

Our responsibility



Our responsibility

Safety first



► Safety is our first imperative. We are passionate about making our roads as safe as possible for the people who are travelling and working on them. We are proud that the SRN currently comprises some of the safest roads in the world, and we work closely with our supply chain, partners and stakeholders to deliver vital safety improvements and initiatives.

+ Read more about our KPIs on pages 24-28

Our delivery over the year Home Safe and Well



We want everyone who travels and works on our roads to be safe and to feel safe. Road safety is a complex issue and we recognise that safety is not an afterthought, but comes from a culture that puts it central to decision-making. That is why, this year, we implemented our new Home Safe and Well approach.

This initiative is our campaign to embed health, safety and wellbeing across our company as our first and most important imperative, and to drive continuous improvements in these areas. This involved developing corporate and directorate-level plans to promote greater ownership and drive safety improvements where they matter most. It was designed to improve safety for all our stakeholders, across our staff and supply chain, road users and vulnerable users.

Improving safety for staff and our supply chain (road workers)

We want everyone to get home safely. Our 2015 RIS1 *Delivery Plan* provided a strong foundation from which to learn and improve as our industry adapts to emerging challenges, and we are proud of what we have achieved so far.

We are focused on improving safety for our customers and this year there has been a reduced frequency of customers being injured, with the number of casualties per hundred million vehicle miles reducing from 11.45 to 9.37.

We also monitor how safely people work on our roads and set internal targets to assess our progress in this area, measuring accident frequency rates (AFRs) for incidents reportable to the Health and Safety Executive. This year has seen an improved performance; we have seen a reduction in our supply chain AFR by 55% from 0.11 to 0.05 (from 39 to 20 RIDDOR accidents) and reduced our traffic officer and employee AFR by 36% from 0.11 to 0.07 (from 10 to 7 RIDDOR accidents). We have seen an overall reduction in the total number of RIDDOR accidents of 45% (from 49 to 27).

In this year's employee engagement survey, of more than 4,000 employees who responded, 89% felt that Highways England takes safety seriously, and 83% felt that their work area was safe. These high scores demonstrate the increasing safety-awareness of individuals within our business, and highlight how safety is now embedded within our culture.

We are encouraged by the progress we have made so far, especially for what this means for our 5,682 employees and supply chain of more than 16,000 people. We have improved our safety, even with the challenge of more people using our roads, and the substantial growth in numbers of employees and supply chain working for, and with, us during the same period.

Improving safety for road users

We have now trained 55% of our traffic officers to perform visual safety checks on our network, increasing our reach and awareness of areas for improvement – including litter, vegetation and signage. Trained traffic officers undertake daily safety and condition inspections to identify critical defects that may impact our customers.

► Strategic case study



Incursions Working Group

The challenge

When road users ignore our traffic restrictions around roadworks and cross our safety barriers into our work sites, we call this an 'incursion'. These put our road workers' health, safety – and sometimes lives – at risk.

Between April 2018 and March 2019 there were 1,833 incursions into our roadworks; an average of 153 per month.

The solution

We chair an Incursion Working Group, which is a sub-group of our Road Workers' Safety Forum.

The group is made up of stakeholders from across the highways industry who share expertise and knowledge to improve the health, safety and welfare of road workers and particularly to reduce risks imposed by incursions.

This year, members of the group have been working on many new initiatives and innovations such as Halo and SafetyCam to help protect road workers on our projects.

The Halo safety system

The joint venture team working on our M27 junctions 4 to 11 scheme have collaborated with FHOSS (who produce high visibility safety equipment) to create new visual aids to help improve the safety of road workers at night.

The Halo safety system projects a high-intensity, continuous, solid red line onto the ground, which illuminates the exclusion zone.

The safety system has been embraced within the construction industry and has recently also been used on our M5 Oldbury scheme.

The innovation has been supported by the Home Office, as well as the DfT and Transport Research Laboratory.

SafetyCam

SafetyCam is another road worker protection system, developed by our supply chain partners Carnell and Kier Highways. Funding from our Innovation Designated Fund led to a successful year-long trial of the technology, which began in July 2017.

The system uses two vehicle detection systems to capture instances of dangerous driving, while providing an obvious visual deterrent. Automatic number plate recognition, combined with 360° video and speed detection cameras, are installed within the vehicles to provide comprehensive coverage.

There is now a fleet of 23 SafetyCam vehicles operating across the SRN.

“We're passionate about safety, not just of road users but also our workforce.”

MARK BYARD HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING DIRECTOR

The outcome

A trial is now underway with Essex Police to pursue prosecutions with motorists, using footage from the SafetyCams.

Separately, we are working with our supply chain to produce a series of short videos to raise awareness of the risk of incursions. These are aimed at managers, traffic management designers and road workers.

We are also working to make sure that all incursions are recorded, and plan to trial the issue of incursion awareness letters to drivers who incur into roadworks to emphasise the risk to our road workers' safety.

