

# M6 milestone after weekend closures

Highways England is constructing a bridge over the M6 at junction 19 at Knutsford to improve traffic flow between the motorway and the A556 and reduce congestion around the junction roundabout.

Work to lift dozens of steel bridge beams into place over the motorway was completed on Monday 1 February with the M6 re-opening after two successive weekend closures. A drone video released today shows how much progress was made during the work.

January's torrential rain damaged Acton Bridge along the A49 over the River Weaver near Northwich and meant plans to use a long-standing A54 and A49 diversion route during the Friday and Sunday night closures had to be altered at the last minute. Highways England had to use the A50 instead, prompting a 'thank you' message to residents.

Highways England project manager Khalid El-Rayes said:

"During the first weekend we were forced to change the diversion route at very short notice. Last week, when it became clear the bridge would not be repaired in time, we worked hard to advise local people we'd be using the A50 again, including writing to about 800 householders along the route.

"We would like to thank people in Holmes Chapel, Knutsford and everyone along the A50 for their patience and support over the last couple of weekends. They have helped us reach a significant milestone in this important project to provide smoother, safer and more reliable journeys for local people and everyone else relying on what is one of the busiest junctions in the North West."

The work to crane the 18 pairs of 40 tonne bridge beams – each up to 42 metres in length – into place over the motorway involved 100 contractors delivering some 12,000 hours of activity safely. Over the two weekends, United Utilities staff were also involved in completing a water mains diversion at the roundabout as part of the overall project.

Pictures from a drone show how much progress was made during the two weekend motorway closures

Pat Cumming, senior project manager for AmeySRM which is the lead contractor on the Highways England M6 Junction 19 project, said:

This was a tremendous achievement and a real team effort. I'm extremely proud of everyone involved. We will continue to work together safely and efficiently to deliver the project with minimal disruption to Highways England customers.

Highways England revealed today it had also used the two weekend closures to do routine motorway maintenance away from the bridge site – with vegetation clearance, gully cleaning and litter picking among the tasks completed and reducing the need for lane and carriageway closures in the area at other times. Features of the operation over the two weekends included:

- Clearing or cutting overgrown vegetation and trees along 26 miles
- Cleaning almost 500 gullies, 108 manholes and more than two miles of drainage
- Removing 200 tonnes of silt along about 12 miles of the motorway
- Collecting ten cage van loads of large debris – including bumpers, tyres and ladders – and litter picking, filling over 800 black plastic bags
- 22 safety barrier repairs and all refuge areas cleaned and jetted

The new bridge is set to open in the summer. More information on the project is available at the [M6 junction 19 scheme page](#)

### **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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## **[The contribution of science and technology for levelling up across the UK](#)**

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## **[Urging Syria's cooperation with the UN](#)**

## and OPCW

- UK underlines that unresolved issues in Syria's declaration of its chemical weapons programme are "of a serious and substantive nature"
- UK urges ongoing coordination between the UN and OPCW to collectively resolve the issue of Syria's chemical weapons programme

Transcript of statement by Ambassador Barbara Woodward at the Security Council briefing on Syria chemical weapons, 3 February 2021

We extend our thanks to High Representative Nakamitsu for her briefing today and I welcome the contributions from other members of the Council. As recognised by the Security Council in resolution 2118, ongoing coordination between the UN and the OPCW is vital if we are to collectively resolve this issue.

Despite decisions by this Council and that of the OPCW Executive Council of 27 September 2013, Syria's declaration of its chemical weapons programme can still not be considered accurate and complete. The unresolved issues are of a serious and substantive nature.

As the OPCW DG noted in his 25 January report, one of the 19 outstanding issues pertains to a chemical weapons production facility declared by the Syrian National Authority as never having been used for the production of chemical weapons. The review of all the information and other materials gathered by the Declaration Assessment Team since 2014, including samples, indicates that production and/or weaponisation of chemical warfare nerve agents did take place there.

