

# Press release: Innovative roadworks scoop top safety award

The equipment is used to install the road studs which help drivers stay in the right position on the road.

Traditionally, to ensure the work to install the studs can be done safely, two lanes of the road, and sometimes a whole carriageway, need to be closed, with the resulting disruption for drivers.

But the new machine does the job with just one lane closure, leaving extra space for drivers to get past.

Now the innovative piece of kit – used by WJ Group which has facilities in Staffordshire, West Yorkshire, Somerset, Buckinghamshire and Scotland – has scooped a top safety award from Highways England, the company responsible for the country's motorways and major A roads.

It was one of 23 initiatives rewarded at the first Highways England Awards ceremony, designed to recognise activities which further the company's imperatives of safety, customer service and delivery.

Other winners included the introduction of a vehicle brake system that improves road worker safety; ways to save water and minimise the environmental impact of construction sites; a partnership to share important vehicle safety check advice with new parents; and a collaboration with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) which has tangible benefits to the road safety of commercial vehicles.

Jim O'Sullivan, Chief Executive of Highways England, said:

The people in our industry work hard to provide the roads that people most need. We face tough safety and cost challenges every day doing just that. These awards are our opportunity to take a step back from the action and recognise a few of the best things our people and suppliers have done this year and say 'thank you'. The whole roads sector sometimes get taken for granted and these awards go some small way to putting that right.

Teams from within Highways England as well as its supply chain partners were among those recognised in the awards. The winning entries were selected from more than 200 submissions.

Judges noted WJ Group's entry noted the innovative equipment went hand in hand with a culture change, and buy-in from the frontline workforce that will make a positive difference to roadworker safety and road users' experience.

Wayne Johnston, WJ Group Managing Director, said:

The roadmarking sector has been operating in much the same way as it did decades ago but the WJ Group have been determined to provide better and safer ways of delivering services.

This excellence in safety award has served to endorse us, not only for the extensive, ground-breaking initiatives and innovations employed to proactively embed an improved safety culture, but also for the part played in sharing our successes across the whole industry.

We are greatly encouraged, because it provides the reassurance that the time spent, and the significant financial investment is exactly what the industry and specifically Highways England require from us.

Given our high-risk environment it was imperative for us to champion these step changes to protect vulnerable operatives, whilst also considering disruption to other road users, our customer.

Now, with renewed vigour, we intend to continue our journey of continual improvement for the benefit of all.

Attendees also had the opportunity share ideas, discover the detail behind some of the featured projects and explore some of the safety initiatives Highways England has implemented and supported over the last year at the event.

In total 23 awards were presented:

## **Highways England Safety Awards**

**Excellence in Occupational Health and Wellbeing winners:**

**Excellence in Safety for Road Users winners:**

- A14 Integrated Delivery Team for dynamic traffic management & exemplary recovery on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme
- Highways England joint working with the DVSA

**Championing Safety winners:**

**Leading Behaviour Change for Safety winners:**

- P. Flannery Plant Hire for Flannery Training
- Tim Burton, Highways England, changing and influencing health, safety

and wellbeing

Highly commended: Chevron for leading behaviour change

## **Highways England Delivery Awards**

**Excellence in Environment and Sustainability winners:**

**Leading Efficiencies and Continuous Improvement winners:**

**Project of the Year winners:**

- telent Technology and Highways England for successful completion of the complex and challenging NRTS2 contract transition
- Highways England Severn River Crossing toll removal

## **Highways England Customer Awards**

**Excellence in Customer Service winners:**

**Improving Customers Journeys winners:**

**Improving Employee Engagement and Behavioural Change winners:**

- A14 Integrated Labour Team for a game-changing approach to meeting the needs of the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme
- Highways England Management Development Programme

## **Highways England's Chairman's Awards Winners**

- Aggregate Industries UK Ltd for SmartBrake – driving improvements in behavioural safety culture and highways industry safety performance
- Highways England Driving Better Business – Highways England's approach to delivering improvements in Work-Related Road Safety

## **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: 200ft-long motorway bridge bites the dust](#)

After a year of careful planning, the motorway bridge was finally erased from the landscape in under 12 hours – some six hours ahead of schedule.