In May 2018, the International Road Federation (IRF) gave its prestigious annual Global Safety Award – known as the Find a Way award – to Highways England. The Find a Way was instituted as part of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety by IRF Chairman Eng. Abdullah Al-Mogbel in recognition of the value of political leadership in driving road traffic injury reduction strategies. Every year, the award distinguishes outstanding commitment to safer roads by a local or national government on the anniversary of the launch of the Decade of Action.

“This year’s award gives special attention to efforts undertaken by the public sector to protect staff and motorists in road work zones, currently responsible for hundreds of thousands of injuries and thousands of deaths worldwide. The guidelines and contractor oversight practices established by Highways England to eradicate danger on road construction sites are widely praised for their results, and are an inspiration for road agencies worldwide.”

PATRICK SANKEY IRF PRESIDENT & CEO

Receiving the award for Highways England, Richard Leonard, Head of Road Safety, noted:

“At Highways England we believe passionately in the safety of everyone using our roads and although they are among the safest in the world we are always working hard to improve them. We have a long-term goal that no-one should be harmed while travelling or working on our network and are working with others on innovative ideas to achieve that. We are delighted the International Road Federation has recognised our work to date and we look forward to continued collaboration with partners across the world to further improve safety for all.”



In 2018 we also won three awards at the TyreSafe Awards, receiving praise for safety initiatives designed to encourage motorists to check their vehicles. We won both the prestigious Safety in the Community category and the Online and Social Campaign award for our vehicle checks campaign. We also

received an Emergency Services Award for a joint initiative to pilot tyre safety checks at charity car wash events with Lancashire and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services and The Fire Fighters Charity.

In our *National Incident and Casualty Reduction Plan*, published in 2016, we set out how we will continuously improve our road safety performance. This plan aligns with our *Health and Safety Five-Year Plan*, which contains a number of actions aimed at improving road user safety. All our activities are based on our Safe System Approach:

‘Safer roads, safer vehicles, safer people.’

Many of our construction schemes include major safety enhancements, and we carry out targeted smaller safety schemes. Our Safety and Congestion Relief Programme looks to address congestion bottlenecks and deliver targeted road safety interventions on our network. To date, we have completed 69 schemes, with 21 schemes in construction and 33 in development. We plan to open a further 17 schemes in 2019-20.



To date we **have completed**

69
schemes



We plan to **open a further** (2019-20)

17
schemes

As part of this programme, we completed a £3 million safety improvement at an accident black spot on the A64 at Barton Hill, east of York, in May 2018. This improvement included changing the alignment

of the junction to provide a safe crossing point for vehicles onto the A64 dual carriageway, as well as a designated pedestrian route and cycleway and improved signage. These improvements will benefit over 9,000 drivers per day, on a major route between York and Scarborough.

We also invest in road safety infrastructure improvements for vulnerable users through the Cycling, Safety and Integration Designated Fund, delivering schemes that enable people to travel across and alongside our network safely. The £175 million funding is available during this road period, and we are targeting the safety element towards single carriageways as they have higher casualty rates. During 2018-19, we invested £18.84 million to deliver around 21 safety schemes on our network. Next year, we plan to design 40 schemes and construct a further 55 schemes.

Our *Cycling Strategy* sets out our approach to making the SRN more accessible and safer for cyclists. For our network, this mostly means cycling facilities that are separated from traffic and that enable users of all abilities to cycle safely. Since 2015, through our Cycling, Safety and Integration Designated Fund, we have delivered 101 cycle schemes across the country, as well as 90 new crossings for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians, and 182 upgrades to existing crossings.

To support the development of safer roads, we launched our *Guide to Road Safety Route Treatments* in May 2018, providing guidance on following the safe systems approach. We also highlight the role of education and compliance measures alongside traditional engineering interventions. The guide draws on a range of different techniques to show how road safety issues can be resolved, including case studies demonstrating how measures have been applied and the subsequent benefits. We have updated a number of our *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB) standards, making it easier for designers to understand road safety considerations, as well as ensuring they are embedded within design decisions. This has been supported by wider research to understand the future needs of our customers, for example older driver engineering measures and wrong way driving interventions.

We worked closely with our key stakeholders and partners who have played a significant role in helping us develop targeted compliance and information initiatives aimed at addressing a wide range of issues which can pose a risk to our customers using the network.

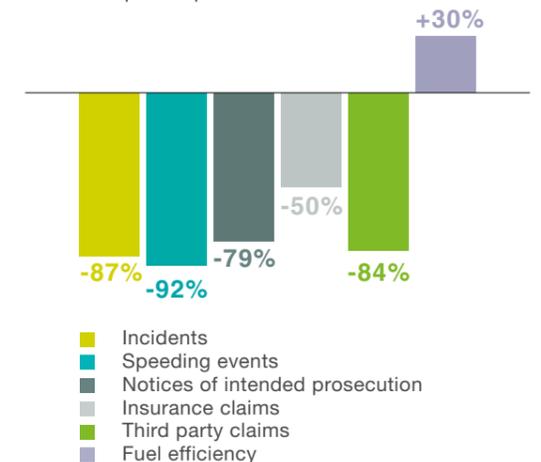
One key area of collaboration is our *Suicide Prevention Strategy*. Around 50 people take their own lives on the SRN every year. These deaths are preventable, not inevitable, and we are clear in our commitment to do everything we can to address this difficult issue. We support Government in its efforts on suicide prevention and have developed our own delivery plan. We are working with the Samaritans to undertake targeted research, while also undertaking crisis intervention, including installing over 500 crisis signs at 100 priority locations. We support those affected by suicide and work across our company to destigmatise mental health issues. We are members of the National Suicide Prevention Alliance and work closely with regional stakeholders, such as local authorities and the NHS, to identify broader interventions.

