

# M4

## Upgrade to smart motorway

Junctions 3 to 12



# About smart motorways

Smart motorways are a technology driven approach to the use of our motorways, increasing capacity and relieving congestion while maintaining safety.

Smart motorways help make journey times more reliable, at less cost than traditional widening schemes, meaning better value for the tax payer.

Key features of a smart motorway include:

## Variable mandatory speed limits

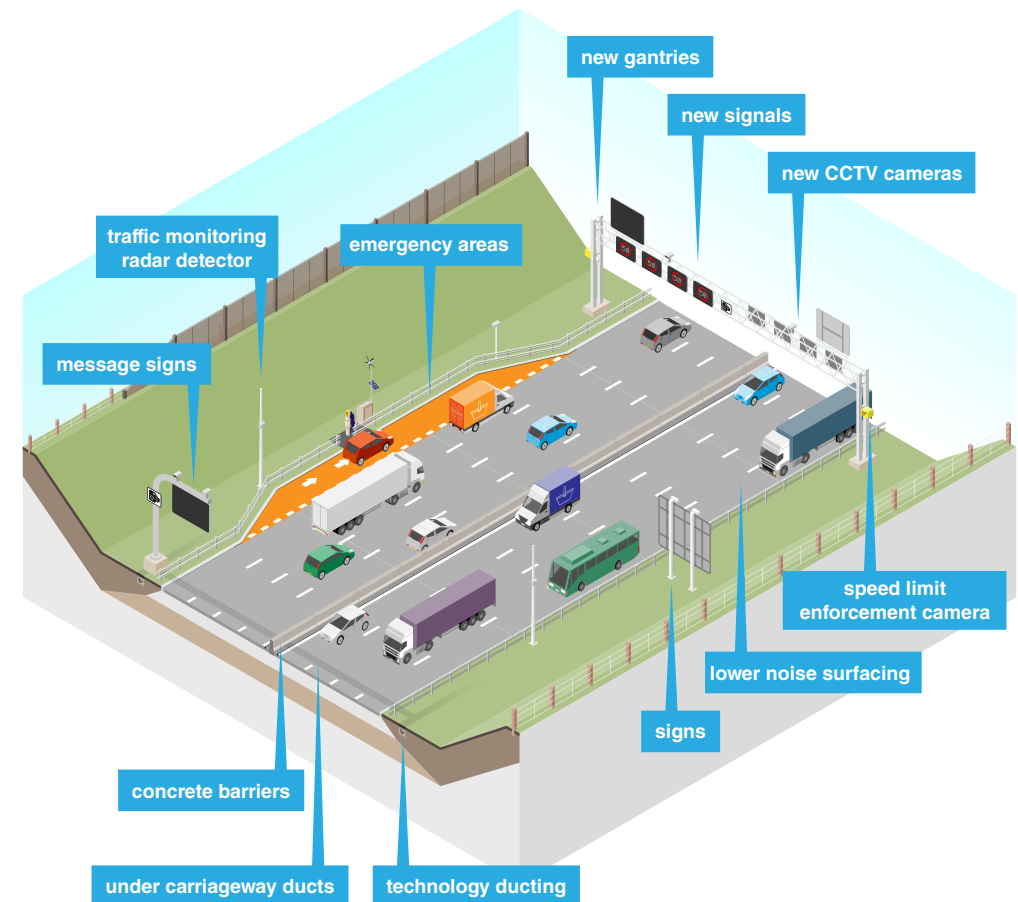
- Speed limits will be set to smooth traffic flows.
- The limits will be clearly displayed on overhead gantries and roadside signs.
- Signs will be used to inform drivers of conditions on the network and when variable speed limits are in place.

## All lane running

- The hard shoulder will be converted to a permanent traffic lane.
- Drivers should obey all signs, including speed limits and lane closure instructions and should not stop on the motorway except in an emergency.

## Emergency areas

- There will be highly visible emergency areas.
- There will be an emergency telephone in each emergency area.
- This will connect you to Highways England's Regional Control Centres and will pinpoint your location.



It is important for drivers to understand the different types of technology and features used on smart motorways

# M4 junctions 3 to 12

The M4 is the main strategic route between London, the west of England and Wales. It connects people, communities and businesses, carrying on average 130,000 vehicles per day and is prone to congestion.



Highways England are improving the M4 between junction 3 at Hayes and junction 12 at Theale by upgrading it to a smart motorway.



This means there will be:

- An additional lane for traffic increasing capacity to reduce congestion.
- More technology on the road to smooth flows and manage incidents.
- More reliable journeys.

The M4 junctions 3 to 12 project received planning permission through the Development Consent Order (DCO) process. Following a statutory consultation, it was granted consent in September 2016. This was followed by detailed design and planning work. Construction on the motorway started in July 2018 and is expected to be completed in March 2022.

# Key changes to the motorway

## All lane running

Between junctions 3 and 12 the hard shoulder will be converted to a traffic lane, so that there are four lanes available for use by road users. Between junctions 4 and 4b, there will be five lanes. Where a hard shoulder does not currently exist, the motorway will be adapted to create a minimum of four lanes. The barrier in the central reservation will be replaced by a new concrete barrier.

