

Bird's eye view of Cheshire's £43 million M6 junction improvement

Press release

New aerial photographs of the M6 in Cheshire show how much progress Highways England has been making since it started a £43 million project at junction 19 near Knutsford to tackle congestion.



Aerial view of M6 junction 19 improvement project looking from southbound A556 Knutsford to Bowdon bypass and showing work at the roundabout underway and (right of picture) new construction compound between the A556 and M6.

Work to install a new bridge through the existing roundabout and over the M6 to link sections of the A556, began in earnest in March. And the first aerial pictures of the work show how one of the most challenging construction projects in the region is literally taking shape – with the bridge foundations in the central reservation and carriageway verges being installed.

Aerial close-up of the centre of the roundabout and M6 carriageways showing verge and central reservation piers taking shape.

Highways England's senior programme manager Kennedy Muzira said:

This new bridge through the roundabout and over the M6 will create a better flow of traffic between the motorway and the A556. This will speed up journeys and reduce congestion around the roundabout. There will also be improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

The aerial photos show how much progress we've made in the last few weeks. We'd like to thank users of the motorway and the A556 for the patience they have shown while we have installed traffic management to enable us to get this complex construction project

underway.

The new bridge is due to open next summer after a complex operation this winter to lift the bridge beams into place and construct the new deck over the M6.

While preparation work like establishing a construction compound occupied the first weeks of the project, permanent work such as installing piled foundations for the bridge piers is now underway.

As part of the project planning process a graphic was produced to illustrate the site's tight working spaces.

The junction upgrade requires a large amount of heavy plant equipment at the site. The tight working spaces requires narrowed lanes and a 50mph speed limit which have recently been installed along a short section of the motorway under the roundabout to help create a safe working space for the construction workers.

All preparation and construction work will be done in accordance with the latest government guidelines related to the Covid 19 outbreak. All Highways England sites have strict safeguarding measures to prevent the spread of the virus and no sites are open to the public.

The improved M6 junction 19 will tie into the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon bypass which opened three years ago. It will also complement the smart motorways already completed or underway in the north Midlands and Cheshire.

Anyone seeking information about forthcoming traffic management arrangements can sign up for the project's weekly traffic management bulletin – [available from the project webpage](#). or by emailing the project team at m6junction19improvement@highwaysengland.co.uk

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.

Published 8 June 2020

Climate benefits of Marine Protected Areas revealed

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) could play an important role in offering 'nature-based solutions' to climate change, new research published today on World Ocean Day reveals.

The study conducted by the [Joint Nature Conservation Committee](#) (JNCC) on behalf of the government found that over half of Marine Protected Areas contain habitats vital for the nation's future climate resilience. 43% of MPAs contain habitats such as sand banks, seaweed and other plant beds that play a role in protecting the coastline from severe weather events. Climate change is predicted to lead to an increase in the frequency of storm surges together with rising sea levels.

It also found that 29% of MPAs protect habitats such as coastal saltmarshes, seagrasses, salt water reedbeds and muddy habitats, which support the absorption and storage of carbon dioxide.

The announcement underlines the importance of the government's commitment to create a 'Blue Belt' of marine protection for Britain's overseas territories and its own coast, as these habitats can be damaged by human activity like anchoring boats, dredging and trawling.

The study also provides new tools for scientists to measure the impacts of climate change such as increases in sea surface temperatures, ocean acidification, ocean heatwaves and rising sea levels on marine sensitive habitats. This could in future be used to help inform future protection measures.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

Our Blue Belt of marine protection around our coast is now an area twice the size of England and truly a world-leading level of protection; however there is always more that can be done. We have a duty to ensure that our marine life recovers and thrives for future generations.

This research published on World Ocean Day gives us the tools to measure the impacts of climate change on some of our most sensitive habitats and provides an important insight into the benefits of Marine Protected Areas – not just for nature but for our own resilience in the face of a changing climate.

Dr John Goold, Director of Marine Evidence and Advice, JNCC:

This collaborative research is a major step forward in helping us develop tools to explore climate smart decision-making in the marine environment.

Marine Protected Areas have the potential to act as nature-based solutions around the world.

The UK has today announced that seven new countries have joined the UK led Global Ocean Alliance, an initiative aimed at securing protection of 30% of the world's oceans by 2030. There are now a total of 20 countries in the Alliance following today's announcement. Germany and Italy are amongst the major new players to join, other joiners include Fiji, Cabo Verde, Monaco, Senegal, and Luxemburg.

The report [‘Developing the evidence-base to support climate-smart decision making on MPAs’](#) is now available on the Defra website.

Malaysia: first of its kind home-based activities to mark World Oceans Day

The British High Commission will mark World Oceans Day on 8 June 2020 with the Blu Hope campaign, a first of its kind online campaign which runs from 8th to 12th June 2020. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the importance of the world's oceans, how plastic pollution is damaging ocean biodiversity and to encourage action in tackling marine pollution.

The campaign encompasses an interactive home-based activity sheet aimed at encouraging children to think more holistically about their plastic usage habits; as well as a series of marine-themed webinars targeted toward businesses, policy makers and academia to encourage discourse and inform policy making. This campaign is supported by the Malaysian Ministry of Education, Ministry of Environment and Water. Other partners include Plastic Oceans UK, Mura Technology, TimorBlue, WRAP, Asia Dive Expo, ZuBlu and YTL.

H.E. Charles Hay MVO, British High Commissioner to Malaysia, said:

Collaboration is at the heart of tackling the global problem of plastic pollution in the oceans. This is why I'm very pleased that the UK is working with Malaysia and international partners on such an important cause. This Blu Hope campaign showcases not just international collaboration to raise awareness, but also research, science and technology that is being deployed to help create a plastic neutral circular economy.

