the smart motorway. These include lane closures, speed restrictions, hard shoulder running and overnight slip road or carriageway closures.

On Monday 13 February the northbound carriageway between junctions 32 and 33, northbound exit slip at junction 29, southbound up and over at junctions 32 and 33 and M18 southbound to northbound M1 link will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Tuesday 14 February the northbound carriageway between junctions 32 and 33, northbound entry slip at junction 29, northbound exit slip at junction 34, southbound entry slip at junction 34, southbound up and over at junctions 32 and 33 and M18 southbound to northbound M1 link will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Wednesday 15 February the northbound carriageway between junctions 32 and 33, northbound entry slip at junction 29, southbound up and over at junctions 32 and 33 and M18 southbound to northbound M1 link will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Thursday 16 February the northbound carriageway between junctions 32 and 33, northbound entry slip at junction 28 and M18 southbound to northbound M1 link will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Friday 17 February the northbound exit slip at junctions 30 and 33 and the southbound up and over at junctions 33 and 34 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

On Saturday 18 February and Sunday 19 February the northbound up and over at junctions 32 and 33 will be closed overnight from 8pm until 6am.

M1 junction 19 to 16, Northamptonshire: smart motorway

On Monday 13 February and Tuesday 14 February there will be a full southbound carriageway closure between junctions 18 and 16 along with the closure of two lanes northbound; closure of the southbound junction 18 entry slip, closure of southbound entry and exit slips at Watford gap services and closure of the southbound junction 16 exit slip from 9pm to 6am.

From Wednesday 15 February to Friday 17 February two lanes will be closed north and southbound between junctions 18 and 16 from 9pm to 6am.

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