

## Press release: A556 'green bridge' is winter wonderland

The £1.15 million bridge was one of 7 constructed across the new £192 million bypass which opened in March. Part farm access track and part wildlife corridor, the bridge, west of Mere, has been provided to maintain connectivity between habitats separated by the new dual carriageway.

When the new bridge was used as the site of the official opening ceremony of the road in March, it had only just been planted with a mixture of hedging and plants.

Now, 11 months later, the extensive planting has given birth to a flourishing green border which is providing a safe passage across the road for badgers, voles and other small animals, insects and birds.

Aerial picture showing the Green Bridge before extensive planting

Aerial picture showing the Green Bridge after extensive planting

Highways England project manager Paul Hampson said:

The green bridge was the centre-piece of our work to ensure the new A556 was the most environmentally-friendly road Highways England has ever built. We are delighted the planting has really taken hold (and as the drone footage shows it is particularly impressive from the air). We are looking forward to watching the bridge bloom for many years to come.

Constructing the bridge cost about £890,000 with a further £273,000 on 'greening work' on the deck, which included planting trees, shrubs and grasses.

The old A556 has also been 'greened' and turned into a £5 million B road with dedicated route for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders featuring a earth border planted with wild flowers to separate it from road traffic.

The project's green measures earned it a prestigious Green Apple Award for Environmental Best Practice last year.

Construction of the new A556 link road, between the M56 and the M6, started in November 2014 and opened in March with the old road – now the B5569 – handed over to Cheshire East Council in November. The scheme has been delivered as part of the Government's £15 billion government investment in motorways and major A roads by 2021 which is being delivered by Highways England as part of the Northern Powerhouse initiative.

## **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.