

[Press release: Minister for the Americas statement on developments in Venezuela](#)

On 28 and 29 March 2017, the Venezuelan Supreme Court issued two rulings giving itself new powers to exercise the National Assembly's legislative powers and restrict the parliamentary immunity of MPs. This effectively limits the constitutional powers of the National Assembly, which has been democratically elected by the people of Venezuela.

The Minister for Europe and the Americas, Sir Alan Duncan, said:

I am utterly shocked by the latest developments in Venezuela. The manner in which the Supreme Court of Venezuela has wrested power from the parliament represents a total breakdown in the separation of powers. Indeed, the Venezuelan Prosecutor General has herself said the decision of the Supreme Court is unconstitutional.

A strong, independent parliament is vital to any democracy and necessary to address the economic and social challenges Venezuela faces. The Venezuelan Government must therefore urgently act to restore Venezuela's democratic norms. Continued shortages of basic goods are having a detrimental impact on the lives of ordinary Venezuelan citizens. I implore President Maduro and his Government to take positive action to rectify this situation.

Further information

[News story: South West Water fail to report dead fish after polluting Devon stream](#)

South West Water has been ordered to pay £89,000 in fines and costs for polluting a stream in Woodbury near Exeter. The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

A court heard how large numbers of fish died following the incident at Ham Lane Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) in September 2014 following an illegal discharge. CSOs are allowed to discharge during storm conditions to prevent

the internal flooding of properties. They are not permitted to operate during periods of dry weather.

The spill was caused by a blockage that resulted in effluent being discharged into a nearby stream over one to two days. The pollution adversely affected water quality in the stream and killed more than 150 fish.

The water company must report any fish kills that occur following a pollution incident. It failed to report this important information to the Environment Agency.

Instead, a witness alerted the Environment Agency to the seriousness of the incident after seeing South West Water staff collect and remove dead fish from below the CSO discharge pipe over several days as part of its remediation work on the stream.

The discharge occurred during a period of dry weather. The dead fish included minnows, stone loach, bullhead and eels.

Pete Ball of the Environment Agency said:

It is important water companies regularly inspect and maintain their structures and assets such as CSOs to ensure they are operating in accordance with their permit and do not cause pollution.

While South West Water responded quickly to this incident, it failed to report the extent of the environmental impact of this spill, especially the fish deaths.

Appearing before Exeter Crown Court, South West Water Ltd was fined £70,000 and ordered to pay £19,023 costs after pleading guilty to breaching its environmental permit at Ham Lane Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO), Woodbury on or around 27 September 2014.

Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on plans for a new settlement in the West Bank

The UK strongly condemns the Israeli government's decision to found a new settlement deep in the West Bank; the first such government decision for over 25 years. I am also disappointed that Israel plans to expropriate additional West Bank territory as 'state land', and press forward with plans for almost 2,000 housing units in spite of significant international concern.

These announcements are contrary to international law and seriously undermine the prospects of two states for two peoples. As a strong friend of Israel, and one prepared to stand up for Israel when it faces bias and unreasonable criticism, I urge Israel not to take steps such as these, which move us away from our shared goal of peace and security and make it harder to achieve a different relationship between Israel and the Arab world.

[News story: Pubs Code Adjudicator \(PCA\) Bulletin March 2017](#)

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[Press release: Planned roadworks in Kent and Sussex: weekly summary for Monday 3 April to Sunday 9 April 2017](#)

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 31 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.

M2 junctions 2 to 4 Rochester, Kent: litter clearance

Works to improve journeys by clearing litter will take place this week on the M2 between junctions 2 and 4. Lane closures will be in place in both directions overnight, between 8pm and 6am, from Monday 3 April for three nights.

M20 junctions 3 to 5 Maidstone, Kent: smart motorway surveys

Work to improve journeys by carrying out surveys continue this week on the M20 between junctions 3 and 5. Various lane closures will be in place in both

directions overnight, between 8pm and 6am, from Monday 3 April for five nights.