The fact that four of the unresolved issues have been closed, shows that, contrary to the assertions of some that they are artificial, they can be resolved if Syria chooses to engage genuinely and constructively. Syria needs to provide complete access to documents and witnesses. The cat and mouse game of non-credible explanations and excuses cannot continue. The Technical Secretariat has repeatedly made clear that it stands ready to assist Syria in this regard. I note the DAT's intention to deploy for consultations again early this month. We expect Syria to provide a full response to all the queries during those meetings.

The ongoing threat posed to international peace and security by these unresolved issues is not hypothetical, especially to the thousands of Syrians who have suffered the horrifying effects on the body of nerve agents and chlorine since 2014.

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# Evidence Presentation System to be rolled out to Crown and magistrates' courts

News story

New system will replace Clickshare and for use in presenting multi-media evidence in court.



From Monday 15 February 2020, the Evidence Presentation System (EPS) will begin rolling out to Crown and magistrates' courts, replacing the existing device used in courtrooms to present multi-media evidence, Clickshare, for which technical support will end in April.

The EPS technology, which can be provided through a cable or wirelessly through wifi, was successfully tested at Guildford Crown Court in November 2020 and has been approved for wider introduction as a solution by the Senior Presiding Judge, with the Bar Council also expressing support.

A wired and wireless solution will be introduced across courtrooms in Crown Courts, with wifi only in magistrates' courts due to more common physical limitations.

Work will begin to replace Clickshare equipment firstly in Crown Courts which is due to complete by the end of April 2021, before proceeding to the magistrates' courts where completion is scheduled for the end of July 2021.

During this transition period, we do not anticipate any disruption to court business and any installation work will be undertaken out of hours. HMCTS will continue to support the use of Apple devices with Clickshare until the EPS rollout is complete, and users should speak to court staff if they encounter difficulties with their device in the interim.

User guides will be made available and the [Clickshare web pages](#) will be replaced with the new EPS guidance during the rollout.

Should you have any questions about the replacement, please contact the

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## [Common Platform is live in more early adopter criminal courts](#)

The Common Platform has gone live in further “early adopter” sites at Bristol Crown and Magistrates’ Courts, representing a major step forward for the Criminal Justice System in making the best use of digital technology. It has already been well established in Derby Crown and Magistrates’ Courts, and Chesterfield Magistrates’ Court and delivers a single, seamless source of information for participants in a criminal case from the initial point of arrest and throughout.

Designed to be used by court staff, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), defence professionals, police and other justice agencies, it provides secure, tailored access to information, so users can only access the information appropriate to them.

Once fully rolled out in England and Wales, Common Platform will enable greater efficiency across the Criminal Justice System. Today is the latest step in the first stage of introducing it to a series of selected early adopter courts across England and Wales, and progress has been made despite the uniquely challenging context of COVID-19.

Christine Murray, Delivery Director for the south-west region, said:

HMCTS staff in the south-west region, and colleagues from partner agencies across Bristol and the wider Avon and Somerset area, have worked exceptionally hard together to bring the Bristol early adopter sites to a stage of readiness, in spite of the challenges being presented by the pandemic.

It is a fantastic achievement, and great testament to the strength of our local relationships and the value of truly collaborative working. A huge thank you to everyone involved.

Common Platform cuts down the need for manual document handling and improves how criminal cases are accessed, managed and processed. It removes the need to copy information from one system to another, ensuring the integrity of crucial information and minimising duplication of effort. A range of features ensure cases are progressed effectively – for example, the system will automatically alert users when new case documents are available, or when

tasks are outstanding.

The next courts due to go live with Common Platform will be in the north-east and south-east regions:

- North Tyneside, Mid and South-East Northumberland Magistrates' Courts, and Newcastle Crown Court
- Guildford and Staines Magistrates' Courts and Guildford Crown Court

[Watch our webinar introducing Common Platform](#)

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