

Press release: Your chance to take a look at preferred route for A303 Stonehenge scheme

Secretary of State for Transport Chris Grayling announced the preferred route for upgrading the A303 at Stonehenge this week.

As part of the biggest government investment in roads in a generation, the £1.6 billion scheme includes the construction of a tunnel past one of the world's most famous prehistoric monuments, a free-flowing, mile-a-minute dual carriageway and a much-needed bypass north of Winterbourne Stoke.

Highways England is hosting drop-in sessions where members of the public are invited to call in to see the proposals and to discuss the preferred route with the project team.

Consultation on the proposed upgrade between Amesbury and Berwick Down attracted considerable feedback earlier this year and Highways England has used this to inform its choice of preferred route, including moving the position of the western portal to avoid conflict with the solstice alignment.

Highways England project director Derek Parody said:

We are pleased to offer an opportunity for people to find out what happens next and to understand the benefits we are working to deliver.

We have listened to feedback from more than 9,000 people and organisations in our consultation earlier this year, and from this, and further surveys and studies, we can move forward with a solution to help improve traffic flow, reduce rat running on surrounding roads, bringing improvements to local communities and benefits to the South West economy, while at the same time enhancing and protecting one of the UK's most iconic landscapes.

We will continue to work with all our heritage partners, and local communities to help shape the scheme's future development, and we look forward to giving everyone an opportunity to see the revised preferred route at these public sessions.

Further consultation on the details of the route will take place in 2018, but in the meantime, the public will be able to view information, including copies of the preferred route booklet, and meet members of the Highways England project team at this month's drop-in sessions.

The events will take place at:

The Manor Barn, High Street, Winterbourne Stoke SP3 4SZ

- Saturday 16 September 11am to 5pm
- Friday, 29 September 2pm to 8pm

Antrobus House, 39 Salisbury Road, Amesbury SP4 7HH

- Friday, 22 September 2pm to 8pm
- Saturday, 23 September 11am to 5pm

Details of the preferred route are also available on the [scheme consultation 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.

[News story: Autumn Budget 2017 date confirmed](#)

Government will publish its next Budget on Wednesday 22 November 2017.

[Chancellor announces the date of Autumn Budget 2017](#)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, has announced that the government will publish its Autumn Budget on Wednesday 22 November 2017.

The Autumn Budget sets out the government's plans for the economy based on the latest forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR).

Following the Chancellor's announcement at Autumn Statement 2016, there will now only be [one fiscal event in each year](#), held in the Autumn. From 2018 there will be a Spring Statement, responding to the forecast from the OBR, but no major fiscal event.

Press release: Pay boost for public sector prison staff

- All public sector prison staff to receive a pay uplift after Justice Secretary, David Lidington, implements in full Public Sector Pay Review Body's recommendations
- Pay uplift follows £100 million government investment to recruit 2,500 new prison officers by 2018.

All prison staff in England and Wales will receive a pay boost as Justice Secretary, David Lidington implements in full the independent Public Service Pay Review Body's recommendations.

All prison staff, including operational support grades and governors, will receive an increase to their salary averaging 1.7% across the service.

Justice Secretary David Lidington said:

Our hardworking prison staff do an outstanding job, often in the most challenging of circumstances. It is therefore right that this work is recognised and that they are awarded a well-deserved increase in pay.

During my visits to prisons around the country I have been hugely impressed with the commitment and dedication they show to make prisons safer and improving the lives of the offenders they manage.

Prison officers provide a vital public service. Their work is often out of sight but is crucial to keeping the public safe.

The government has already boosted the pay of thousands of frontline staff in London and the South East thanks to a £12 million package announced in February. Prison officers at 31 establishments have received a boost of up to £5,000 and new starters are now receiving a total pay of up to £29,500 – an increase of £5,000.

The £29 million of funding for the annual pay increase announced today will be drawn from existing budgets. It comes just weeks after the Justice Secretary announced a net increase of 868 new prison officers between January and June 2017. An additional 738 job offers have been made to potential recruits who are expected to start after June 2018.