In addition, the eastbound exit and entry slip roads at junction 4 will be closed overnight, between 8pm and 6am, on Saturday 8 April. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via adjacent junctions. Surveys are scheduled to be completed in May 2017.

M20 junctions 4 to 6 Maidstone, Kent: resurfacing

Work to improve journeys by resurfacing sections of the carriageway begin this week on the M20 between junctions 4 and 6. The eastbound carriageway will be closed between junctions 4 and 6 overnight, between 8pm and 6am, from Monday 3 April for five nights and overnight on Sunday 9 April between 8pm and 6am. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A228, M2 and A229.

M20 junctions 7 Maidstone to 13 Folkestone, Kent: resurfacing

Work to improve safety by resurfacing sections of the carriageway will take place this week on the M20. The following closures will be in place overnight, between 8pm and 6am:

- Monday 3 April: eastbound entry slip road at junction 7
- Tuesday 4 April: eastbound entry slip road at junction 10
- Wednesday 5 April: westbound exit slip road at junction 4
- Thursday 6 April: westbound entry slip road at junction 12
- Friday 7 April: eastbound exit slip road at junction 7

Clearly signed diversions will be in place via the adjacent junction.

M23 junctions 8 to 10a, South Nutfield to Crawley: smart motorway surveys

Work to improve journeys by carrying out surveys continue this week on the M23 between junctions 8 and 10a. The westbound Gatwick spur road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 6am, on Monday 3 April. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the M23, A2011, A23, and Airport Way.

In addition, various lane closures will be in place in both directions overnight, between 10pm and 6am, on Tuesday 4 April for four nights. Surveys are scheduled to be completed in April 2017.

A2 Canterbury, Kent: bridge joint repairs

Work to improve safety by maintaining a bridge near Canterbury begins this week on the A2 between Upper Harbledown and Thannington Road. The eastbound carriageway will be closed between the A2050 and the A2050 at Roman Road overnight, between 8pm and 6am, from Monday 3 April for five nights. A

clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A2050, A290 & A2050. Work is due to be completed by mid-April.

A20, Folkestone, Kent: resurfacing

Work to improve safety by resurfacing sections of the carriageway takes place this week between Courtwood and the M20. The westbound carriageway will be closed between the A260 and the M20 overnight, between 8pm and 6am, on Thursday 6 April. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A260 and A259.

A21 Tonbridge to Pembury, Kent: major improvement

Work to improve journeys on the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury continues this week. A 40mph speed limit remains in place 24/7 between the Vauxhall interchange and the A228.

The southbound carriageway will be closed between Quarry Hill and the Pembury interchange and the northbound carriageway between the Pembury and Vauxhall interchanges overnight, between 8pm and 6am, on Thursday 6 April. In addition, Longfield Road will be closed in both directions between Longfield roundabout and Knights Park roundabout. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A26, A2014, A26 and A228. Two way traffic lights will be in place on the A21 overnight, between 8pm and 6am, from Monday 3 April for three nights and overnight on Friday 7 April.

Tonbridge Road will remain closed after Pembury Hospital up to and including Longfield Road roundabout until Spring 2017. A clearly signed diversion route will be in place via the A228 and the A21.

The scheme is due to be completed in Summer 2017. For further information, [visit the scheme website.](<http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/a21-tonbridge-to-pembury-dualling>)

A23 West Sussex: vegetation clearance

Work to improve journeys by clearing vegetation continues this week on the A23 between Pease Pottage and Patcham. Various slip road closures will be in place in both directions overnight, between 8pm and 6am, from Monday 3 April for five nights. Clearly signed diversions will be in place via the next available junction. Work is scheduled to be completed by the end of April.

Safety at roadworks

Highways England is working with the industry and road users to reduce the risks of working on the roads. For the safety of road workers and all road users, when you are approaching roadworks:

- keep within the speed limit – it is there for your safety
- get into the correct lane in good time – don't keep switching

- concentrate on the road ahead, not the roadworks
- be alert for works' traffic leaving or entering roadworks
- keep a safe distance – there could be queues in front
- observe all signs – they are there to help you
- be alert for road workers, the roads are their workplace

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.