

# Britain's biggest road project restores river footpath

Drivers are not alone in reaping the benefits from Britain's biggest roads project, with walkers along the banks of one of the country's longest rivers now being rewarded too.

Highways England has finished the majority of work on its £1.5 billion upgrade of the A14 in Cambridgeshire, with 85,000 daily drivers benefitting with up to 20 minutes taken off their journeys following the opening of a new 12-mile bypass in December 2019, and the rest of the 21-mile stretch being upgraded to three lanes last May.

Now the benefits of the project are being extended to pedestrians and local communities, with £42,500 being invested by Highways England and Cambridgeshire County Council on a number of upgrades along the Ouse Valley Way including vegetation clearance, surfacing works, and new signage and information boards.

Laura Hampshire, Senior Project Manager on Highways England's A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme, said:

While our work is primarily to improve roads, making journeys safer and shorter for drivers, Highways England takes a holistic approach of improving the environments and communities which we work in and around. Now the road upgrade is largely complete, we're working in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council and community groups to deliver lasting improvements to the Ouse Valley Way.

Now walkers and riders will enjoy the improvements made along this historic path that will deliver lasting benefits for users and communities. We hope that people will enjoy these upgrades for generations to come, and see that our work extends beyond merely upgrading roads.

Councillor Peter McDonald, Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee at Cambridgeshire County Council said:

We're pleased to have worked closely with Highways England and the Ouse Valley Trust on providing the improvements and we hope those who use the path will benefit from the upgrades made.

The 150-mile long Ouse Valley Way follows the River Great Ouse from its source in Syresham, Northamptonshire to the Wash, near King's Lynn, Norfolk. Some 26 miles of this epic route runs through Cambridgeshire as it snakes through St Neots, St Ives, and Godmanchester.

Improvement works were undertaken during Spring 2021 along the path and included clearance works to make large sections alongside the river between Buckden and Diddington accessible that were previously eroding, improving accessibility by removing a number of kissing gates, and surfacing works to remove steps at bridges and boardwalks.

Further work included the design and installation of 12 new interpretation boards along the Ouse Valley Way from St Neots to Earith to inform people of the natural habitat and history of the river. The work will also cover replacing 30 signs with dedicated Ouse Valley Way signs, and installing 100 high visibility way marker posts to make the route more navigable.

Great Ouse Valley Trust trustee Ian Jackson with one of the information boards

The Great Ouse Valley Trust Chairman Graham Campbell said:

We were delighted to work with Highways England and Cambridgeshire County Council on the Ouse Valley Way project. Through our partner members we have been able to identify those parts of the route that needed upgrading, and to distribute new way marking posts.

The Highways England funding enabled us to use the expertise of our trustees, design contacts and advisors to completely rewrite and illustrate all the existing information boards on the route, plus two new ones. We have included heritage sites, plus notes on personal safety and the Countryside Code. The Great Ouse Valley Trust exists to promote, preserve and enhance the unique landscape of river valley through Cambridgeshire.

## **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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## **[Government response to the](#)**

# consultation on environmental objectives for the spaceflight regulator under the Space Industry Act 2018

On Friday 25 June (2021), I published the [government's response to consultation on environmental objectives](#) and [guidance that the government is setting for the regulator when exercising its spaceflight functions under the Space Industry Act 2018](#).

This government is committed to growing the space industry in the UK and cementing our leading role in this sector by unlocking a new era in commercial spaceflight across the UK. The government's ambitious support for safe and sustainable spaceflight activities will drive research, innovation and entrepreneurship, exploiting the unique environment of space.

The environmental objectives and guidance, along with the space industry regulations, and other instruments covering accident investigation and appeals, will pave the way for a new licensing regime for commercial spaceflight activities from UK. This will feed into our emerging national space strategy as we develop our priorities for levelling-up the UK and promote the growth of this thriving sector in the long term.

The environmental objectives demonstrate the importance this government attaches to balancing the mitigation of potentially negative environmental impacts of spaceflight activities with enhancing the strong contributions that commercial spaceflight can make to both the economy and our local and global efforts to monitor the environment.

The objectives and guidance build on the [Space Industry Act 2018](#) requirements for applicants for a launch or spaceport licence to submit an assessment of environmental effects as part of their application. The objectives and guidance set out clearly how the government expects the spaceflight regulator will take account of these assessments when deciding licence applications and setting licence conditions.

The government welcomes the thoughtful and detailed responses received to the consultation from industry, environmental professional bodies and other stakeholders. The response I am sharing today (28 June 2021) sets out the ways we have adjusted the draft guidance to reflect the suggestions and recommendations made through the consultation process.

We believe that this collaborative approach will not only strengthen the licensing regime we are implementing, but also demonstrates the government's ongoing commitment to growing this exciting sector whilst ensuring that the most significant environmental impacts are mitigated and that growth of this sector is consistent with the government's wider sustainable development

goals.

My department has worked closely with the [Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#), the [UK Space Agency](#) and [Civil Aviation Authority](#) to legislate for a wide range of new commercial spaceflight technologies, including traditional vertically launched vehicles, air-launched vehicles and sub-orbital spaceplanes and balloons.

The government's aim is to have in place all the necessary secondary legislation and supporting guidance before the summer recess to enable the regulator to begin receiving and assessing applications.

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## [Dorset farmer's leaky silage clamp kills fish in river](#)

Press release

More than 400 fish were killed because a Dorset farm owner was unaware effluent from his silage clamp was discharging into a river.



