

[It's a hat-trick! Another boost to the North East economy as third A19 upgrade opens to traffic](#)

The A19 Downhill Lane scheme will provide extra capacity on the junction between the A19 and the A1290 in Sunderland, supporting the regional economy and providing access to the planned development of the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) to the north of Nissan's motor manufacturing plant.

The upgrade is part of the Government's drive to build back better from the pandemic and level up regions across the country and follows closely on the heels of last year's opening of the [A19 Norton to Wynyard](#) and [A19 Testo's improvements](#).

National Highways marked the milestone today (Wednesday, 16 March) by cutting a ribbon to open a new pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian footbridge over the main carriageway. Key stakeholders, including delivery partners Costain, scheme designers Jacobs, Sunderland City Council and South Tyneside Council were in attendance.

Minister for Roads Baroness Vere of Norbiton said:

I'm delighted to see this multi-million pound scheme open for traffic. Our funding will provide a fantastic boost for the North East's economy, make it easier for millions of people in the region to get around, and is a great example of how this Government is levelling up the country by enabling better access to opportunities and employment.

National Highways Chief Executive Nick Harris said:

This is the third upgrade of the A19 we have been able to open to traffic in the last eight months and another important milestone in the substantial investment being made in the North East's major A roads.

The International Advanced Manufacturing Park is predicted to create up to 7,850 new jobs and attract £295 million of investment by 2026/27. Having the infrastructure in place to support that is key.

These improvements will make a major contribution to the region, from providing better journeys to and from the region's ports and Teesside airport, to improving journey times for local people who can get home more quickly and safely to their families or to and from their workplace.

Our roads are not only the lifeblood of our economy, they support local as well as national businesses, and are vital to enable our emergency services to support local communities.

L-R: Paul Muir, Sunderland City Council, Helen Burrow, National Highways project manager, Trevor Male, South Tyneside Council, Cllr Joan Atkinson, Deputy Leader, South Tyneside Council, and Tim Gamon, National Highways Regional Delivery Director at the event.

The [A19 Downhill Lane](#) project has seen the construction of a full roundabout at the junction and improvements made to the existing A19. New traffic signals have been installed at the junction, a new road bridge has been installed and a bridge provided for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

National Highways has also improved the adjoining rights of way helping to support and encourage non-polluting and healthier travel options.

The improved access off the A19 encourages drivers to stay on the strategic road, more suited to moving larger volumes of traffic, and off the local highway network, improving the environment for those that live and work in the area.

Cllr Jim Foreman, Lead Member for Housing and Transport, South Tyneside Council, said:

It's fantastic to see this work completed and for drivers to start experiencing the benefits of this scheme.

The A19 is the economic artery linking South Tyneside to the wider region and beyond, and these improvements are a major boost.

As well as increasing capacity, reducing congestion and improving connectivity to the local road network, this scheme is vital to promote economic growth and to ensure that we can unlock the full potential of the IAMP and other employment and investment opportunities.

Located next to the Nissan plant, IAMP is a joint venture between Sunderland City Council and South Tyneside Council to offer a place for advanced manufacturing and an attractive location for national and international investment.

Cllr Martin Gannon, Chair of the North East Joint Transport Committee, said:

We are pleased to support the A19 Downhill Lane junction improvement scheme that Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils have been working hard to develop. It's great to see that one of the schemes key aims is to increase sustainable walking and cycling

links to the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) via a linked pedestrian bridge across the A19. We also commend the project team on their efforts to make carbon savings by re-purposing existing road materials on the development.

The works will bring tremendous socio-economic benefit to the region by greatly improving access to a number of large manufacturing plants in the North East, meaning there will be better connectivity to key employment sites, as well as creating thousands of new jobs through the extension of the IAMP- something which will move us closer to achieving our vision of becoming a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.

More than half a million people hours were worked on the A19 Downhill Lane project, with 60 per cent of the workforce made up from locally based staff.

Some £3 million of savings were achieved by delivering the project at the same time as the work on A19 Testo's Junction, and £150,000 was saved reusing materials such as the stone from the site access roads at Testo's.

In addition, 100,000 tonnes of earth were re-used from the £75m A19 / A1058 Coast Road scheme delivered in 2019, while 44,000 cubic metres of material were re-used at Washington Road.

The new steel bridge for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians weighs 550-tonnes.

Just under 600 steel columns were installed as part of the foundations for the new road bridge, which is 37 metres long and 14.5 metres wide.

Elsewhere in the region, National Highways is carrying out a range of improvements along the A1 corridor between Newcastle upon Tyne and Gateshead by increasing the number of lanes in each direction between junction 74 at Scotswood and junction 79 at North Brunton as well as between junction 65 at Birtley and junction 67 at Coal House. Both projects will improve capacity and safety as well as unlock potential future growth.

View a video about the A19 Downhill Lane upgrade:

[A19 Downhill Lane](#)

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Fisheries and Seafood Scheme Relaunch

News story

The Fisheries and Seafood Scheme will relaunch in April, continuing to provide support to England's seafood sector, coastal communities and marine environment.



This April the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) will relaunch the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme (FaSS). This will continue to provide certainty to the seafood sector, with funding available up to April 2025.

The new iteration of the scheme will deliver investment to safeguard the long-term sustainability, resilience and prosperity of the seafood sector across England.

The scheme will have simplified guidance – reflecting feedback from the first year – and will continue to evolve and improve throughout its lifetime.

