

# Highway's England makes £114 million pledge to improve roads in East of England

Well-known motorways and major A roads including the M11, A14, A1, A47 and A12 will all benefit from the planned package of enhancements, with road resurfacing, bridge joint replacements, the creation of cycle lanes, improved signage and landscaping all set to take place.

In total, Highways England will invest more than £114 million into 150 schemes across Norfolk, Sussex, Essex, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Buckinghamshire.

Highways England's regional director for the East of England Martin Fellows said:

Keeping our roads in good condition is essential for safety and in ensuring the reliability of journeys for drivers. This multi-million-pound investment will help keep journeys on our motorways and A roads flowing and reduce the risk of unplanned, disruptive maintenance.

Over the next 12 months, we'll be working hard to ensure drivers throughout the East enjoy a smoother experience while travelling on our roads.

Highways England will begin work on their comprehensive maintenance programme in the coming months, with schemes including:

## **A14 Brickfield bridge**

Replacing the existing bridge joint bearings, carrying out concrete repairs, resurfacing the road and renewing the road markings.

## **M11 junction 11 Mill bridge**

Replacing four bridge joints, re-waterproofing the bridge deck and repainting the bearings.

## **A14 junction 32 Histon**

Replacing all road markings and studs where resurfacing has taken place.

## **M11 River Granta bridge**

Replace two bridge joints, re-waterproofing the bridge deck and resurface.

This latest investment into the regions roads follows on from last year's essential maintenance programme which saw Highways England pump £60 million into the completion of 140 road renewal and maintenance projects.

Throughout last year, Highways England laid more than 35,000 tonnes of surfacing material across the East of England – the equivalent of 175 blue whales. This allowed for 43 lane miles of resurfacing. A further 50,000 road studs were set into the region's roads, helping to light up the way for drivers. Other improvements include:

- more than 80 traffic signs installed
- 17 junctions improved
- 16 bridge joints installed
- 2.7 miles worth of cycle lane improvements

Many of our upcoming improvement schemes will have no impact on drivers during construction. However, some might require lane closures, overnight closures or road closures, although disruption will be kept to a minimum.

To keep up to date with the latest travel information follow @HighwaysEAST on Twitter or [visit our website](#).

## **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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# **[Embrace data to deliver for the public, Chief Secretary tells Whitehall](#)**

News story

The government must overhaul its use of data to deliver for the public following the coronavirus pandemic, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury said today.



- Steve Barclay brands Treasury as 'the new radicals' in government, creating a faster and smarter culture, in first speech as Chief Secretary to the Treasury
- says Whitehall has proven it can work at pace when needed during the pandemic and needs to continue to do so once the machinery of government returns to normal
- comments come ahead of Comprehensive Spending Review in the autumn

In his first speech since taking on the role, Steve Barclay called on government departments to make data a key part of policymaking to improve public services and measure outcomes, ahead of the autumn's Comprehensive Spending Review.

He announced that he has set up a team of data experts at the Treasury to scrutinise departmental spending, in a bid to make the government's economic ministry the 'new radicals' of Whitehall and lead the way with this new agenda.

Looking ahead to the Comprehensive Spending Review, launched by the Chancellor last week, he told the audience:

Coming as it does in the wake of a crisis that has fully tested the machinery of government, this Spending Review is a moment to ingrain a new approach into the public finances.

Instead of being seen as a brake on progress, I want the Treasury to put a foot on the accelerator.

The Chief Secretary also emphasised the need for speed when designing policy and delivering services – drawing on the pace at which the Treasury had implemented policies in the wake of coronavirus, including the furlough and self-employment support schemes.

Discussing the need to build a fully digital state he said that a key focus of the Spending Review will be addressing legacy IT issues which have plagued the public sector. This investment in data infrastructure will aim to improve security and ways of working – including IT solutions across Whitehall departments that will make it easier to share data to aid better policymaking and modern public services.

The Chief Secretary also discussed successful bids from the government's Shared Outcomes Fund – a scheme designed to test innovative approaches to address cross-cutting issues affecting society.

This included £28 million to help join up agencies to break up serious and organised crime gangs whilst tackling addiction in a crackdown on drug abuse.

A further £4 million will fund pilots to encourage the use of green “social prescribing”, where outdoor and nature related interventions will be used to help people's mental health.

#### **Further information**

- the speech can be read in full [here](#)

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## **Sixteenth Meeting of UK-Kuwait Joint Steering Group**

News story

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The first of the sub-groups of the sixteenth meeting of the biannual UK-Kuwait Joint Steering Group, which is the Defence subgroup will be held virtually on Wednesday 29 July . The meetings of the UK –Kuwait Joint Steering Group reflect the two countries' commitment to working together to advance the close Kuwait –UK relationship to the benefit of both countries. The UK-Kuwait Joint Steering Group covers a wide range of issues, including trade, investment, migration, security, defence, cyber security, healthcare, education, higher education, scientific research, environment, culture and

international development.

The defence sub-group will focus on ways to strengthen cooperation between the two countries especially on training and joint exercises. The discussions will cover Exercise Desert Warrior, emergency planning and crisis response , training of Kuwaiti forces in the UK, and progressing Government-to-Government procurement discussions among other subjects.

