

# Statement to Parliament: Justice update

Earlier today, I notified the market via the London Stock Exchange group that I would today lay a Statutory Instrument to change the discount rate applicable to personal injury lump sum compensation payments, to minus 0.75%.

Under the Damages Act 1996, I, as Lord Chancellor, have the power to set a discount rate which courts must consider when awarding compensation for future financial losses in the form of a lump sum in personal injury cases.

The current legal framework makes clear that claimants must be treated as risk averse investors, reflecting the fact that they may be financially dependent on this lump sum, often for long periods or the duration of their life.

The discount rate was last set in 2001, when the then-Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, set the rate at 2.5%. This was based on a three year average of real yields on index-linked gilts.

Since 2001, the real yields on index-linked gilts has fallen, so I have decided to take action.

Having completed the process of statutory consultation, I am satisfied that the rate should be based on a three year average of real returns on index-linked gilts. Therefore I am setting it at minus 0.75%. A full statement of reasons, explaining how I have decided upon this rate, will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The Statutory Instrument to effect this change has been laid today, and will become effective on 20 March 2017.

There will clearly be significant implications across the public and private sector. The government has committed to ensuring that the NHS Litigation Authority has appropriate funding to cover changes to hospitals' clinical negligence costs. The Department of Health will also work closely with General Practitioners (GPs) and Medical Defence Organisations to ensure that appropriate funding is available to meet additional costs to GPs, recognising the crucial role they play in the delivery of NHS care.

The government will review the framework under which I have set the rate today to ensure that it remains fit for purpose in the future. I will bring forward a consultation before Easter that will consider options for reform including: whether the rate should in future be set by an independent body; whether more frequent reviews would improve predictability and certainty for all parties; and whether the methodology – which in effect assumes that claimants would invest only in index-linked gilts – is appropriate for the future. Following the consultation, which will consider whether there is a better or fairer framework for claimants and defendants, the government will bring forward any necessary legislation at an early stage.

I recognise the impacts this decision will have on the insurance industry. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Chancellor will meet with insurance industry representatives to discuss the situation.

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## Green Party: Government is targeting disabled to balance its books



27 February 2017

The Green Party is deeply concerned by proposed changes to PIP payments, which will affect more than 160,000 people [1].

George Freeman MP defended the proposal by saying disability benefits should go to “really disabled people” not those “taking pills at home, who suffer from anxiety” [2].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“The Government by its own admission is targeting the disabled to try to balance its books. This ruthless and underhand move is designed simply to cut disability benefits, regardless of the impact on people’s lives.

“The Government is deliberately going against the two tribunals that ruled the payments should have more reach, not less. George Freeman’s defence of these changes was appalling and revealed a lack of understanding and nothing less than discrimination against people who face serious health conditions like anxiety. His comments are part of the terrible stigma that still exists around mental health, and reinforces it.

“With the Spring Budget approaching the Government should urgently reconsider its plans. This will hurt thousands of people, put up more social barriers and restrict them from going about their daily lives. Disabled people should not be penalised and forced to pay for a budget deficit which they did not create.”

Mags Lewis, Green Party disability spokesperson, said:

“Disabled people are already on the brink, having faced vicious cuts, confusing benefit changes, and Government indifference. Now the Government is planning to change the goal posts yet again. As a disabled person, I know these constant onslaughts cause anxiety, hardship, and terror to disabled people’s lives. Why are we seen as an easy target for cuts? We must unite against this onslaught, fight in the courts and be heard by our Government. Enough is enough.”

**Notes:**

1. <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/benefits-cut-change-tory-pip-9906018?service=responsive>
2. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-39097019>

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## [Press release: People urged to have their say before A303 Stonehenge consultation ends](#)

People still have a chance to give their views on proposals to improve the A303 past Stonehenge as part of a major roads package to cut congestion in the south west.

Consultation on the proposals for the Highways England dualling scheme continues until March 5 and anyone who would like to comment can still do so [via the scheme consultation website](#).