If you have a project you would like to progress through the scheme, please do look out for the new guidance which will be published on MMO's website once the scheme is launched.

Please note the relaunched FaSS will replace the existing scheme, which will no longer be considering new applications this financial year. Any project you would like to progress will be considered under the new scheme.

Published 16 March 2022

Work to reduce flood risk in Bishopthorpe now complete

Press release

The Environment Agency has completed work on a £3.4m project in the village of Bishopthorpe in York, better protecting 198 properties from the risk of flooding.



Completed flood defence wall in Bishopthorpe

Work on the scheme started in May 2021 to construct a 180 metre flood defence wall running along Chantry Lane and the boundary of the Bishopthorpe Palace grounds, incorporating a six metre-deep steel barrier underground; a floodgate across the bottom of Chantry Lane and water flow mechanism to prevent river water from backing up into the drainage system.

Flood gate being installed at Bishopthorpe

The scheme also protects properties on Main Street, therefore helping to protect access for residents in the village.

In addition, 50 trees have been planted locally, with plans in place for over a hundred more and hedging to compensate for the 18 trees which had to be removed to build the flood wall.

Chris Ashcroft at the Environment Agency said:

The recent flooding in Yorkshire highlights the importance of projects like this one in Bishopthorpe, which will help make York more resilient to climate change and better protect 2,000 homes and businesses from flooding. We would like to thank residents for their patience and cooperation while we have been building these vital community flood defences.

This work forms part of the £45 million York Flood Alleviation Scheme, which is made up of 18 smaller 'cells' like this one.

Last year, a record £5.2 billion government investment to create around 2,000 new flood and coastal defences and better protect 336,000 properties across England was announced.

Over £146 million has been allocated in 2021-22 to 150 flood schemes across Yorkshire.

The construction of flood defences are just one of the tactics that can be deployed to protect people and property. Residents are urged to sign up for free flood warnings to get vital time to save themselves and their possessions from the devastating effects of flooding by visiting www.gov.uk/flood or contacting Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

They can also check their flood risk online at <https://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk>.

Published 16 March 2022

UK's commitment to the rights of women and girls: National Statement to the UN Commission on the Status of Women

Madam Chair,

I want to begin my statement by addressing the situation in Ukraine.

Russia's assault on Ukraine is an unprovoked, premeditated attack against a sovereign democratic state.

The UK and our international partners stand united in condemning the Russian government's reprehensible actions, which are an egregious violation of international law and the UN Charter.

Russia's actions should concern everyone at the Commission on the Status of Women. This war of choice will set back human rights and gender equality. As UN Women have said, we know the conflict will affect women and girls differently and disproportionately. A majority of the already 1.5 million refugees are women and girls. Women and girls will be more exposed to the risk of violence, particularly sexual and gender-based violence. We acknowledge the vital work of civil society organisations on the ground in Ukraine; and I am proud that on International Women's Day, we launched new

funding for women's rights organisations and civil society actors working to support the critical needs of women and children both inside and displaced outside of Ukraine.

The UK is committed to preventing sexual violence in conflict, and we are exploring options for strengthening the international consensus on tackling this vital issue.

Madam Chair

Please, allow me to make three points on this year's priority theme.

First, the UK remains steadfast in our commitment to using our COP Presidency to advance gender equality and social inclusion in climate action and finance. This means strengthening implementation of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan, in line with the Glasgow Climate Pact; and supporting the climate leadership of women, girls and marginalised people, while building their resilience to climate impacts. We were delighted that so many governments and other actors came forward – in the run-up to COP26 and at COP26 itself – with commitments to deliver gender-responsive climate policies, programmes and actions. We continue to call on others to do the same.

Second, as we recover from the pandemic, we must reflect on both the new and existing challenges that women and girls have faced.

It is the responsibility of governments, like mine, to take steps to provide the support that women need to recover – in terms of their health, their economic situation and their well-being.

We have launched a range of programmes to support women to build back better, and I am pleased that I have been able to speak about these initiatives during CSW.

My government's priorities include going further still on pay transparency, increasing our support for women entrepreneurs, and identifying ways to get more women into STEM careers.

And third, we look forward to achieving consensus on an ambitious and progressive outcome document that truly delivers for women and girls. We will approach negotiations positively and constructively, with a view to agreeing a text that clearly sets out the issues that climate change causes for women and girls, and the steps that we must all take to tackle it.

We call on all member states to do the same.

We stand ready to work with you.

UN Human Rights Council 49: UK statement for the interactive dialogue with the Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict

The United Kingdom reaffirms its strong support for the work of the Special Representative, as we celebrate 25 years of the Children and Armed Conflict mandate.

The UK remains deeply concerned about the sustained and alarming number of grave violations committed against children.

In Ukraine, Russia's unprovoked and brutal assault has already resulted in hundreds of civilian casualties and deaths, including children. Continued attacks on schools, as well as other civilian infrastructure, demonstrate why we advocate for universal endorsement of the Safe Schools Declaration.

We fully endorse the statement by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, demanding Russia immediately cease its aggression and military actions. This is the only way to ensure the protection of children in Ukraine.

Moreover, persistently high levels of sexual violence against children globally remains concerning, which is why in November 2021, we launched the Call to Action to ensure the rights of children born of sexual violence in conflict.

It is critical the voices of young people are heard and that they shape policy decisions. Our Minister for Africa is hosting a roundtable with young people this month to do just that.

Madam Special Representative,

Could you provide an update on the situation in Ukraine and the work your office is doing to support children and monitor alleged violations?