Key safety schemes

Driving for Better Business

We have further extended and strengthened our Driving for Better Business programme, which works collaboratively with our partners, to improve the standard of occupational road risk management. This has been achieved through securing strategic support from public and private sector partners. They provide advocacy and promote the programme through their networks and a broad range of marketing and communication activities, for example our Driving for Better Business Public Sector Summit in the Houses of Parliament in January 2019. We have also led by example, reviewing our occupational road risk management system and policies, achieving Driving for Better Business Champion status, and embedding the programme across our supply chain. These companies are now sharing this good practice with their own supply chains to allow others to achieve similar results.

Improvements for participants include:



More details on how these benefits were achieved can be found in the Business Champion case studies on the Driving for Better Business website: www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com

Supporting learner and new drivers

Novice drivers, typically aged between 17 and 24 years old, comprise 8% of driving licence holders, driving less mileage than other drivers but accounting for 13% of all car occupants killed or seriously injured in Great Britain in 2016. In their first year of driving, one in five will have a collision.



In their **first year** of driving

1 in 5 NEW DRIVERS WILL HAVE A COLLISION

In December 2016, the DfT undertook a consultation to allow learner drivers to take lessons on motorways, setting out the need to provide them with the broadest range of skills, knowledge and confidence to prepare for independent driving. The DfT subsequently proposed measures to enable learner drivers to have lessons on the motorway. The change in legislation came into force in June 2018.

To prepare for this change, we formed the New Driver Programme, a collaboration led by us between the DfT, DVSA, DVLA, and all the major motoring schools. We aimed to increase the knowledge of learner and novice drivers, approved driving instructors, and parents and guardians when driving on motorways or high-speed roads. The programme provided improved learning resources, key educational modules and a telematics app, giving learner drivers the knowledge and the confidence to drive safely on our network.

The first element was our online learning portal, Driving Hub. This supports the pupil, parent or guardian with five educational modules including CCTV clips from our control room and traffic officer vehicles. The site went live prior to the change in legislation and points all those accessing the site to partner resources and safe driving advice.

To date, we do not have any reports of incidents on our network involving learner drivers, and we will keep monitoring and working with the approved driving instructor industry to embed the change in legislation.

Smart motorways, all lane running and stopped vehicle detection

In 2018-19, we completed our monitoring and evaluation of the two M25 all lane running schemes (junctions 23 to 27 and junctions 5 to 7), based on extensive evidence gathered over the first three years of operation. Our analysis demonstrated that the all lane running concept exceeded its safety objective, delivering levels of safety as good as, and possibly better than, a traditional motorway.

Both M25 schemes show an improvement in the fatal weighted injury (FWI) rate, which we use to assess the safety performance of a scheme:



M25 junctions 5 to 7 show

42%

IMPROVEMENT IN FWI RATE

(Over the first **3 years**)



M25 junctions 23 to 27 show

18%

IMPROVEMENT IN FWI RATE

(Over the first **3 years**)

In May 2018, we switched on our Stopped Vehicle Detection system between junctions 23 to 27 on the M25, enhancing our capability to detect and respond to stationary vehicles.

The system is now in operation on around 25 miles of all lane running on the M25. It uses radars to automatically detect vehicles that have stopped in a running lane, allowing our operators to set signals quickly in response. This has significantly enhanced our operational capability and reduced the potential for incidents.

We plan to roll out this capability across all lane running smart motorways, starting with the M3 junctions 2 to 4a in 2019-20.

Innovation and technology

We invest time in developing innovative road infrastructure and new technologies, working with Government, customers, transport operators and businesses to deliver and operate a national network fit for the future.

We are investing £120 million in the first road period through the Innovation Designated Fund to support more innovation and use of technology across the road transport sector, with a view to reducing road delays and improving safety and the environment.

Examples of our safety innovations projects include:

HGV platooning trial

We are working with the DfT and leading an on-road pilot of HGV platooning to better understand what greater automation of HGVs can deliver.

HumanDrive

We are part of a consortium, jointly funded by central Government and industry, to build an autonomous vehicle with human-like control by 2020.

Autonomous impact protection vehicle trial

We are working with industry to remove drivers from vehicles used to protect road workers and users during maintenance.

Autonomous vehicle trials

We are working with the automotive industry, academia and others to develop safe trials of autonomous passenger vehicles on our network. Collaboration is crucial to ensure customers, road authorities and vehicle manufacturers all benefit from these technologies.

