

Press release: First phase of major A1 improvement to go live

From Friday (22 September) drivers will benefit from the extra capacity and improved road information on the six mile section between Leeming and Catterick.

Once finished, the full scheme between Leeming and Barton will complete the missing link of motorway between London and Newcastle, using the M1 and A1 (M), as well as improving journey times and increasing safety.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Upgrading the A1 is a big priority for the Government and this is the latest stage in our broad ranging investment plan for better transport in the north, cutting congestion and journey times.

Highways England project manager, Tom Howard, said:

We are pleased to be able to open this section ahead of the main completion to give drivers the benefits of motorway standards as well as smoother and safer journeys.

This is an important milestone and means we are now halfway to completing this major scheme on this vitally important route.

Over the autumn period our focus will be on the remainder of the project including completing the local access road between Scotch Corner and Brompton-on-Swale and opening the new Fort Bridge which will provide a new east – west link to Catterick for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

Once Fort Bridge is fully open by the middle of November, the next major milestones will be the opening of the motorway between Scotch Corner interchange and junction 56 at Barton, and between Catterick junction and Scotch Corner interchange. The scheme will be fully open by Winter 2017/18.

Complicated ground conditions have impacted on the method used to stabilise the embankment near the River Swale. This has resulted in an extension to the planned completion date. Highways England is working with contractors to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

When fully open, journey times between Leeming and Barton are expected to be reduced by approximately 20 per cent.

For more details, [visit the scheme website](#).

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: Tony Fountain to step down from his role as Chair of Sellafield Ltd](#)

Tony Fountain has accepted an offer to become Chair at Essar Oil, and has therefore decided to step down from his role as Chair of Sellafield Ltd.

He will chair his last Board later this month.

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) will now begin the process of finding a suitable successor to continue the momentum created under Tony's tenure.

Nigel Smith, a senior independent Non-Executive Director with Sellafield Ltd, will cover the role in the interim.

David Peattie, NDA Chief Executive Officer, said:

On behalf of the NDA, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Tony for his excellent leadership and contribution to the clean-up mission at Sellafield. We wish him every success in his new role.

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Press release: Explore the wonders of the Witham in free Wyndham Park event

Habitat improvements at Grantham's Wyndham Park are the stage for a day of free activities helping everyone enjoy the nature on their doorstep.

Environment and conservation experts will be on hand at the award-winning location on Sunday 24 September, offering games, competitions, crafts, wildlife spotting and more.

All activities have been designed to show how easy and fun it is to get closer to nature – and play a part in protecting it.

The event marks the official unveiling of improvements to Wyndham's Park's natural habitat, and a 100m-stretch of the River Witham that flows through it.

Enhancements include an area of stepped decking enabling safe access to a shallow part of the river and new wetland habitat to attract rare species.

All were funded using fishing licence money from the Environment Agency, which is re-invested into rivers, helping to improve facilities for anglers, tackle illegal fishing and encourage more people to take up the sport.

The event will offer a chance to explore the changes to the park's habitat, and discover how they benefit both visitors and wildlife.

Matt Parr, geomorphology technical specialist at the Environment Agency, said:

Few things beat the great outdoors but that doesn't mean you have to escape into the wilderness. Natural wonders can be found right in the heart of your town.

We'll be on hand to help you spot the opportunities, using the beauty of Wyndham Park – and our improvements to the river there – to show how easy and fun it is to get closer to nature.

Organisations taking part in the event include the Environment Agency, South Kesteven District Council, Lincolnshire Rivers Trust, Anglian Water and Rivercare.

It takes place from 12noon to 4.30pm on Sunday 24 September. The date coincides with World Rivers Day, a global celebration of rivers, their value to local communities and the importance of looking after them.

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