Effluent from a silage clamp was going into the river

Jasper Miller, 52, of Lower Fifehead Farm in Fifehead St Quintin, pleaded guilty to causing an incident which saw the River Divelish, a tributary of the River Stour, polluted for over 3 kilometres between 25 and 29 June 2019. He was fined £1,300 and ordered to pay costs of £6,079 at North Somerset Magistrates Court on 14 June 2021.

The court heard from the Environment Agency that a member of the public reported seeing dead fish and officers went to investigate. Tracking the pollution upstream, they eventually found silage effluent discharging from a pipe connected to the farm.

Dye tracing established the link between the silage clamp and the pipe and Miller admitted that the wrong pipe had been unblocked, leading to the discharge. To mitigate the impact he began removing polluted water for proper disposal by tanker.

Sara Durden of the Environment Agency said:

We are grateful to the person who alerted us to the pollution which set in motion the events that led to stopping this incident. Good intelligence sent to us through our hotline is more important than ever because it allows us to react accordingly and take the appropriate action.

We take incidents of agricultural pollution very seriously and while most cases can be resolved by following guidance, we will take enforcement if the offence is serious. This incident could have been avoided if proper maintenance and checks to the drainage system had been made prior to the silage clamp being filled.

If you see pollution or dead fish in a river, contact our 24/7 incident hotline on 0800 807060.

### **Notes to editor**

Miller of Lower Fifehead Farm, Fifehead St Quintin, Sturminster Newton, pleaded guilty to one count of allowing silage leachate to discharge into the River Divelish without an environmental permit, contrary to Regulations 12(1)b and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

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## **One reappointment and 2 extensions to Criminal Procedure Rule Committee**

The Secretary of State has reappointed Alison Pople QC as barrister member of the Criminal Procedure Rule Committee (CPRC) from 1 September 2020 until 31 August 2024.

The Secretary of State has also extended the tenures of the following non judicial members of the CPRC for the terms shown below:

David Kenyon, voluntary organisation member – 1 September 2020 to 31 March 2021; and

Jodie Blackstock, voluntary organisation member – 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021.

The Courts Act 2003 established the CPRC to make rules governing the practice and procedure of magistrates' courts, the Crown Court and the Court of Appeal, criminal division.

The Act requires the Committee to make rules that are simple and simply expressed, and that help make the criminal justice system accessible, fair and efficient.

### **Alison Pople QC:**

Alison Pople QC is widely recognised as a leading silk with particular specialisms in financial crime and regulation, corporate crime, global investigations, crime and professional discipline. Alison has not declared any political activity.

### **David Kenyon:**

David Kenyon has 20 years' experience of the criminal justice system including: management of a Victim and Witness Service; service design; quality and assurance assessment; policy development; and strategic engagement. David has not declared any political activity.

### **Jodie Blackstock:**

Jodie Blackstock is JUSTICE's Legal Director. She practised as a barrister for five years before joining JUSTICE in 2009, with a mixed common law practice in England and Wales and was also called to the Bar in Trinidad and Tobago. She is Treasurer of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales. Jodie has not declared any political activity.

These appointments are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The reappointment and extensions have been made in line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Appointments to CPRC are made by the Lord Chancellor in consultation with the Lord Chief Justice for England and Wales.

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## **Attorney General launches new campaign to combat contempt of court online**

The Attorney General, Michael Ellis QC MP, today warned of the legal consequences that could come from posting prejudicial information online.

A new campaign has been launched today by the Attorney General, warning of the legal consequences of prejudicing the judicial process via social media.

The Attorney General's Office's #ThinkBeforeYouPost campaign aims to highlight the dangers of committing contempt of court online. The campaign will provide advice and guidance on what information, if posted publicly, could leave social media users at risk of being held in contempt of court.

Contempt of court refers to behaviour that undermines or prejudices court proceedings or interferes with the administration of justice, or creates a real risk of that happening. The same rules apply to members of the public as they do to journalists, especially when posting on social media.

These rules are in place to protect an open justice system and ensure fair trials and the fair treatment of defendants, victims, and witnesses. Contempt of court can be punished by a fine or up to two years in prison.

The public education campaign aims to provide advice and guidance on how to avoid committing contempt of court via social media.

The Attorney General, Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP, announced the campaign today saying:

"Everyone is innocent until proven guilty, and everyone deserves a fair trial. The issue is really about discussing matters which should only be raised for the first time in front of the jury.

"A mis-judged tweet or post could have grave repercussions and interfere with a trial. A post on social media could mean a trial is delayed or at worst stopped because a fair trial isn't possible – so I would caution everyone, don't get in the way of justice being done.

"It is not only journalists or lawyers who can be found in contempt of court, ordinary members of the public can also do so and find themselves facing their own legal consequences."

We all have the right to discuss and comment on what we see and hear in the news, as long as we stay on the right side of the law. These laws are in place to ensure that a trial can take place unimpeded, and not be postponed or aborted.

Aborted trials affect not only the defendant, but also the victims and witnesses who will then have to go through an often-traumatic experience all over again.

The campaign will run on social media between 28 June and 2 July and use the hashtag #ThinkBeforeYouPost.

[Contempt of court factsheet](#) (PDF, 159KB, 1 page) [Contempt of court social media case studies](#) (PDF, 75.2KB, 2 pages)