UK CITE and connected corridors

We are involved with two exciting projects, which will be trialling how roads, infrastructure and vehicles can all talk to each other, safely and efficiently:

UK Connected and Intelligent Transport Environment (UK CITE):

This is an industry-led project on the SRN and local roads in the Midlands. We are providing the roadside infrastructure to allow vehicles to talk to our systems, as well as adapting these systems to provide information to trial vehicles in real time.

Connected corridors:

We are working with the DfT, Transport for London and Kent County Council to create a connected corridor along the A2 and M2.

Connecting vehicles to each other and the road

This will improve journeys, safety and give drivers reliable, real-time personalised information; it could also help us manage traffic and respond to incidents.

- In October 2018, we delivered a TestFest in Kent, focusing on Hybrid communications and Green Light Optimal Speed Advice.
- In 2018, we began to install road side technology and equip the fleet of test vehicles.
- We believe this will enable vehicles to communicate road safety and other information using the road-side equipment and existing cellular networks.
- Test trials started in November 2018 and are planned to carry on until December 2020.

This year we launched our Innovation Portal, which allows others outside Highways England and our usual supply chain to connect directly with us. In the first four months since its launch, the site has attracted 16,000 hits and well over 100 enquiries, a number of which are now being considered as innovation trials.

In February 2019, we launched our first large-scale innovation and air quality competition, working in partnership with Innovate UK. The competition has a total budget of £20 million, with up to £1 million awarded for each winning proposal. It is designed to allow us to reach out to a much wider network of innovators, including small businesses, academics and manufacturers.

In March 2019, three Highways England projects won West Midlands Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation awards: Best Innovation Award 2019 with Kier, for the pioneering Aqua-Slot drain; Best Innovation Highly Commended Award with Balfour Beatty Vinci, for their virtual reality training programme to improve roadworker safety; and Best Small Project Highly Commended Award with Kier, for their work on the re-waterproofing and concrete repairs at the A38(M) Gravelly Hill Viaduct. These awards recognise the achievements of those working in the transportation sector, promoting their professionalism as best practice to a wider industry audience.

Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs)

Most road safety incidents are the result of human error. Reducing the level of human error on our roads is therefore critical to improving road safety. We recognise that technology has an important role to play in this area, particularly through autonomous vehicles and connected highways.

We are collaborating with industry, academia and others to develop safe test environments, operational standards and infrastructure to facilitate trials of CAVs on our network. We are also working with our European colleagues to standardise and test connected technology.

We see the potential for the greater automation of vehicles to deliver improved safety and increased mobility.

In response to a CAV trial in autumn 2018, Jim O'Sullivan, Highways England Chief Executive, commented:

“We are pleased to be supporting the Government’s ambition for the UK to be a global leader for innovation. The trial has the potential to demonstrate how greater automation of vehicles can deliver improvements in safety, better journeys for road users and reduction in vehicle emissions.”

Delivering our Health and Safety Five-Year Plan

Our Health and Safety Five-Year Plan has delivered 117 of its 130 actions, with 13 actions left to complete. We have also developed corporate and directorate-level plans to promote greater ownership and drive the right safety improvements where they matter most across our organisation and supply chain.

► Strategic case study



Don't be a Space Invader safety campaign

Our multi-media campaign has shone a light on the very serious issue of tailgating on the roads this year.



The challenge

Statistics show that:

TAILGATING IS A CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR IN **1 in 8** of all road casualties

WITH MORE THAN **100 people** killed or seriously injured each year

NEARLY **9/10 people** say they have either experienced tailgating or seen it happen to others

MORE THAN **1/4** of drivers have admitted to tailgating

While tailgating can be deliberate, often it is unintentional by drivers who are simply unaware they are dangerously invading someone else's space.

The solution

Our Don't be a Space Invader safety campaign has been our most impactful campaign to date. We set up a dedicated website where drivers can find more information about tailgating and what they can do to stay safe. We also created bumper stickers for people to display on their vehicles.

The campaign worked particularly well across social media and we worked with LADbible to develop an Instagram slider for mobile phones to help young people understand the true stopping distance at 70mph.

A host of companies backed the campaign, including National Express which is carrying the message on some of its long-distance coaches. Other advocates include the Football Association, RAC, National Police Chiefs' Council, leading road safety bodies Brake and the Institute for Advanced Motorists, and Thatcham.



Professional racing driver and Hollywood stunt expert Ben Collins, best known for

his role as The Stig on BBC motoring show Top Gear, has coached hundreds of celebrities from Tom Cruise to Lionel Richie around the race track, and is also a championship winning Le Mans racing driver. But he is now helping drivers travelling on our motorways and major A-roads to 'stay safe, stay back – and not be a space invader'.

Former Formula 1 world champion Nigel Mansell (now President of the Institute of Advanced Motorists RoadSmart) also acted as a spokesman for the campaign.

The outcome

The number of people likely to change their behaviour towards tailgating has increased month-on-month since September 2018.