Project director Derek Parody said:

The consultation on plans to relieve congestion on the A303 around Stonehenge is ongoing and the feedback we receive from everyone is really important in helping us to develop our proposed option.

We are delighted with the response so far with more than 2,500 people attending our ten information events.

The consultation website is still live and we would urge anyone who would like to comment on the proposals to do so before consultation ends on March 5.

A single carriageway section of the A303 currently runs alongside the Stonehenge monument. The proposed option is to move the road further away from the stones and put it underground in a 1.8 mile dual carriageway tunnel.

This would improve journey times for the tens of thousands of tourists, commuters, businesses and local people that use the road every day, as well as remove the sight and sound of traffic from this part of the world heritage site.

The Highways England proposals also include a bypass for the village of Winterbourne Stoke and improvements to existing junctions between the A303 and the intersecting A345 and A360 north-south roads. The upgrade will develop the A303 corridor into a high quality, high performing route linking the M3 in the south east and the M5 in the south west, improving journeys for millions of people.

Following consultation the preferred route will be announced later in 2017 and is subject to the completion of statutory procedures for development consent.

## **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.

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# **[Press release: Planned roadworks in Yorkshire and the Humber: summary for Monday 27 February to Sunday 5 March 2017](#)**

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of Friday 24 February and could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible.

## **M1 junction 30 Barlborough**

The northbound entry slip road at junction 30 will be fully closed overnight on Monday 27 February for survey works. The closures will take place between 8pm and 6am, and drivers will be able to follow clearly signed diversion routes.

## **M1 Junction 32 Thurcroft to Junction 35a**

## **Stocksbridge**

The hard shoulder is currently closed in both directions as part of the smart motorway scheme between junctions 32 and 34. The northbound carriageway will be closed between the slip roads at junction 33 overnight for two nights from Saturday 4 March. The northbound exit slip road at junction 32 will be closed on Thursday 2 March. The southbound entry slip road at junction 34 will be closed overnight for seven nights from Monday 27 February. The southbound exit slip road at junction 33 will be closed overnight for seven nights from Monday 27 February. There will be narrow lanes and a 50mph speed limit until the project is completed in March 2017. The closures will take place between 8pm and 6am, and drivers will be able to follow clearly signed diversion routes.

### **M62 junction 22 to junction 23 Outlane**

The westbound carriageway will be reduced to a single lane overnight for four nights from Tuesday 28 February for road marking works. The closure will take place between 9pm and 6am.

### **M62 junction 22 Rishworth Moor**

The eastbound entry slip road will be fully closed overnight on Monday 27 February for electrical works. The closures will take place between 8pm and 6am, and drivers will be able to follow clearly signed diversion routes.

### **M62 junction 24 Ainley Top**

The westbound exit slip road will be fully closed overnight on Tuesday 28 February for electrical works. The closures will take place between 8pm and 6am, and drivers will be able to follow clearly signed diversion routes.

### **M621 junction 2 to junction 2a Cemetery Road Bridge**

The clockwise exit slip road at junction 2 will be fully closed overnight on Tuesday 28 February for electrical works. The clockwise entry slip road at junction 2a will be fully closed overnight on Thursday 2 March for electrical works. The closures will take place between 9pm and 6am, and drivers will be able to follow clearly signed diversion routes.

### **A1M junction 37 to junction 36 Warmsworth**

The southbound carriageway will be fully closed overnight for four nights from Thursday 2 March for barrier works. The closures will take place between 9pm and 6am, and drivers will be able to follow clearly signed diversion routes.

## **A63 South Cave**

The westbound entry and exit slip roads will be fully closed overnight on Thursday 2 March for routine works. The closures will take place between 8pm and 6am, and drivers will be able to follow clearly signed diversion routes.

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## **[Press release: Planned roadworks in Central Southern England: weekly summary for Monday 27 February to Sunday 5 March 2017](#)**

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 24 February but could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible.

### **M3 junctions 2 (M25) to 4a Farnborough, Hampshire: smart motorway improvement**

Work to reduce congestion and improve journey times continues this week with narrow lanes a 50mph speed limit in place on both carriageways between junctions 2 and 4a, with a free recovery service operating 24 hours a day.

