

# M6

## junction 21a to 26

### motorway upgrade

Spring 2021

**W**elcome to the first edition of our M6 junction 21a to 26 project newsletter. Keeping you informed about current motorway upgrade activities, and providing you with an overview of planned work.

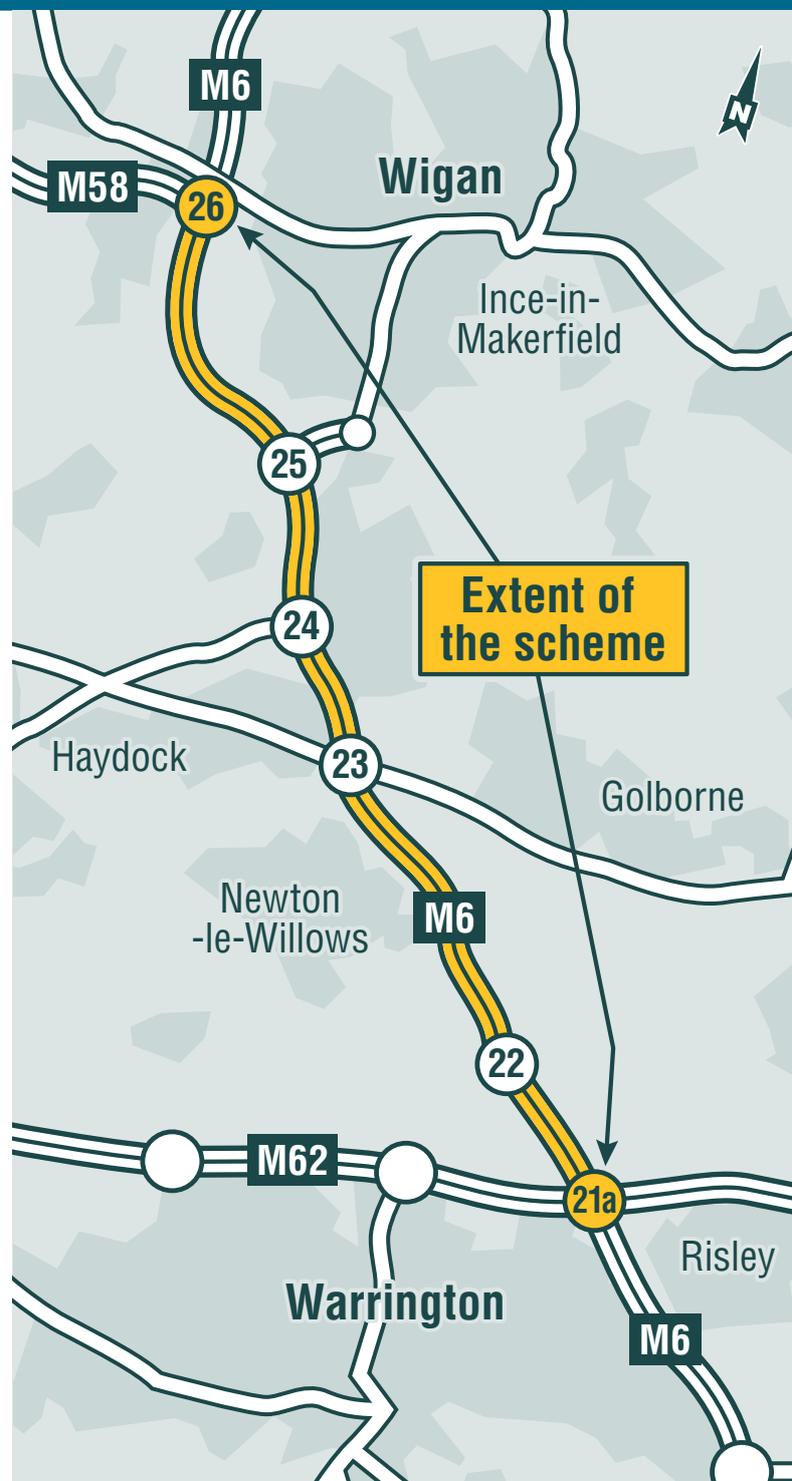
#### Background

The M6 motorway between junctions 21a and 26 is a key strategic route carrying around 120,000 vehicles every day between Lancashire, Merseyside, Cheshire and Greater Manchester. Our upgrade scheme is around 10 miles (16.4km) long and extends from the Croft Interchange at junction 21a, to the Orrell Interchange at junction 26.

During busy periods drivers experience congestion and unreliable journey times, and traffic is predicted to grow. The M6 junction 21a to 26 motorway upgrade project will:

- provide additional capacity by converting the hard shoulder into a new lane for traffic
- reduce congestion and smooth traffic flow
- improve safety and provide more reliable journey times
- install more technology on the road to manage traffic flows and incidents

We'll be starting the main construction work in March 2021, and we expect to complete the project by spring 2023.