250 articles published with a potential reach of over **34 million people**

20 broadcast and print interviews, including BBC Breakfast, Sky News, Jeremy Vine and BBC Radio 5 Live

20% of our survey respondents said they had seen or heard the campaign (the benchmark for this type of campaign is 16-18%)

43% of participants in our survey agreed the campaign would change how other drivers behave

79% of participants agreed they would change their own behaviour as a result of seeing or hearing the campaign

OVER 300,000 car and vehicle stickers distributed to motorists and stakeholders to date

Car sticker packs available at all driving test centres in England

Worldwide interest in the campaign from every continent apart from Oceania and Antarctica

“I discovered the dangers of tailgating at a very early age – in an overly enthusiastic game of musical chairs. The music stopped, so did the kid in front of me. But I didn't. I face-planted the back of his head instead.

Following the vehicle in front too closely reduces your vision to zero, along with your time to react to danger. Stay safe, stay back and look ahead.”

BEN COLLINS FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE STIG

“Tailgating is a driving habit I utterly deplore. Not only is it aggressive and intimidating, but it can lead to a crash with a tragic outcome. There is absolutely no upside to it – you will not get to your destination faster, you are not a skilled driver for doing it, and you are putting so many innocent people at risk. So I very much back this campaign to highlight the dangers of tailgating.”

NIGEL MANSELL PRESIDENT OF IAMR

Our customers

▶ We serve the people who use our roads – from large and small business users to commuters and leisure drivers – and those who live and work alongside our roads. Our customers expect to feel safe on our network, to have good, stress-free journeys, and to trust the information we provide.

Our major projects and delivery schemes from the past year can be read about in detail in our strategic report on pages 30-43. We have also worked on a range of initiatives this year, focused on improving the experience of the millions of people who use, or are affected by, our network every day.

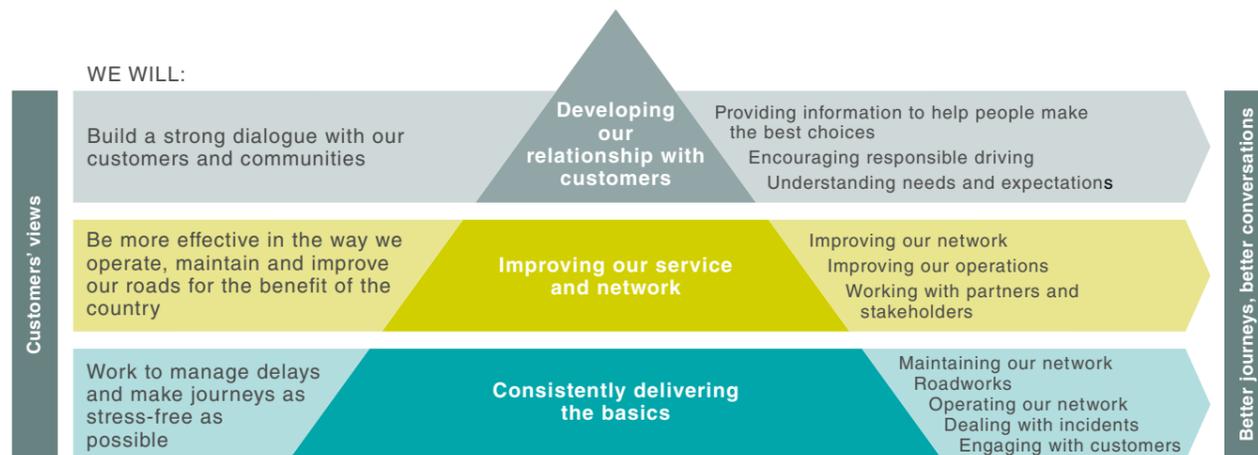
Our strategy

Customer service guides all our activity and remains one of our three strategic imperatives: keeping people moving today, and moving better tomorrow. We are focusing more on being a service-led organisation.

Our Customer Service Strategy underpins everything we do, focusing on consistently delivering the basics, while ensuring that we improve the service and network for all our customers and communities. We are constantly looking at how we can develop and improve our relationships with our customers, including understanding and responding to their needs.

We want our customers to trust us, and for all our people, both on and off-road to understand their contribution to customer service. To help us focus on things that matter to our customers, we also publish an annual *Customer Service Plan*.

Customer Service Strategy Model



1. Improving user satisfaction

Responding to our customers and communities

We have an active customer research and innovation programme, and have implemented several initiatives to allow us to understand and respond to customer and community feedback. December 2018 saw us hold the first meeting of the National Mobility and Disabled Road Users Forum, giving us an early opportunity to discuss and act upon the findings of the Transport Focus research into the needs of road users with disabilities.

Lifting roadworks

Responding to our customers' and stakeholders' feedback, we have reduced roadworks during high-demand travel periods. During Christmas 2018, we lifted approximately 400 miles of roadworks across England, allowing 99% of our network to be free from roadworks over this busy period.



99%

OF OUR NETWORK FREE OF ROADWORKS DURING CHRISTMAS 2018

Improving our diversion routes

In July 2018, we issued a customer-focused standard for diversion routes for unplanned events.

This standard was developed with our supply chain, and tested with customers, stakeholders and partners. It sets out minimum requirements for a route to transport strategic traffic around an unplanned closure. It also provides guidance to ensure mitigating actions are considered to reduce the impact on our customers and communities when using these routes. This is being embedded across all regions.