A fascinating time lapse video has now been released which reveals the work involved in demolishing the bridge including the moment the structure came crashing down.

### [Burton Bank Footbridge demolition](#)

The M6 was shut in both directions, between junctions 13 and 14 at Stafford, to carry out the complex demolition of the Burton Bank footbridge, which weighed some 140 tonnes and contained enough concrete to fill 20 tipper trucks.

The arched bridge, north of junction 13, had to be removed to make way for Highways England's major upgrade of the M6 through Staffordshire.

Built in the early 1960s, the curved shape of the footbridge meant there would not be enough headroom for HGVs to travel underneath when the hard shoulder also becomes a new running lane.

The time lapse video, filmed by contractors Kier who are carrying out the work on behalf of Highways England, encapsulates the demolition process that took place throughout the night.

Lane closures began at 5pm last Saturday with the M6 completely shut from around 8pm as more than 50 workers descended on the motorway to carry out the demolition.

The bridge was brought down shortly before midnight and the mammoth clean-up began. The M6 was reopened in both directions by 7.30am on Sunday.

Highways England Smart Motorways Project Sponsor Peter Smith said:

This is the second bridge we have taken down on this stretch and the first operation went very smoothly, exactly as we planned.

The age and shape of Burton Bank footbridge made this more

challenging but in the end it was business as usual for us. We were delighted to be able to open the motorway so early in the morning, before the traffic started to build up.

Thank you to everyone who heeded our warnings and avoided the area on Saturday night. We are grateful to those who did have their journeys affected for their patience and understanding.

The M6 the day after the bridge was removed

Live Twitter feeds throughout the night enabled people to follow the progress of the demolition.

Traffic was diverted off the M6 between junctions 13 and 14, using the A449 and A34 as alternative routes. This route had been agreed with local authority partners and was kept clear of other works.

Signs alerting motorists to the closure were introduced as far away as Dover and Carlisle. Motorists and hauliers travelling between the North West and the Midlands and South of England were advised to avoid the area by using the M62 and M1.

The first bridge removed as part of work to upgrade the motorway between junction 13 (Stafford) and junction 15 (Stoke-on-Trent) was Creswell Home Farm bridge, just north of junction 14, which was demolished last year.

The removal of Burton Bank bridge came as Highways England this week revealed a £265million project to upgrade 19 miles of the motorway to the north of Staffordshire has now been completed.

Extra lanes and new technology have been successfully added to the M6 between Crewe and Knutsford enabling more traffic to travel on the road, tackling congestion and bringing smoother journeys for around 120,000 drivers every day.

This is the first of the four smart motorway schemes to be finished that will ultimately increase the M6's capacity by a third on 60 miles of the motorway between Coventry and Wigan.

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# News story: Dstl backs local STEM challenge for girls

Staff from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory supported girls in Wiltshire schools in the annual Soroptimists STEM Challenge trophy.

Dstl provided STEM Ambassadors as judges and mentors for the schools during the project, and attended the awards event with a display to discuss careers with the girls.

The teams, from Years 8 and 9, were asked to research what simple sustainable innovation could make life better for people living in poverty in the developing world. They were challenged to design and create a prototype for a sustainable innovation that could improve the lifestyle of people living in the third world.

Dstl STEM Ambassador Lisa Scandling, Chairman of the Judges and President Elect of the new Salisbury Soroptimist Club said:

I believe it is important for Dstl to support initiatives to encourage young people, particularly girls, to consider careers in STEM. Through the STEM ambassador scheme within Dstl, this challenge allowed Dstl mentors to work in schools alongside the teams supporting, guiding and encouraging them.

Their ideas, knowledge about the world and research skills are just incredible – they are so much better than I remember being at their age! If we have encouraged even a fraction of the girls there to consider the range of possible futures in STEM, then I think we have done well.

The team 'Fresher, Faster Water Supplies' from South Wilts Grammar School won the STEM Challenge trophy and cash prizes for themselves and their school at this year's award ceremony. Some 21 girls across five teams from three schools entered the competition, now in its second year, to encourage local girls to consider careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

The winning team focused on providing eco-friendly and sustainable water supplies to Yemen with their entry, which made use of aluminium piping and solar powered batteries to power the generator to pump the water. The girls said:

We chose Yemen because it is one of the most water-deprived countries in the world and does not have an irrigation system in place.