The southbound carriageway between junctions 2 and 4a including the M25 junction 12 entry slip to the M3 southbound and M25 junction 12 anti-clockwise link road to the M3 southbound including junctions 2, 3 and 4 entry slips and junctions 3, 4 and 4a exit slips will be closed overnight, between 8pm and 5.30am on Monday 27 February for four nights. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via:

- M3 southbound junction 2 to M25 junction 13 via A30 to A327 to M3 junction 4a
- M25 clockwise junction 13 via A30 to A327 to M3 junction 4a

- M25 anti clockwise junction 13 via A30 to A327 to M3 junction 4a

The northbound carriageway between junction 4a and 2 including junction 4a, 4 and 3 entry slips, junction 3 exit slip and the M3 junction 2 slip road to the M25 clockwise and M3 junction 2 link road to M25 anti-clockwise will be closed overnight, between 8pm and 5.30am on Monday 27 February for four nights. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via: M3 junction 4a to A327 to A30 to M25 junction 13 to M3 junction 2 northbound.

The northbound carriageway between junctions 3 and 2 including junction 3 entry slip and M3 junction 2 slip road to the M25 clockwise and M3 junction 2 link road to M25 anti-clockwise will be closed overnight, between 8pm and 7am on Friday 3 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via: M3 junction 3 to A322 to A30 to M25 junction 13 to M3 junction 2 northbound.

The M3 Jct 2 northbound slip road to the M25 clockwise and the link road to the M25 anti-clockwise will be closed over the weekend between 9pm Friday 3 March and 5.30am Monday 3 March. Three clearly signed diversions will be in place via:

- M3 junction 2 northbound slip road to M25 junction 12 clockwise – leave the M3 northbound at junction 4; follow the A331/A31/A3 and then join the M25 at junction 10
- M3 junction 2 northbound (Heathrow) – leave the M3 at junction 3. Follow the A322 to A329M on to the M4 to junction 4B where you can join the M25 at junction 15
- M3 junction 2 northbound (Gatwick) to the anti-clockwise M25 – continue on the M3 northbound to junction 1, then using the roundabout turn around and re-join the M3 at junction 1 southbound to the M3 junction 2 to the M25 anti-clockwise

For further details [visit the scheme page](#).

## **M3 junction 8 Popham, Hampshire: bridge strengthening**

Work to maintain journeys by undertaking bridge bearing and support replacement continues this week. Narrow lanes and a 50mph speed restriction are in place on the link from the M3 southbound to the A303 westbound 24 hours a day until May.

## **M3 junction 9 Winchester, Hampshire: safety barrier**

Work to improve safety by carrying out repairs to the barrier along the southbound carriageway starts this week. Lane closures will be in place on the southbound carriageway overnight, between 10pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 5 nights.

## **M3 junctions 12 Chandlers Ford to 11 Winchester, Hampshire: resurfacing**

Work to improve journeys by resurfacing a section of the M3 northbound carriageway near Otterbourne starts this week. Lane closures will be in place on the northbound carriageway overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 6 nights (Monday to Friday only).

In addition, the northbound entry slip road at junction 12 will be closed overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Thursday 2 March for 3 nights (Monday to Friday only).

## **M3 junctions 12 Chandlers Ford to 13 Eastleigh, Hampshire: signs**

Work to keep road users informed by maintaining the signage along the M3 continues this week. The southbound exit slip road at junction 13 will be closed overnight, between 9pm and 6am, until Wednesday 1 March (Monday to Friday only). A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the Chilworth Roundabout.

## **M4 junctions 5 Slough to 6 Windsor, Berkshire: street lighting**

Work to maintain road user safety by carrying out maintenance to the street lighting along the M4 continues this week. Lane closures will be in place on the east and westbound carriageways overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 9 weeks (Monday to Friday only).

In addition, the eastbound carriageway between the slips at junction 5 will be closed overnight, between 9pm and 6am, during the same period. Traffic will be diverted down and across the junction.