Review of variable speed limits

Following customer insight and complaints, we carried out a comprehensive review of variable speed limits this year. As a result, we developed a prioritised programme of 31 current and proposed improvements to variable speed limits. By December 2018, our existing and new improvements had saved over 750 hours of customers' journey time per day.

We will measure the impact of these changes throughout 2019-20.

Complaints

We aim to respond to customer complaints within 15 working days.

The number of complaints we have handled is similar to last year (5,004 for 2017-18 and 5,022 for 2018-19), and our revised complaints process has been reviewed and further embedded. We have made it clearer to customers what the Independent Complaints Assessor (ICA) can and can't review and supported our correspondence teams to seek additional ways to resolve complaints when they reach us. Over 96% of all complaints received were resolved at the first stage of the process.

The table below sets out the number of complaints that were received by Highways England this year, those escalated through our own complaints process, those referred to the ICA, and those investigated by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Complaints received	Complaints escalated from stage 1	Complaints escalated from stage 2 to ICA¹	Complaints escalated from stage 3 to PHSO
5,022 (4,852 resolved)	170 (121 resolved)	49 (47 resolved)	2 (0 accepted by PHSO)

1. The figure represents the total referrals to the ICA. Previously we have only reported cases completed.

2. Improving customer experience

Keeping the network in good condition

Smoother road surfaces

We know from feedback that smooth road surfaces play an important role in customer satisfaction, as they provide drivers with smoother, quieter and safer journeys. We are working hard to ensure that our road surfaces are maintained to a level that improves our users' driving experiences.

This year, the A1 West Moor to Newton-on-the-Moor scheme has been our first project to use the innovative in situ cold pave recycling solution. The process strips the top level of material off the road and mixes it with materials such as bitumen emulsion so that it can be re-laid on the road. This is a radical change to the pavement renewal process, where traditionally each section of road requires its own management, labour and support plant and equipment. The cold pave recycling process means that one single activity encapsulates both the planning and road-laying activities, leading to less disruption, shorter roadworks and significant environmental benefits for our customers, along with smoother driving conditions.

Fix Now

Our Fix Now initiative means our inspectors can carry out small-scale defect repairs themselves while they are undertaking their normal condition inspection duties, rather than calling out a maintenance contractor. This resolves small repair jobs immediately, lessening disruption for our customers and reducing our costs.

Improving emergency areas

We have been upgrading existing emergency areas on all lane running motorways to make them more visible to our customers and recovery operators. Before we started this work, our Insight division tested signs and surface colours with our customers to understand how we could help road users feel safe, confident and in control.

All 23 emergency areas on the M25 now have new SOS signing and orange surfacing, and all our schemes will now adopt these features. We plan to upgrade all smart motorway emergency areas by the end of the first road period.

A free-flowing network

Increasing speed limits through roadworks

Our customers have told us that they want to see fewer speed restrictions during roadworks, especially if no road workers are present.

Following trials in 2017-18, we used a 60mph limit this year during the commissioning stages of our smart motorways schemes, and the initial results have been positive.

The increased speed limit was in place during the Christmas break on the M6 junctions 16 to 19 smart motorway scheme, supporting our customers as they travelled to spend time with friends and families. We have also undertaken further trials of 60mph in different roadwork scenarios, with a view to widening its safe use on the network in 2019-20 and beyond.

Improving traffic information

Our customers value traffic information, expecting it to be accurate, provided in a timely manner and communicated in a way they find accessible.

This year, we have started providing daily updates on road closure information for the next seven days, helping commercial road users with their logistics and planning. We also improved our capability to provide real-time information through social media by extending our Twitter service into our Regional Control Centres, ensuring that tweets are accessible to both national and regional audiences. These two improvements allow business and private road users to plan alternative routes when there is disruption on our roads, helping to minimise traffic and journey delays at points of congestion.

Motorway incident detection and automatic signalling

Our motorway incident detection and automatic signalling system automatically detects slow moving traffic and sets 40mph speed limits upstream to slow and warn approaching traffic. Once triggered, the speed limits stay in place for a minimum time. This was originally four minutes, but following research, we trialled two minutes.

As the trial was effective, we rolled out the change across our network, with 40mph restriction reduced by approximately 40 hours per day across the network. This created a cumulative daily customer journey time saving of 418 hours a day, equivalent to £2.12 million per annum.

National Roads Telecommunications Service

Our National Roads Telecommunications Services (NRTS) network was established in 2005, and the first contract, NRTS1, ended in September 2018. This service provides vital secure telecommunications interconnectivity between our seven Regional Control Centres, our National Traffic Operations Centre and our 30,000 roadside assets, such as cameras, helping us to monitor our network 24/7.

The demands of RIS1/RIS2 delivery, and an increasingly developed Customer Service Strategy, resulted in greater service requirements. For NRTS2 we needed a solution that was agile, flexible and scalable, suitable for business operating in a rapidly developing technological world.

For those bidding for the work, there was a clear contractual emphasis on the requirement to be innovative in how management and development of the NRTS network could reduce costs and improve customer service.

We completed the six-month transition programme (between March and September 2018) without any disruption to the business. This was achieved safely, to time and to budget. Based on a comparison of NRTS2 to NRTS1 direct costs, we have identified £93.7 million of efficiency savings: £44.1 million in the current road period and £49.6 million in the next. There is up to a further £10 million per year savings over the seven-year term, linked to the efficiency saving on reduced NRTS2 call-off prices for schemes.

3. Improving customer communications

Our major initiatives

Signage in roadworks

Our customers told us that, when they drive through roadworks, they want to know what is going on, why it is happening, and when the project will end. To address these points, we are investigating increasing the use of billboards in roadworks to include:

- an entry billboard which tells customers what is happening and where, when it will finish, and who is responsible for the work
- electronic billboards within the works which tell customers what is happening that day, particularly when they cannot see any activity (we are currently trialling electronic billboards on some of our projects)

- exit point signage which shows how the work is progressing

Feedback from our Customer Insight Survey shows:



Billboards in roadworks is the first of our proposed Customer Service Standards, all of which will focus on relieving customer pain points. Our Customer Service Standards will ensure that we deliver consistency for our customers and will define what is expected from us and our supply chain.

Variable signs and signals

Variable signs and signals are electronic traffic signs that we use to provide in-journey information to customers. We have an ongoing programme of improvements based on insight gathered from our customers. During 2018-19, we have:

- trained all our variable signs and signals operators to set messages that customers feel are more relevant and helpful
- increased the number of devices capable of receiving messages sent from our National Traffic Operations Centre
- introduced new messages specifically developed for customers who might find themselves caught in traffic
- implemented new travel-time messages into city centres

This year, we have enhanced the amount of information and number of travel-time variable message signs. This included showing multiple routes to the same destination, and multiple destinations, on the same sign. We have rolled out these enhancements to over 400 signs across England. We also now regularly tell customers actual delay times and estimated times for incidents to be cleared on strategic variable message signs.

To embed improved ways of setting variable signs and signals, we have developed virtual reality training that allows our control room operators to be virtually transported into the vehicles and homes of customers impacted by incidents, and to see and hear how our customers feel.

Social media

We operate eight regional Twitter channels, providing live traffic updates to over 433,000 followers across the country. All our regional control and operational centres are now engaging with customers through these channels on a 24/7 basis. We have found that empowering the people who have local knowledge of our network to operate our regional Twitter channels has resulted in more relevant conversations, and better engagement with our customers.

Engaging with our communities

We are doing more than ever to become closer to our communities – through talking, listening, understanding and responding. We are involving them in our work when we are designing schemes, using community feedback from consultations to refine our plans, so that the people affected by the changes can provide their input.

For example, in July 2018, we initiated a local community consultation for our A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down (Stonehenge) scheme, asking how we could reduce any negative impact on our customers. Using the 5,000 consultation responses, we created a *You said, we did* document, and made a number of amendments to the proposed scheme based on this feedback. These included:

- adding an environmental screen
- providing safer entry points for vulnerable users (pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians)
- diverting traffic to avoid a tranquil village

This year, we also trialled community insight mapping, a tool which reaches a more diverse sector of our communities, helping us to understand their priorities, needs and concerns. We can use this insight to tailor and develop our schemes to meet the needs of those impacted by our works.

We have run a community satisfaction survey, which has 11,000 respondents to date, to better understand the needs of the communities surrounding our network. We will use the survey results to improve how we plan, undertake schemes and engage with our communities in 2019-20.

In summer 2018, seven Regional Control Centres gave the public an insight into what goes on behind the scenes. Parents were encouraged to bring children to find out how a motorway is managed, meet traffic officers, including a few familiar faces from the BBC documentary, talk to project teams who carry

out our engineering schemes, and find out about our initiatives to improve safety. In total, 1,000 people attended, and all seven centres have said they will repeat the open days in 2019, pointing towards a new and lasting legacy to engage young people.

4. Building collaborative relationships

Strategic stakeholder partnerships

Building strong and mutually beneficial relationships with our stakeholders is essential to the delivery of better customer service. This year, we have collaborated with a wide range of groups. For instance, we have developed partnership agreements with local housing authorities, including West Midlands Shires and Unitaries Traffic Managers Group, and the West of England Combined Authority, which is made up of three of the local authorities in the region.

We also secured a partnership agreement with the Football Association (FA), which includes a commitment to share our traffic information on their social media channels to football fans travelling on the SRN, helping make journeys to events as smooth as possible. Our FA partnership case study is outlined on page 81.

We developed and shared a smart motorways training package with our partners. We distributed our smart motorway driver education course to 80 national organisations within the freight and logistic sector, including all companies named within our Delivery Plan. The 61 training organisations that are accredited to Delivery Driver Certificate of Professional Competence have also been contacted and offered the training package, resulting in engagement with a further 20 companies. Six of these organisations are training consortiums with large membership portfolios, outlined in the infographic on page 82.

► **Strategic case study**



How our partnership with the FA is helping thousands of road users

This year we have teamed up with the FA to ensure fans get safely to and from events at Wembley Stadium. Many fans use the country’s motorways and trunk roads to get to the 90,000-seater stadium, including the M1, M4, M40 and Britain’s busiest motorway, the M25.