## Through junction running

This enables a consistent number of lanes to pass through the junction, reducing the need for vehicles staying on the motorway to change lane. Through-junction running will be in place at junctions 4, 6, 7, 8/9 and 11 and at the Reading motorway service area.



## Bridge works

To accommodate the new smart motorway:

- 11 bridges carrying local traffic over the motorway will need demolition and replacement.
- Several bridges that carry the motorway over roads, railways and rivers will need widening.
- Several subways and culverts that run under the motorway will also need work in order to accommodate the upgrade.

## Emergency areas

There will be new high visibility emergency areas between junctions 3 and 12. Places of relative safety will be every 1.12 miles on average and no more than 1.6 miles apart. If you are driving at 60mph you will pass one approximately once every 90 seconds.

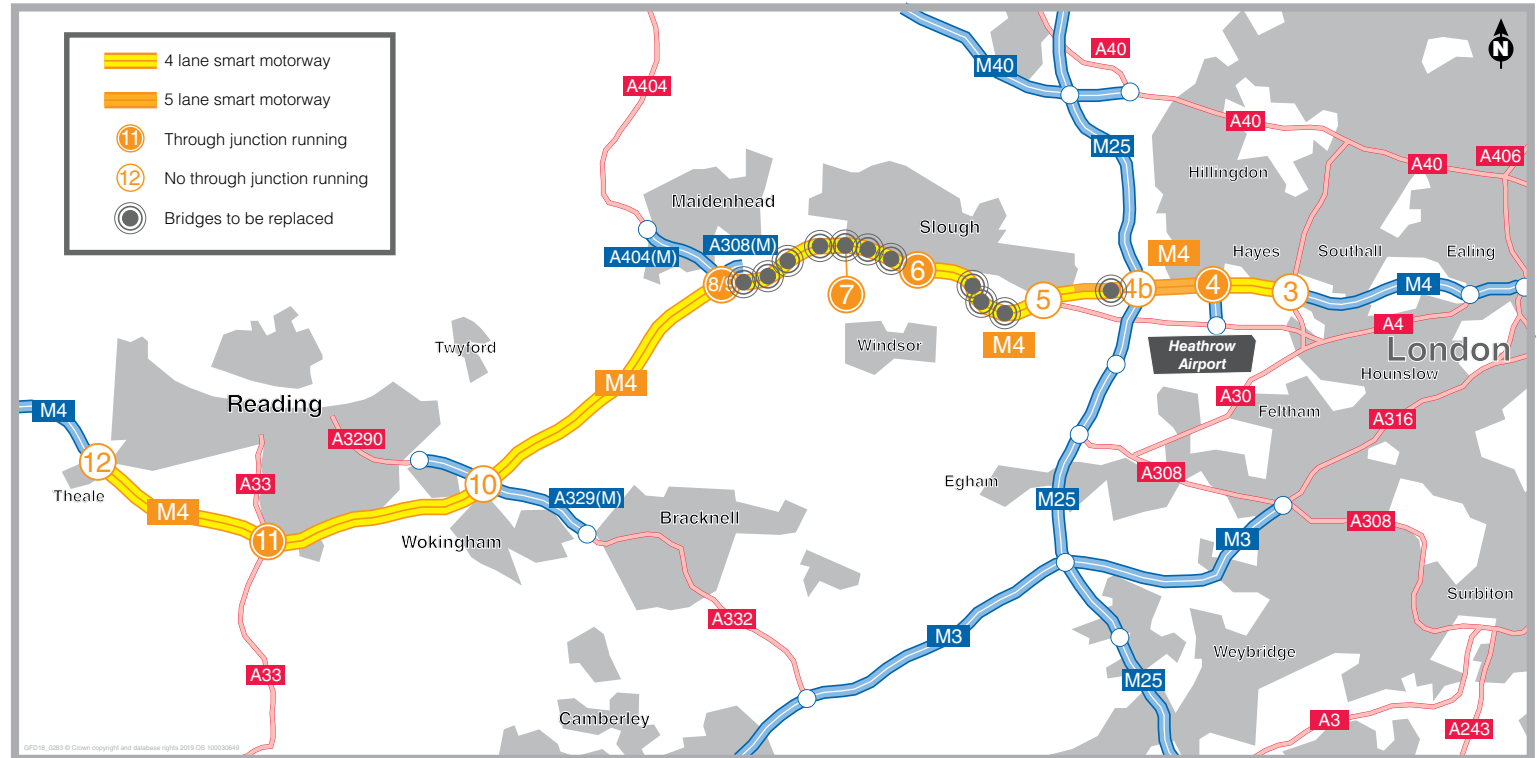
# What work is planned?

This is the longest smart motorway project in England to date (51km, 32 miles).

We started construction between junctions 8/9 and 10 in July 2018 and subsequently began enabling work on four bridges between junctions 8/9 and 7. The more complex section of the scheme, progressing east from junctions 8/9 towards junction 3, will commence in May 2019. This section includes significant structures work, including the replacement of 11 bridges.

