

News story: Brakes, tyres and road wear call for evidence launched

The government today launches a call for evidence on the impact of emissions from brakes, tyres and road wear.

Air quality has improved significantly over recent decades, but we recognise more needs to be done to tackle all sources of pollution. The new [Road to Zero strategy](#) has already set out a clear pathway to zero tailpipe emissions and Government's plans to make the UK the best place in the world to build and own an electric vehicle but it is also vital we also look at the non-exhaust emissions that all road vehicles can produce.

The call for evidence, which was first announced in the new [Clean Air Strategy](#), will look at ways to address the impact tyres and brakes have on air quality and our environment and will help inform the design of future policy.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

While we are all now well aware that fumes from the exhaust pipes on our cars can have a detrimental impact on human health, it is less well known that tiny particles that are released from our brakes and tyres also contribute to air pollution and can harm our precious marine life.

This call for evidence will help us to learn more about how these particles are released as well the actions we can take to reduce their impact. I encourage anyone who has evidence or solutions to share to get involved.

While we're driving our vehicles, the brakes and tyres produce tiny pieces of particulate matter – for example dust and soot – that comes from general wear and tear.

These particles are left on our roads and when it rains can be deposited into our sewers and oceans, leading to harmful consequences to our marine wildlife and food chains.

Transport Minister Jesse Norman said:

Particulate pollution from exhausts has been reduced substantially in recent years. But we must also take action to reduce the very serious pollution caused by the wear of tyres, brakes and roads.

Tackling this issue is crucial for reducing air pollution. We would urge anyone who has expertise in this area to get involved and

share their evidence and views.

The government has worked with the University of Plymouth to improve scientific understanding of the impact these tiny particles and we estimate that emissions from tyre wear may contribute as much as 5-10% to the total amount of plastic in our oceans. But further research and data in this area is still required which is why we have launched this call for evidence to improve the evidence base both nationally and globally.

The [Call for Evidence](#) will run until 28 September 2018.

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Press release: A23 junction upgrade plans revealed

Sections of the A23 at Hooley will have an extra lane added, upgraded traffic signals will be installed and new pedestrian and cycling facilities will be introduced.

Hooley junction is where the M23 motorway terminates, and is a major route from the M25 to Croydon and south London. The 35,000 drivers who use it every day are often held up as motorway traffic merges onto the A23, and queuing traffic frequently blocks access to residential roads.

The improvements seek to address both of these issues, and plans are going on show this weekend (Friday 27 and Saturday 28 July).

Highways England project sponsor Tommy Whittingham said:

These improvements will deliver improvements for drivers and local people alike. The A23 through Hooley is badly in need of

improvements. Residents along this stretch often have access to their driveways blocked by queuing traffic, and drivers using the A23 at Hooley have long suffered with congestion with traffic backing up along the carriageway and onto the local roads.

This scheme will add an extra lane to relieve bottlenecks in each direction, while upgraded traffic lights will help to optimise traffic flow. And a new shared pedestrian and cycle path will give a safe, convenient alternative to the main road.

We are holding two public information events at Hooley Village Hall in Hooley on Friday and Saturday this week so people can come and speak to the project team and find out more about our plans.

The A23 is a major route for drivers travelling to and from south London using the M23 and M25, and the junctions between the A23, Star Lane and Netherne Drive in Hooley are often congested. Queuing traffic often blocks access to residential properties driveways, backing up the main carriageway.

The scheme includes:

- widening the northbound A23 from Dean Lane Junction to Netherne Drive to two lanes
- widening the southbound A23 from Netherne Drive to the Esso petrol station to two lanes
- upgrading traffic signals to improve traffic flow at the A23 junctions with Netherne Drive, Star Lane and Church Street
- enhanced pedestrian and cycling facilities with a new shared footway and cycleway. This will give cyclists an alternative to the main carriageway.

The improvements will increase capacity and help smooth traffic flow on the A23 between Dean Lane to Netherne Drive, and provide journey time savings of around two and a half minutes per vehicle. The upgrade will also help to reduce congestion during the peak hours and improve traffic flow for vehicles entering and exiting the A23. The scheme will also reduce the likelihood of traffic backing up on to junctions further along the A23. The scheme design and traffic modelling indicates that it will not move the problem further along the A23.

Drivers, local residents and business owners are invited to find out more about the plans, which will be on show at three public exhibitions at Hooley Village Hall this Friday and Saturday. To find out more about the events, please visit the [project web page](#).

Work is scheduled to start next summer, with the upgraded junction fully open to traffic in Spring 2020.

Anyone interested in the scheme can visit the project page on the Highways England [website](#), where they can also sign up for updates.

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: Near miss with a road vehicle at Plainmoor User Worked Crossing](#)

At around 09:37 hrs on 7 July 2018, the driver of a York to Scarborough train reported a near miss with a road vehicle at Plainmoor User Worked Crossing. The car driver had previously telephoned the signaller and obtained permission to cross.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances surrounding this incident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will be made available on our website in the next few weeks.

[News story: Curriculum programme pilots to reduce time spent planning lessons](#)

A multi-million pound fund to make it easier for teachers to find high-quality lesson plans and resources and cut unnecessary workload has been launched today by School Standards Minister Nick Gibb.

The [first round of £7.7million Curriculum Fund](#) will provide grants to schools to help them share teaching resources with other schools, saving teachers from having to repeatedly create lessons plans from scratch.

It comes after research by the Department for Education found that many teachers feel lesson planning creates unnecessary workload and that they want easy access to practical resources that will help them put together innovative and effective lessons.

The initiative is the latest step by the department to meet the Government's manifesto commitment to provide schools with tools that will cut unnecessary workload, freeing them up to focus on what matters most – teaching.

Schools Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Having easy access to high quality curriculum resources will not just save teachers time, it will make it easier for them to deliver knowledge-rich and engaging lessons that help young people to acquire the knowledge and skills they need.

This fund will help great schools share resources that they know are effective. This will help to spread excellent teaching practices and continue the drive to raise standards in our schools.

Since the £7.7m Curriculum Fund was first announced in January, the Department for Education has worked with school leaders, teachers and experts from across the profession to understand how teachers plan lessons and use resources such as textbooks – with research showing that teachers feel lesson planning continues to result in unnecessary workload. Schools can apply from today for grant funding to share their high quality curriculum programmes.

The Education Secretary Damian Hinds has pledged to champion the teaching profession and to work with teaching unions and Ofsted to reduce workload in schools – and in [his first keynote speech at the Association of School and College Leaders' \(ASCL\) conference](#) in March 2018 he set out his intention to use the Curriculum Fund to make it easier for schools and teachers to share and access high-quality resources.

The opening of the application window, which closes on 17 September, follows a number of recent announcements to help schools free their staff from unnecessary and time-consuming tasks, including: