

Update from National Highways on M4 works

Please find below the letter update that I have received from National Highways concerning works on the M4.

Dear Rt Hon. Sir John Redwood MP

National Emergency Area Retrofit – work set to begin on M4 between junction 10 and junction 12.

We are delivering a government commitment to add more than 150 more emergency areas to motorways across the country including several sections of the M25 and surrounding motorways.

I am writing to update you on what this means for the M4 in your area. Between junctions 10 (Wokingham) and 12 (Theale) we are adding 12 new emergency areas to the existing 10, providing drivers with more places to stop if they need to in an emergency.

The work is expected to start from Tuesday 7 May 2024 and is due to be completed by March 2025. Whilst we will do our utmost to maintain these dates, these dates may be subject to change.

There are major upgrades already underway at junctions 10 and 28 of the M25, as well as regular roadworks for maintenance and renewals. We know just how busy this section of the motorway network is and are working tirelessly to coordinate all this work closely and keep disruption to an absolute minimum. You can find out more about these projects, including a series of planned weekend closures on the M25 junction 10 project on their webpages:
<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/south-east/m25-junction-10/>
<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/south-east/m25-junction-28-improvements/>

To carry out the work safely, lane one (the left lane) on the four-lane motorway, will be closed throughout construction. Lanes two, three and four will remain open with a 50mph speed limit in place. Existing emergency areas through roadworks will remain open and a free recovery service will be in place throughout the roadworks.

The traffic management for the working areas will be installed overnight when the traffic flows are quieter. We always do our best to minimise disruption and we apologise in advance for any inconvenience these works may cause to your constituents.

It may take a few weeks before the roadworks appear as preparatory work is completed. We will regularly publish information about the upgrade and the roadworks on our website at www.nationalhighways.co.uk/emergency-areas.

The new emergency area work will mainly be carried out Mondays to Fridays

from 7am to 7pm. There will be occasions when we need to close lanes, slip roads or the carriageway between junctions for construction activities and deliveries to the work sites, but this will be overnight and at weekends when traffic flows are at their lowest. Should there be a need to close overnight there will be clearly signed diversion routes in place.

We are in close contact with local authorities through coordinated collaborative meetings to minimise the impact of roadworks as much as possible. A summary of all planned closures on the strategic road network is available at: Road closure report – National Highways.

Emergency areas provide a place to stop in an emergency if drivers cannot exit the motorway or stop at a motorway service area. They are clearly signed at regular intervals along the motorway and have bright orange road surfaces to help identify them. At 100 metres long, they have plenty of space for even the largest lorry plus a recovery vehicle and they are equipped with emergency telephones linking directly to our control rooms to get help on the way quickly.

You can find out more about what to do if your vehicle breaks down on the motorway here: <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/road-safety/breakdowns>. This investment in extra emergency areas, along with technology like stopped vehicle detection, more signs, and clear advice about all lane running motorways online and in an updated Highway Code, will help road users feel safe and be safer on our roads.

Through all the work we are doing, we are determined to further improve public confidence in driving on our motorways and to continue to build and operate one of the safest and best performing road networks in the world.

Drivers can visit Driving on the motorways – National Highways for more details on what to do in the event of an emergency, including how to use an emergency area.

We are encouraging drivers to plan their journeys and check before travelling and we would be grateful if you could consider re-sharing our posts and information on your channels and with your audiences to help increase awareness about the work.

For more information you can follow National Highways @highwaysseast and <https://www.facebook.com/HighwaysSEast> .

I hope you find this update useful.

Yours sincerely

National emergency area project sponsor