## **M4 junctions 6 Windsor to 7 Maidenhead, Berkshire: signs**

Work to keep road users informed by maintaining the signage along the M4 continues this week. Lane closures will be in place on the east and westbound carriageways overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Tuesday 28 February for 5 nights (Monday to Friday only).

## **M4 junction 7 Maidenhead, Berkshire: surveys**

Work to improve journeys by carrying out surveys in preparation for converting the M4 into a Smart Motorway continues this week. A lane closure will be in place on the southbound Huntercombe Spur overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 5 nights.



## **M4 junction 8/9 Maidenhead, Berkshire: drainage**

Work to maintain road user safety by carrying out maintenance to the drainage system at the junction finishes this week. Lane closures will be in place on all approaches to the junction overnight, between 9pm and 6am, until Tuesday 28 February.

## **M4 junction 8/9 Maidenhead to 10 Wokingham, Berkshire: surveys**

Work to improve journeys by carrying out surveys in preparation for converting the M4 into a smart motorway continues this week. Lane 1 of the westbound carriageway will be closed overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 2 weeks (Monday to Friday only).

## **M4 junction 10 Wokingham, Berkshire: bridge reconstruction**

Work to refurbish the bridge which carries the link roads over the M4 continues this week. Narrow lanes and a 40mph speed limit are in place on the slip roads and a 50mph speed limit is in place on the M4 carriageway until November 2017.

## **M4 junctions 10 Wokingham to 11 Reading, Berkshire: safety barrier**

Work to improve safety by carrying out repairs to the barrier along the M4 near Shinfield continues this week. Lane closures will be in place on the westbound carriageway overnight, between 10pm and 6am, until Friday 17 March (Monday to Friday only).

## **M4 junctions 11 to 12 Reading, Berkshire: resurfacing**

Work to improve journeys by replacing a bridge joint and resurfacing a section of the M4 westbound carriageway between Moto services and junction 12 continues this week. Lane closures will be in place on the westbound carriageway overnight, between 10pm and 6am, until Tuesday 28 February.

The westbound carriageway will then be fully closed overnight, between 10pm and 6am, on from Wednesday 1 March for 9 nights (Monday to Friday only). A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A33 and A4.

## **M4 junction 12 Theale, West Berkshire: surveys**

Work to improve journeys by carrying out surveys in preparation for converting the M4 into a smart motorway continues this week. Lane 1 of the eastbound entry slip road at the junction will be closed overnight, between

9pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 5 nights.

## **M4 junctions 12 Theale to 13 Chieveley, West Berkshire: bridge refurbishment**

Work to refurbish the bridges which carry the M4 over Dark Lane and Ashampstead Road continues this week. Narrow lanes and a 50mph speed limit will be in place on the east and westbound carriageways from Monday 27 February until August.

## **M27 junctions 3 Southampton to 2 Ower, Hampshire: resurfacing**

Work to improve journeys by resurfacing the M27 westbound carriageway finishes this week. Lane closures will be in place on the westbound carriageway with traffic running along the hard shoulder only overnight, between 9pm and 6am, until Friday 3 March. Traffic will also be directed to exit at junction 3, cross the junction and return onto the M27 westbound carriageway via the entry slip road.

## **M27 junction 4 Chilworth, Hampshire: bridge joint**

Work to maintain journeys by undertaking bridge joint replacement starts this week. The link from the M27 westbound carriageway to the M3 northbound carriageway will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 2 weeks (Monday to Sunday). A clearly signed diversion will be in place via Junction 3, accessing the M3 from the M27 eastbound carriageway.

## **M27 junctions 8 Bursledon to 7 Hedge End, Hampshire: resurfacing**

Work to improve journeys by resurfacing the M27 starts this week. The westbound carriageway from junction 8 to junction 7 will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 2 weeks (Monday to Friday). A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A27.