## What will this stretch of motorway look like after the upgrade?

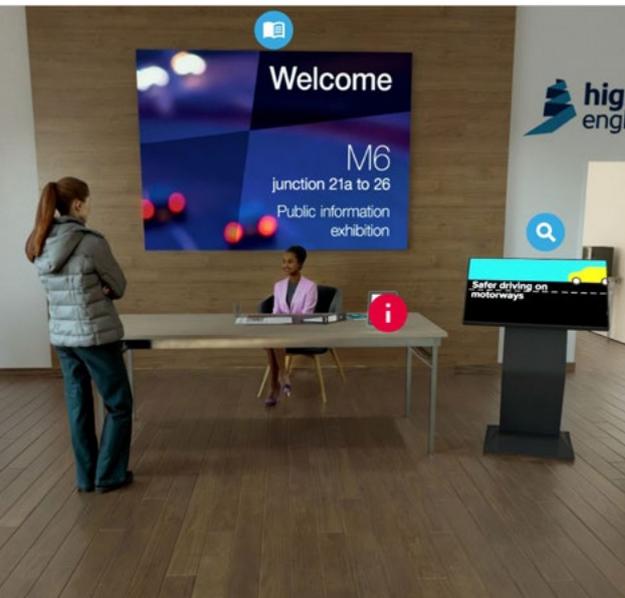
An upgraded motorway uses technology to monitor and control the speed and flow of motorway traffic.

By using CCTV, sensors, electronic signage and variable speed limits, we can keep vehicles moving more smoothly, reducing congestion on the road.

By introducing this technology and extra safety features, including ten new emergency areas, we can convert the hard shoulder into a permanent running lane. This provides motorists with 30 percent additional capacity in both directions.

Adding the extra capacity in this way also helps us to reduce our environmental impact. It removes the need for the additional land that would be needed if we widened the road. It is less costly than widening, and upgrades can be completed much more quickly.

For information about driving on motorways, including those that have been upgraded, please visit [highwaysengland.co.uk/road-safety/driving-on-motorways](https://highwaysengland.co.uk/road-safety/driving-on-motorways)



### Virtual public information exhibition

To obtain further information on the scheme you can visit our virtual exhibition at [M6j21a26.virtual-engage.com](https://M6j21a26.virtual-engage.com). This site will be available for the whole duration of the scheme

### Sign up for future updates

We plan to send out our next update in summer. Future updates will be in the form of an e-newsletter which you can sign up to on our webpage: [highwaysengland.co.uk/m6-j21a-26](https://highwaysengland.co.uk/m6-j21a-26), it's just one of the ways we're helping to protect the environment. If you need a hard copy please contact us and let us know. You can also follow us on Twitter [@HighwaysNWEST](https://twitter.com/HighwaysNWEST)

## COVID-19

Please be assured that we have strict safeguarding measures on site to prevent the spread of Covid-19. We will be closely monitoring the ongoing situation and we will continue to follow the government's current guidelines. We will adapt our plans to take account of any changes, keeping our workforce and road users safe.



## What's next

Our scheme is approximately 10 miles long, and considering feedback from customers, we will be working in phases starting from junction 24 to junction 26. This will reduce the length of narrowed lanes to 5 miles minimising any potential for disruption to journeys.

The main construction work is to start from March 2021 and we expect to complete the work by spring 2023. For the safety of road users and our workforce, we will need to use some traffic management measures. This will include narrowed lanes with a reduced speed limit. Installing narrow lanes allows us to retain three lanes of traffic during the daytime, maintaining the current capacity, while still allowing us the safe space we need to work.

Reduced speed limits are necessary for the safety of both road users and our road workers. Roadworks create a different environment for drivers in which reactions and behaviour change, for that reason, a lower speed limit is necessary. This will normally be 50mph and, when possible – such as a prolonged holiday period, the speed limit will be increased to 60mph. A 50mph limit over the length of the initial work area will only add 3 minutes additional travelling time.

To install the narrowed lanes, overnight closures (from 9pm until 6am) are required on both carriageways of

the M6 between junctions 23 and 26 on the following dates:

- **M6 southbound** between junctions 26 and 23 – **Tuesday 6, Thursday 8 and Wednesday 14 April**
- **M6 northbound** between junctions 23 and 26 – **Wednesday 7, Friday 9 and Tuesday 13 April**