We have carefully planned the work to minimise disruption to our drivers and communities, however this timetable may change. Any changes will be published on our project web pages.

Visit [www.trafficengland.com](http://www.trafficengland.com) or follow [@HighwaysSEAST](https://twitter.com/HighwaysSEAST) on Twitter for live and future traffic information.



Motorway Link	J12 - 11	J11 - 10	J10 - 8/9	J8/9 - 6	J6 - 5	J5 - 4b	J4b - 3
Start	May 20	May 20	July 18	May 19	Dec 19	May 20	Jul 19
Finish	Dec 20	Dec 20	May 20	Mar 22	Mar 22	Mar 22	Mar 22

# Bridge and structure works

Much of the M4 was originally built as a two-lane dual carriageway, and has been upgraded over the years. Eleven bridges over the motorway need to be replaced to make room for a new lane where there is no existing hard shoulder

To limit disruption, seven of the new bridges will be built next to the existing ones, before the old ones are demolished. These are:

- Ascot Road (A330)
- Monkey Island Lane
- Lake End Road
- Huntercombe Spur
- Wood Lane
- Datchet Road
- Riding Court Road

However, where there is not enough space for this, four of the bridges will be demolished first, then a new bridge will be built in the same place. These are:

- Marsh Lane
- Oldway Lane
- Recreation Ground
- Old Slade Lane

Where the motorway passes over, for example, the River Thames at Bray and the railway line to Windsor, we will need to widen bridges to support the new smart motorway.

Two subways, including at Sipson, and several culverts that run under the motorway will also need work in order to accommodate the upgrade.

Some weekend closures will be required for bridge works. Road diversions for all of these works have been agreed with the local and statutory authorities. Full details will be communicated and posted on our project webpages well in advance.

# What to do if you break down

If you need to stop in an emergency on a smart motorway:

- Use an emergency area and the emergency telephone.
- If you can, leave the motorway at a motorway service area, or the next junction.




If you have to stop in a live lane:



- Put your hazard warning lights on to help other drivers see you and help our control room staff spot you on CCTV.
- If you are in the left hand lane and it is safe to do so, exit the vehicle via the left hand door. Wait behind the barrier if possible.
- If you cannot exit the vehicle, do not feel it is safe to do so or there is no other place of relative safety, remain in the vehicle. Keep your seat belt on and dial 999.



**As soon as Highways England is alerted, our Regional Control Centre will close lanes to protect you and your vehicle until help arrives.**

# Safety, red sign and incidents

We use a red  symbol to show that a lane is closed because of an incident or people working on the road:

- This provides access for emergency services.
- You will see red  symbols on a gantry sign over the motorway or on a gantry sign at the side of the motorway.
- Driving in a lane with a red  symbol is dangerous and drivers must **not** use it.

Incident management is controlled by teams in our control centres:

- Incidents will be detected by traffic sensors, CCTV or calls from the public.
- The control centre will set signs to protect incidents and clear an access route for emergency vehicles.
- Control centre staff will monitor traffic conditions throughout each incident, ensure signs are set to manage traffic, and will reopen lanes as soon as it is safe to do so.



## Find out more

You can find out more about the plans for junctions 3 to 12 at these exhibitions. Highways England and the design and construction teams will be available to discuss the scheme and answer your questions.

## Drop by to meet the team

Venue	Date	Time
Datchet Women's Institute Hall, The Green, Datchet, Berkshire SL3 9EH	Wednesday 13th March 2019	17:00 – 21:00
Slough Aspire, 350 Edinburgh Avenue, Slough SL1 4TU	Friday 15th March 2019	12:00 – 19:00
Cippenham Community Centre, 90 Earls Lane, Slough SL1 5TD	Monday 18th March 2019	16:00 – 20:00
Heathrow Windsor Marriott, Ditton Road, Slough SL3 8PT	Tuesday 19th March 2019	15:00 – 20:00
Langley Pavilion, Langley Road, Slough, SL3 8BS	Wednesday 20th March 2019	16:00 – 20:00
Yiewsley & West Drayton Community Centre, 228 Harmondsworth Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 9JL	Friday 22nd March 2019	17:30 - 20:00
Hayes & Harlington Community Centre, Albert Road, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 4HR	Saturday 23rd March 2019	12:00 – 16:00
Cranford Community College, High Street, Hounslow TW5 9PD	Thursday 28th March 2019	18:00 – 21:00
Iver Village Hall, Grange Way, Iver, Buckinghamshire SL0 9NW	Monday 1st April 2019	18:30 – 21:00

We will also be holding pop-up exhibitions at shopping centres, supermarkets, business parks, and major employment locations throughout Spring and Summer 2019. Details of these will be posted on our webpages.

# Contact us

**Phone:** 0300 123 5000

**Email:** [M4J3to12SmartMotorways@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:M4J3to12SmartMotorways@highwaysengland.co.uk)

**Mailing Address:** M4 J3-12 Smart Motorway, Highways England,  
2 Colmore Square, Birmingham B4 6BN

**Project web pages:** <https://m4j3to12smartmotorway.commonplace.is/>  
<https://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/m4j3to12>

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