Judges were Cerys Rees, Fellow at Dstl, Helen Harrison, Deputy Head of Electrical Engineering and Construction at Wiltshire College and Rhian Griffith, Design Engineer at Gilo Industries.

The judges also selected a runner-up team, Starchy St Ed's of St Edmund's Girls School, who they felt showed a strong approach to project planning and research through several experiments. They paid tribute to all five teams for their "high level of presentation, the level of research and the dedication of time that each team had put in and the teamwork shown."

The other schools' finalists were:

'Tomorrow's Masterminds' and 'Dauntsey's Team 2' from Dauntsey's School and 'SITNC' from St Edmund's Girls School .

The third Salisbury STEM Challenge will start in September 2019, and girls in KS 3&4 in local schools have until February 2020 half term to develop their entries.

[More information on Salisbury Soroptomists](#)

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## [News story: NW seminar: Identity psychology in probation: Implications for working with personality disorder](#)

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## [Press release: Trustee removed and](#)

## over £13 million distributed to good causes following the Commission's inquiry

A [statutory inquiry](#) into a poverty charity has found breaches of trust and duty by trustees who misapplied charity funds and failed to manage conflicts of interest. As a result of the investigation, over £13 million has been distributed to charities and the charity's former chair has been disqualified, following his removal, from serving as a charity trustee or holding any senior management function of any charity in England and Wales.

The Commission opened a statutory inquiry into [Relief for Distressed Children and Young People](#) in 2006 after concerns were raised about its management and administration. On opening the inquiry, the Commission took protective action to freeze access to c. £13.8 million held across 3 bank accounts in the charity's name.

The inquiry questioned the trustees about \$6.35 million which they claimed had been spent on building orphanages in Iraq. Investigators examined letters, photographs and detailed plans of building work. It later materialised that over \$5 million had been passed to non-charitable organisations or friends and family of the trustees in Iraq.

Funds equivalent to those misapplied, plus interest, were quickly repaid into the charity's bank accounts by the trustees. The inquiry considered this an admission by the trustees that funds had been misapplied.

In 2007, the Commission suspended the trustees pending consideration of their removal. The chair was removed in September 2007. The remaining trustees were discharged from their roles in 2008.

The charity's funds remained protected by Orders of the Commission. As a result of the trustees' conduct a potential tax liability of up to £3.5 million was identified. With no trustees remaining, the inquiry appointed an interim manager to take over the administration of the charity, settle any tax liability and make a determination on the charity's future.

As a result, between 2011 and 2016 the interim manager awarded grants of over £13 million to three charities working in Iraq to relieve poverty.

By this point the inquiry had found clear misconduct and/or mismanagement by the former trustees, including their:

- failure to act in accordance with the prohibition in the charity's trust deed on the trustees receiving financial benefit;
- provision of false and/or misleading information to the Commission;
- misapplication of the charity's assets;
- little or no knowledge of the financial controls and activities of the



- charity; and
- failure to manage conflicts of interest.

After settling any outstanding liabilities, the interim manager applied the charity's remaining funds before dissolving it. The charity was removed from the Register of Charities on 1 March 2019.

**Michelle Russell, Director of Investigations, Monitoring and Enforcement at the Charity Commission said:**

Our inquiry has relentlessly pursued these funds so that a significant sum could be safeguarded and applied to good causes.

A series of actions by the former trustees allowed charitable funds to be misapplied and put at risk. Our protective action ensured they put right their mistakes and have been held to account for their actions.

As regulator, we want to see charity thrive. This case highlights the lengths we will go to address misconduct and/or mismanagement in charities and protect charity property and assets so that the sector can inspire trust.

The full report of the inquiry is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Ends.

**Notes to editors**

1. It is an offence under section 60 of the Charities Act 2011 to knowingly or recklessly provide the Commission with false or misleading information.
2. By virtue of his removal, the chair is disqualified from acting as a charity trustee or in a senior management function of any charity in England and Wales without a waiver from disqualification from the Commission or the Court. The charity's former chair is listed on the [register of disqualified individuals](#) maintained by the Commission.