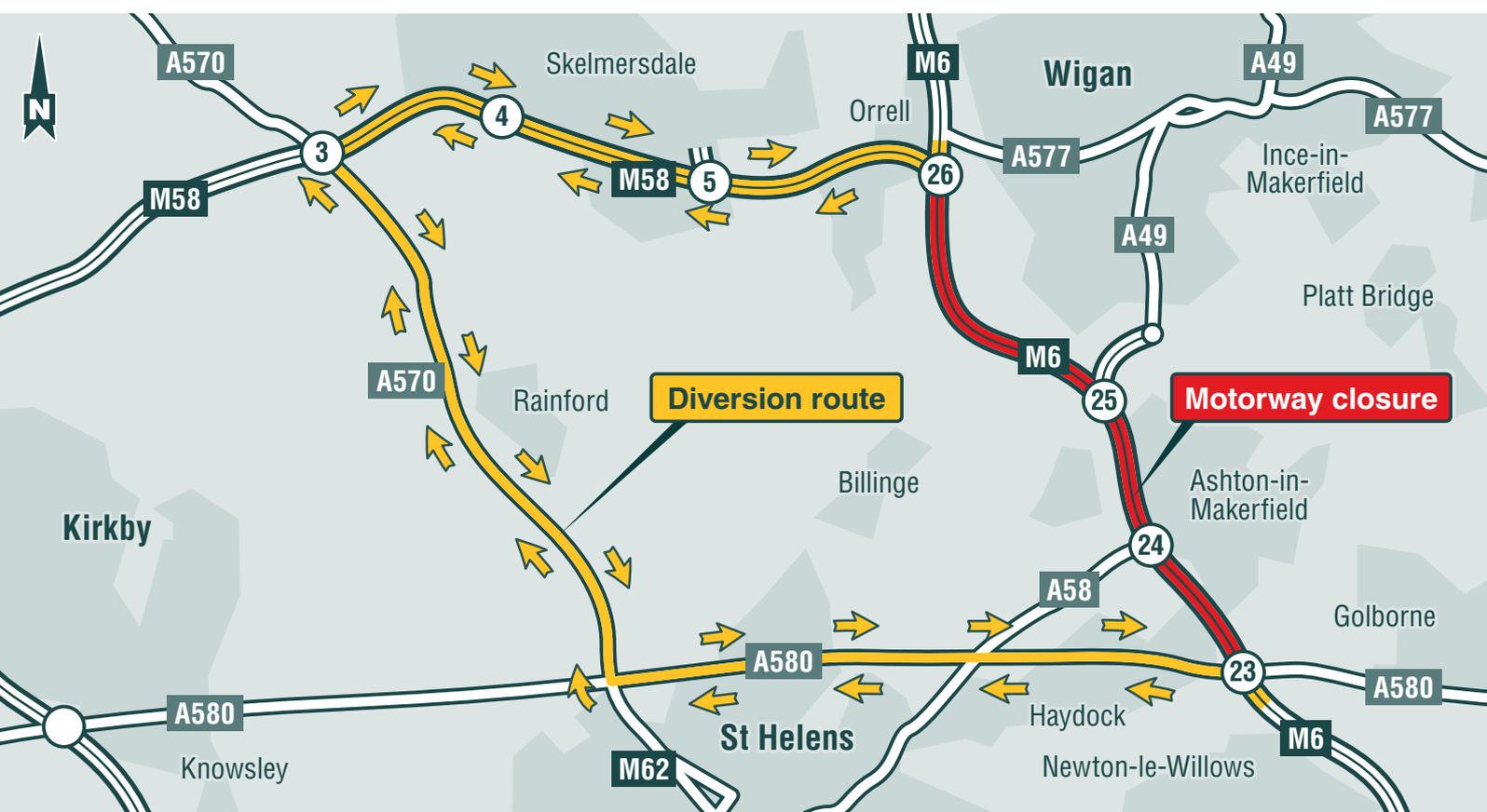
As the work progresses, further overnight closures are needed to adjust the narrowed lanes and working area. Signed diversion routes will be in place and for more information, please see the map below.

It's estimated the diversion routes will add an average of 13 minutes to your journey time.

We will provide a **24/7 free recovery service** throughout our roadworks, assisting any stranded vehicles that have broken down within our work area.

### Have your say

We welcome your thoughts and feedback on the scheme. Visit our M6 junction 21a to 26 web page to have your say using our feedback tool. The tool includes an interactive map, which enables you to click on a location to make a specific comment, or you can give us more general feedback.



If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.



## Contact us

If you'd like any more information about the project, please visit our project webpage at [highwaysengland.co.uk/m6-j21a-26](https://highwaysengland.co.uk/m6-j21a-26)

You can sign up to receive weekly email updates about our planned closures by emailing [M6j21a26@costain.com](mailto:M6j21a26@costain.com)

If you have any questions, you can contact us by:

- phone on **0300 123 5000** (24-hour Customer Contact Centre)
- email at [M6j21a26@costain.com](mailto:M6j21a26@costain.com)
- post at **M6 junction 21a to 26 Project Team, Highways England, 2 Colmore Square, Birmingham, B4 6BN**

Scan this QR code with your smartphone to go straight to our webpage



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