Tackling plastic pollution is one of the UK Government's commitments in the broader agenda of conserving the environment and addressing climate change. The UK is championing these causes and will be co-chairing the very important United Nations' Climate Change Conference of Parties or COP26 in November 2021.

This online campaign, which is well-suited to the current environment where people are encouraged to stay home, will enable children in Malaysia, SE Asia and beyond to participate by doing the 'Plastic Detectives' activity sheet which is available in Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese and English languages. The activity challenges children to record and track their household plastic consumption for one week (8th to 14th June) and upload their findings on the campaign website. The data and findings will be tallied with the objective of informing future policy on plastic.

To further promote participation, the Ministry of Education Malaysia will disseminate the activity sheet to 10,000 public primary and secondary schools in Malaysia.

The special lesson plan and activity sheet was developed by British NGO Plastic Oceans UK. Jo Ruxton, its founder and director, said:

Since our work began in 2009, I have been delivering presentations on plastic to school pupils of all age groups. I've seen how effectively these students take that message on to their friends, relatives and even their teachers. Our 'Plastic Detectives' activity sheet will engage those young minds. But it will also show how much single-use plastic has entered into our homes, unnoticed. We hope that those who take part, with their families, will feel a new sense of responsibility to break the plastic habit. We're empowering young leaders to become plastic intelligent through our behaviour change programmes.

The live webinars and online panel discussions will feature a line-up of Malaysian and international speakers. Among the topics which will be covered are oceans and biodiversity; protection of mangrove and corals; sustainable tourism, chemical recycling among others. There will also be sessions where eco warriors and professional divers will share tales and tips and also daily screenings of 'A Plastic Ocean'. These webinars and online discussions have been made possible with the help of Asia Dive Expo (ADEX) who will co-host the sessions.

The Plastic Detective activity sheet, webinar schedule and other campaign materials are available at [Blu Hope](#).

Blu Hope is the third phase of the British High Commission's ongoing Green is GREAT campaign, which was first launched in September 2019 with the VVIP screening of BBC's Blue Planet II graced by TRHs The Prince Edward Earl of Wessex and Tengku Zatashah binti Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah. The second phase of the Green is GREAT campaign was held in conjunction with

Commonwealth Day in March this year.

More face-to-face hearings as courts reopen

- A further 16 additional courts to reopen this week

159 HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) locations have remained open throughout the pandemic and a further 9 have opened in the last few weeks. This, together with the significant increase in use of remote audio and video technology, has enabled the justice system to continue functioning in these exceptional circumstances.

Now, 16 more sites have been assessed as suitable to hold socially-distanced hearings. These are spread across the country and across all jurisdictions. Each building has been individually assessed and will strictly follow public health guidance to ensure the protection and safety of all court users. A full list can be found below.

Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland said:

Throughout the coronavirus outbreak, court staff and the judiciary have worked tirelessly to make sure justice has not stood still and I'm pleased that we are now in a position to reopen more of our buildings.

A functioning justice system is one of the hallmarks of a healthy democracy and today's update will give confidence to people up and down the country that justice can continue to be done in a way that is safe for all court users.

Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Lord Burnett of Maldon said:

This is a very welcome step towards reopening all our court buildings. A remarkable volume of work has continued throughout the lockdown, much of it being conducted by judges from home.

Reopening all of the court estate, using additional accommodation and continuing to use technology imaginatively will enable us to return to and surpass pre-lockdown volumes, helping manage the growing caseload.

The Senior President of Tribunals, Sir Ernest Ryder said:

All of the Tribunals in the UK are open for business and we have been able to provide an impressive service during the Pandemic by working remotely. The re-opening of tribunal buildings is welcomed.

It will allow us to add to that service for those cases which are not best suited to remote methods of hearing, where face to face determination by a tribunal panel is important.

We will continue to develop the technology that has been introduced for use in remote hearings and in our buildings and we will use this opportunity to increase the number of panel hearings that take place.

The dedication of all those in the justice system has allowed people across the country to continue to access the justice they are entitled to while being protected against the spread of the virus, and many thousands of court hearings across all jurisdictions have been heard since the coronavirus pandemic began.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the government and the Judiciary have announced through HMCTS:

There are now 184 court and tribunal buildings open for essential face-to-face hearings, representing 54% of the 341 crown, magistrates, county and family courts and tribunals across England and Wales.

Work has also begun to identify suitable venues to house so-called 'Nightingale' courts. These would use public spaces, such as civic centres or university moot courts, to allow traditional court buildings to manage more work while maintaining social distancing – whether that be by hosting full hearings or allowing victims and witnesses to attend remotely. A working group has been established to develop these plans, made up of HMCTS officials, the judiciary, legal professional bodies, representatives of victims' groups and other court users.

Notes to editors

[Animal medicine seizure notice: Border Force, Inverness Airport](#)

News story

Details of seizure notice served at Border Force, Inverness Airport following a routine search. Published in June 2020.



The following veterinary medicines were detained and subsequently seized at Border Force, Inverness Airport following an attempt to import:

- 1 x Equine Bute Paste
- 2 x 100ml Ketoprofen Injection
- 2 x 100ml Buscopan Compositum
- 2 x 100ml Doxycycline Paste
- 2 x 5ml Calmat Injection
- 6 x 50ml Syntocin Injections
- 100 x 1.3g sachets of Butalone Granules

These products were intended for use in horses and are not UK authorised products.

The medicines were seized under Regulation 25 (Importation of unauthorised veterinary medicinal products) of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013.

Published 8 June 2020