This means more support for colleagues, and more support for prisoners, implementing the new key-worker scheme that will train each officer to work more closely with 6 offenders, building stronger relationships to bring about

positive change.

By having more staff on the ground, staff will be better supported to do the job they came into the prison service to do, and spend more time reforming offenders.

[Press release: Landowners warned to be vigilant of fraudsters](#)

Organised criminals are known to be targeting sites in the West Midlands where they are either requesting to store waste which has been baled or claiming they will use the site for other means like vehicle storage, and then filling the site with baled waste instead.

Landowners are being duped by these criminals with the promise of payment for storage, but even if an initial cash payment is made, the further promised monies don't appear. Instead their land is filled up with the waste and they are left with clean-up costs that can run into the hundreds of thousands of pounds, or potentially a fine or custodial sentence leaving them with a criminal conviction on their record if the waste is not moved or disposed of in an appropriate manner.

The waste bales are being transported using curtain sided lorries and unloaded from the lorries using fork lift trucks. We would urge transport companies and plant hire companies to also be vigilant and not become part of this illegal activity.

Marc Liddeth, Environment Manager said:

A number of recent vehicle stops in the West Midlands found HGVs attempting to dispose of potentially illegal waste. These vehicles were stopped and the waste sent back to the original locations. The Environment Agency and police are investigating but we are unable to give any details at this time as it may damage any further investigations.

The storage of any baled or processed waste is not allowed without an environmental permit being in place. We are sending this warning to landowners, hauliers and plant hire companies to remain vigilant and to prevent them becoming a victim of this scam.

Waste companies, local authorities and businesses all have a

responsibility to check what happens to their waste. We have specialist teams who work in partnership with the police and agencies like HMRC to tackle waste crime. This specialist crime unit uses intelligence to track and prosecute organised crime gangs involved in illegal waste activity.

If you or your company are approached or have any information about those involved in this scam please contact the Environment Agency via their incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously online via [Crimestoppers](#) or by calling 0800 555 111.

[News story: Home Office sets out police pay award for 2017 to 2018](#)

The government recognises the extraordinary efforts of the police over the past year, and in light of independent recommendations made by the [Police Remuneration Review Body \(PRRB\)](#) and the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB), we will award police officers a pay award worth a total of two per cent to each officer in 2017 to 2018.

This will consist of:

- a 1% increase to base pay for all ranks
- an additional one-off non-consolidated payment to officers at federated and superintending ranks
- a 1% increase to the London Weighting payment
- a 1% increase to the Dog Handlers' Allowance

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

The tireless work and contribution of police officers in responding to some of the most challenging situations our country has faced for a very long time has been extraordinary.

This award strikes a fair balance for police forces, officers and taxpayers. We want to reward and attract the very best police officers within the resources we have, whilst making the right decisions for the economy overall.

This award strikes a fair balance for police forces, officers and taxpayers. We believe it is affordable within the current police funding settlement. The independent pay review body and the police's independent inspectorate have both highlighted the potential for further efficiencies in the police, forces have increased their reserves from £1.4 billion in 2011 to £1.8 billion in

2016, and police spending has been protected in real terms since 2015.

Policing remains a very attractive career. Applications rates for police officer roles are high. For example, this summer, more than 1500 people applied for 300 Humberside police officer jobs.

Officers benefit from a competitive pay and benefits package. The starting salary is between £19,971 (no qualifications) and £23,124 for constables, rising to £38,382 within 7 years of joining.

Officers who have not reached to top of their pay scale receive annual incremental pay of at least 2% in addition to any annual pay awards depending on rank, experience and securing a satisfactory performance grading.

They are entitled to membership of a defined benefit pension scheme, which is among the best available in the public or private sectors. Members benefit from employer contributions of 21.3% of their pay towards their pensions on top of their own contribution. All contributing members are able to take their pension by age 60, with the majority able to take a pension sooner.

The PRRB highlighted in its report the potential for further efficiencies to be made within policing.

Further information about police welfare, pay and wellbeing is available on the [Home Office media blog](#).