By email

11 April 2024

To whom this may concern

National Emergency Area Retrofit - work is set to begin on the M25 and surrounding motorways in the next few weeks.

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.

Work to install additional emergency areas is already taking place along the M1 corridor from junction 16 up to junction 35a.

The programme of work in the south will start from 25 April 2024 and all sections are expected to be open by the end of March 2025. I am writing to give you an overview of what this means for the strategic road network.

In the South East over the coming months work will start on:

- M25 between junctions 5 (Sevenoaks) and 7 (Redhill), due to start from 25 April 2024.
- M25 between junctions 23 (South Mimms) and 27 (Epping), due to start from 25 April 2024.
- M3 between junctions 2 (Thorpe) and 4a (Farnborough), due to start from 29 April 2024.
- M4 between junctions 10 (Wokingham) and 12 (Theale), due to start from 7 May 2024.
- M20 between junctions 3 (West Malling) and 5 (Aylesford), due to start from 22 May 2024.
- M27 between junctions 4 (Southampton) and 11 (Fareham), due to start during summer 2024.

Please be aware we do our upmost to maintain these dates, however dates are subject to change, and 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 https://nationalhighways.co.uk/emergency-areas.

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/

We are in close contact with local authorities through coordinated collaborative meetings to minimise the impact of roadworks as much as possible.

To carry out the work safely, lane one (the left lane) on the four-lane motorways listed, 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.

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.

Please do plan your journeys and check before you travel via: 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 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.

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

Please re-share our posts and information on your channels, to help increase awareness about the work with your audiences.

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

I hope you find this update useful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or the project team directly on EAretrofit@nationalhighways.co.uk or by calling: National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Yours sincerely



Felicity Clayton
National emergency area project sponsor