The British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport said :

Over the next few weeks the UK will be hosting virtual working groups in the framework of the UK/Kuwait Bilateral Joint Steering Group (JSG). I am delighted that this 16th JSG will take forward our work across key areas of bilateral Kuwait-UK co-operation, starting with a meeting of the Defence Working Group on 29 July, which I look forward to attending. This will be followed by working groups focussing on next steps in bilateral co-operation on security, including aviation security, cyber security, health, trade & investment, international development, education, culture and science. I am most grateful to His Excellency Khalid Al Jarallah, Deputy Foreign Minister, His Excellency Walid Al Khobeizi and their cross-ministerial teams for their support and encouragement in our joint endeavour to deepen our co-operation and jointly face the challenges presented by COVID-19.

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## [Eat Out to Help Out – look for the Logo](#)

More than 53,000 outlets across the UK have so far signed up to the UK government's Eat Out to Help Out scheme – and a [new official government online finder](#) is available to help diners locate them.

As Eat Out to Help Out stickers and posters start to appear in the windows of restaurants, cafes, bars and other establishments across the country, customers who want to take advantage of the scheme are advised to look out for the logo.

The logo means diners who eat-in will benefit from a 50% discount, up to a maximum of £10 per person, on food and non-alcoholic drinks, any Monday to Wednesday in August 2020 – and no voucher is required. Diners can take advantage of the offer as many times as they like during the month.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

Our restaurants, cafes and bars play a vital role in our economy, employing more than a million people. They have been hit hard by coronavirus, so it's vital we do everything we can to help them recover.

Our Eat Out to Help Out scheme is designed to get more customers through the door – protecting jobs by giving businesses the confidence to retain and hire staff. More than 53,000 businesses across the country have already signed up, and from today you'll be able to find one near you with the online finder.

To find out if a restaurant is participating in the Eat Out to Help Out scheme you can use the [online restaurant finder](#) now live on GOV.UK. Simply enter your postcode, or one near to where you want to eat out, to get a list of participating outlets within a 5-mile radius.

You can also get in touch with your local restaurant to see if they're taking part or check their website.

Participating outlets must wait 7 days from registration to make their first claim with all eligible claims being paid within 5 working days. Claims can be submitted weekly and businesses are encouraged to register before the 3 August to benefit for the entire month in which the scheme runs.

Further information for businesses, including [how to register and make a claim](#), is available online at GOV.UK.

Businesses can:

Diners can find out [how to use the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme](#).

The Eat Out to Help Out scheme is open to restaurants and other establishments that sell food for consumption on the premises. Establishments can provide their own dining area, or share it with others that allow customers to dine-in.

The discount can be used unlimited times and will be valid Monday to Wednesday on any eat-in meal, including on non-alcoholic drinks, for the entire month of August 2020 across the UK.

Customers do not need a voucher. Registered businesses simply reduce the bill by the appropriate amount, and the offer can be used with other promotions and offers the business accepts.

Help available to businesses:

[YouTube video](#)

- webchat service
- dedicated helpline for restaurants 0300 322 9429 available 8am until 4pm Monday to Friday
- [free downloadable promotional assets](#) to help businesses promote the scheme

HMRC will check claims and take appropriate action to withhold or recover payments found to be dishonest or inaccurate.

Tax agents cannot register or make claims on behalf of their clients. This will trigger a fraud alert and will result in delays in registering and claiming. Impacted clients will have to contact us separately to resolve.

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## [4x4 drivers warned after group spotted driving in river](#)

Press release

The Environment Agency is warning drivers of 4x4 vehicles they could be subject to legal proceedings after a group of vehicles were seen being driven along a Shropshire river.



Some off road vehicles photographed next to a Shropshire river

Several off road vehicles were photographed on a stretch of river in Shropshire and the incident was reported to the Environment Agency.

Chris Bainger, fisheries technical specialist with the Environment Agency, fears that other 4x4 drivers could be tempted to try this kind of “off-roading” as they venture into the countryside following the gradual easing of lockdown restrictions.

Chris said:

Do they realise the harm they may be doing? They are directly crushing any ecology and while some fish like trout and larger juvenile salmon may be able to get away, small salmon won't escape. Plus, if there are a number of vehicles following each other they are damaging the sensitive gravel on the riverbed. That means fish will be less able to successfully spawn later in the year, additionally the churned up sediment smothers the river bed and the small creatures that live within it. Those are an essential part of the food chain for larger aquatic wildlife in the river. The knock on effect is longer term stress on the localised environment.

Anyone who is found to have driven along a river could be subject to criminal proceedings under the Wildlife and Countryside Act or civil proceedings for trespass.

Chris added:

The Environment Agency does issue permits for work to be carried out in rivers at certain times of the year that don't interfere with spawning. But, as for driving along a river, while you can drive through a ford, no one should be driving down a river bed. If anyone has evidence of this, it should be reported to the police or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## **Note to editors**

Owners of riverbanks own up to the centre point of a river. Anyone entering a river and crossing over the centre point should have permission from the owners of both banks to do so.

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