## **M271 Southampton, Hampshire: road markings and signs**

Work to maintain road user safety by renewing the road markings and maintaining the signage along the M271 takes place this week. The southbound links between the A3057 Romsey Road roundabout and the M27, and between the M27 and Lordshill Roundabout will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 6am, on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A3057 Romsey Road and Brownhill Way. In addition, lane closures will be in place on the southbound link from the M27 to the Lordshill Roundabout overnight, between 9pm and 6am, on Tuesday 28 February.

## **A3 Ockham to Guildford, Surrey: road markings and drainage**

Work to maintain road user safety by renewing the road markings and carrying out drainage maintenance takes place this week. The A3 southbound carriageway will be closed from Ockham to the University Interchange at Guildford overnight, between 10pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 2 nights.

In addition, the A3 northbound carriageway will be closed from the University Interchange to Ockham overnight, between 10pm and 6am, from Wednesday 1 March for 2 nights.

A clearly signed diversion for the southbound closure will be in place via B2215 Portsmouth Road, A247, A25 towards Guildford, re-joining the A3 at the University Interchange. The diversion for the northbound closure is the same but in reverse.

## **A3(M) junction 5 Bedhampton, Hampshire: drainage**

Work to maintain road user safety by carrying out drainage maintenance along the A3(M) takes place this week. Lane closures will be in place on the northbound carriageway overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 2 nights.

## **A3(M) junction 3 Waterlooville, Hampshire: drainage**

Work to maintain road user safety by carrying out drainage maintenance along the A3(M) takes place this week. Lane closures will be in place on the northbound carriageway overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Wednesday 1 March for 5 nights (Monday to Friday only).

## **A31 St Leonards, Dorset: drainage**

Work to maintain road user safety by carrying out drainage maintenance along the A31 continues this week. The A31 eastbound carriageway from the Boundary Lane junction to the Woolsbridge roundabout will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 4 nights. Clearly signed diversions will be in place for local residents (Boundary Lane and Hurn Road) and for heavy goods vehicles (west along the A348, east along the B3073 and north up the A338).

In addition lane 1 of the eastbound carriageway between the Palmersford and Boundary Lane roundabouts will be closed overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Friday 3 March for 5 nights (Monday to Friday only).

## **A34 Winchester to Sutton Scotney, Hampshire: drainage**

Work to maintain road user safety by carrying out drainage maintenance starts

this week. Lane closures will be in place on the northbound carriageway overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 2 nights.

## **A34 Bullington Cross to Highclere, Hampshire: resurfacing and road marking**

Work to improve road user's journeys by resurfacing a section of the A34 northbound carriageway continues this week. The A34 northbound carriageway will be closed from the A303 (Bullington Cross) to the A343 (Wash Common) overnight, between 10pm and 6am, until Monday 6 March (Monday to Friday only). A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A303, Andover and A343.

## **A34 Drayton to Didcot, Oxfordshire: resurfacing**

Work to improve road user's journeys by resurfacing a section of the A34 southbound carriageway starts this week. The A34 southbound will be closed from the A415 Marcham Interchange to the A4185 Chilton Junction overnight, between 10pm to 6am, from Monday 27 February for 12 nights (Monday to Friday only). A clearly signed diversion will be in place from the A420 Botley Interchange, the west on the A420, south on the A338 to Wantage, then east back towards Chilton/Milton.

## **A34 Oxford, Oxfordshire: surveys and street lighting**

Work to improve journeys by carrying out surveys of the drainage system along the A34 continues this week. The northbound entry slip road at the A420 Botley Interchange will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 6am, on Tuesday 28 February. A clearly signed diversion will be in place south via the Hinksey Hill junction and return.

In addition, work to maintain road user safety by carrying out maintenance to the street lighting at the A44 Peartree Interchange continues this week. The southbound entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 5 nights. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the Oxford ring-road, re-joining the A34 at the Hinksey Hill junction.

## **A303 Popham to Micheldever, Hampshire: drainage**

Work to maintain road user safety by carrying out drainage maintenance along the A303 takes place this week. Lane closures will be in place on the east and westbound carriageways overnight, between 9pm and 6am, from Monday 27 February for 7 nights (Monday to Friday only).

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