

September 2018 news bulletin

Welcome to our second monthly information bulletin which we will use to keep the local community informed of forthcoming works taking place between junctions 3 and 12 of the M4 as we upgrade to a smart motorway.

Traffic management (TM) and narrow lanes were deployed between junctions 8/9 and 10 during overnight closures in late July & early August ahead of main construction starting this month and increasing through the autumn.

We are currently focused on central reservation works, and we will be extending the TM out towards junctions 8/9 in mid-September and towards junction 10 in early October. Other enabling works to allow for this, including vegetation clearance, are also underway.

NB: In the event of poor weather conditions or other issues out of our control, planned works may be postponed at short notice. If works complete ahead of schedule the motorway may reopen early. Signage will be in place to update road users of changes.



Works and traffic management underway on the M4

What's happening on the M4 project during September?

Overnight closures of the M4 in September

Full closures of the motorway are currently planned between junctions 8/9 and 10 as follows:

- **Saturday 15th September** 22:00 - 05:00 westbound only
- **Sunday 16th September** 22:00 - 05:00 east and west
- **Monday 17th September** 22:00 - 05:00 eastbound only

Diversion routes will be in place via the A404M, A4, A3290 and A329M. For more information on other M4 works and closures visit: www.trafficengland.com

Carrying out construction works at night

We carry out various works at night in order to minimise disruption to road users during peak traffic hours. We also have to do certain works at night if it is not possible to complete these during daylight hours. Some of these essential works can be noisy for which we apologise for any inconvenience. Please do get in touch if you have any concerns about works at night.

Works for the project are being carried out under the Development Consent Order granted in September 2016 and with local consent under Section 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974.

Vegetation clearance work underway

One of the most important activities taking place at present is clearing and maintaining vegetation. This is required to create space and facilitate construction of the permanent works and install the technology for the new smart motorway. Due to limited space between the motorway fence and hard shoulder this often (but not always) requires complete clearance within the highway boundary.

We are also clearing vegetation along the fence line to allow CCTV and temporary power cables to be connected. There are however areas of retained vegetation which are being left where there is sufficient room to allow this and these areas will be retained throughout construction.

All works are carried out under strict guidelines and monitored to minimise impact on local wildlife and the amenity of local residents. Please do contact us with any concerns about vegetation clearance near your home.

Emergency areas



One of the central elements of the smart motorway programme is the conversion of the hard shoulder to a running lane for traffic, adding additional capacity to the motorway. Naturally we have had a lot of questions from our customers about this significant change. The key things to remember are:

1. There will be new high visibility emergency areas with emergency telephones on the smart motorway. These places of relative safety will be every 1.12 miles on average (no more than 1.6 miles apart). If you are driving at 60mph you will pass one approximately once a minute.
2. If you have to stop in a live traffic 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 and call 999. 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.
3. Incidents will be detected by traffic sensors, CCTV or calls from the public. The control centre will set signs (including the red X sign) to close lanes to protect incidents and clear an access route for emergency vehicles.
4. Driving in a lane with a red X sign is dangerous and drivers **must** not use them under any circumstances.

Who's who in the project?



Highways England is the wholly government owned company that operates, maintains and improves England's strategic road network, including the M4.



The Balfour Beatty Vinci Joint Venture is the lead construction supplier for the project. The two companies are global leaders in infrastructure delivery.



The Arcadis Jacobs Joint Venture is the design consultant for the project. The firms are specialists in engineering design for built & natural assets.

In addition to the three main project delivery partners, there are many more companies and contractors (including small and medium sized enterprises) involved in the project. The project will employ its workforce from all over the UK and will support apprenticeships and work experience. It will also engage with the local community to share knowledge and encourage careers in engineering.

Construction timescales for the M4 smart motorway project

Motorway Link	J12 - 11	J11 - 10	J10 - 8/9	J8/9 - 6	J6 - 5	J5 - 4b	J4b - 3
Start	May 20	May 20	Sept 18	May 19 ¹	Dec 19	Oct 19	Jan 20
Finish	Feb 22	Jan 22	May 20	Dec 21	Mar 22	Mar 22	Mar 22

1. Mobilisation work to 4 structures between junction 7 and junctions 8/9 will also start in autumn 2018

To minimise disruption to our customers we will need to work on different sections of the motorway at different times. Our current intention for the phasing of construction is to start at junctions 8/9 and progress west towards junction 10. In tandem, we will start work on four bridges between junctions 8/9 and junction 7. The more complex section of the scheme, progressing east from junction 8 to junction 3, will be started in May 2019.

During construction, narrow lanes and reduced speed restrictions will be put in place to create a smooth and safe flow of traffic through the works and to protect workers. Additionally, traffic management barriers will be needed. Three narrow lanes will be available for road users during peak hours. Wherever possible, noisier works will be undertaken during daytime hours to reduce disturbance. Core working hours will be from 08:00 to 19:00 on weekdays (excluding bank holidays) and from 07:00 to 16:00 on Saturdays. There will be temporary closures of the carriageway and slip roads at night on some occasions. In these instances, the closure will be advertised in bulletins and online, and advance warning signs and clearly signed diversions will be put in place.

Find out more

You can find out more about the plans by visiting our website at: www.highwaysengland.co.uk/m4j3to12 or following the South East regional twitter feed [@highwaysSEAST](https://twitter.com/highwaysSEAST)

You can also email us at: M4J3to12smartmotorways@highwaysengland.co.uk, call on 0300 123 5000 or write to: M4 J3-12 Smart Motorway, Highways England, 2 Colmore Square, Birmingham B4 6BN.