The challenge

Through our customer profiling work, we identified football and event fans as being particularly vocal about the lack of information about delays on the network.

We used social listening tools to find out the reasons for these frustrations. We discovered that football fans were particularly unhappy about road closures and a lack of information about incidents, delays and congestion routes.

The solution

We are now working with the FA to help drivers plan their journeys and warn them of any incidents, delays or congestion, using social media channels and the extensive array of digital messaging signs on motorway gantries.

“Each and every event held at the national stadium plays host to thousands of fans who choose to travel via the country’s roads.

It’s essential they are able to do so safely, in plenty of time and with access to constantly evolving travel information.

Highways England has already made significant strides to improve the event day experiences of these fans, so I am delighted the partnership has now been formally announced and look forward to working together in this area.”

JON SELLINS FA OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Peter Carr is Chair of SpursAbility, the Disabled Supporters Association for Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. Tottenham played at Wembley Stadium between August 2017 and March 2019 while their new stadium was being built.

“As a wheelchair user, it’s hugely important for me to have the choice to drive. A smooth journey for me is all about knowing what will happen – as far as is possible. So, tools like the Highways England app are a routine part of how I plan. I build in time and room for problems that might happen, like a traffic build up or lane closures on the M25 for example.”

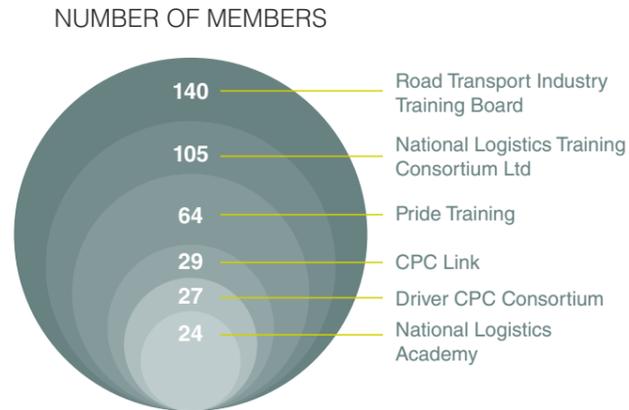
PETER CARR CHAIR OF SPURSABILITY

Lessons learned

We are using learnings from our partnership with the FA to develop relationships with other strategic companies and organisations who rely on the SRN for their work, including health, distribution and motoring organisations. For example, we have signed a similar agreement with the 2019 Cricket World Cup organisers.

We also reached an agreement with DPD – the parcel delivery company – to work with them to improve safety and compliance and to keep traffic on the SRN free-flowing.

Figure outlining the training consortiums referenced in 'Strategic stakeholder partnerships' on page 80.



Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder survey

Understanding our stakeholders' views is an important part of insight, performance monitoring and evaluation. It supports the implementation of our commitments set out in RIS1, delivery plans and other key strategies. Our new Stakeholder Survey helps us to understand our reputation, levels of trust and engagement, and what needs to change to improve our relationships with stakeholders. The survey is undertaken on a quarterly basis, alternating between a full survey and a sample pulse survey. During the first wave this year:

- 51% of respondents indicated that we have a good reputation
- 60% of organisations trust us

These figures highlight that we can improve in these areas.

Stakeholder mapping tool

One way in which we have sought to improve stakeholder engagement is by developing a stakeholder mapping tool which identifies the key distribution hubs of our freight stakeholders to better understand pinch points when we are planning roadworks. The tool also tells us where we need to focus engagement with stakeholders at a local level.

Royal Mail, DPD and Eddie Stobart are currently using the tool, and we are jointly evaluating its success.

Road closure reports and website

We produce a daily road closure report to provide our freight stakeholders with information on planned full closures on our network for that night.

In 2017-18, we were providing around 20% confidence in our road closure information. Having established a Regional Focal Point network and introduced new processes into our supply chain for road work scheduling, we have increased accuracy to around 83%.

Daily reports are being distributed to more than 220 stakeholders and the Road Hauliers Association has links to the data on their site. Positive feedback from stakeholders about the improved accuracy in closure information convinced us to invest in the development of a new website where roadworks information is displayed in a more accessible format. Royal Mail are now using this within their processing centres.

Working with our supply chain

Our supply chain contracts include customer metrics to ensure that customer service and satisfaction is a core part of all delivery. We test delivery using supply chain assurance reviews.

This year, we have engaged extensively with our supply chain. We have developed customer-centric planning guidance and templates for them to document customer priorities and show how these will be delivered across design, consultation, delivery and scheme exit.

We proactively support sustainability and this is crucial to helping us meet Government's target of 25% of spend for goods and services procurement to come from SMEs. During 2018-19, we spent 26.24% with SMEs.

We need and value the expertise and innovation that our supply chain bring. We hold annual Highways England Awards, which recognise the contribution our supply chain make in areas such as safety, customer service and delivery.

Working with Government

As a Government-owned company, we work closely with ministers and officials across many departments in Whitehall. We have worked hard to improve our communication with MPs, both around individual schemes and the impact of our work nationally. This has included holding regular surgeries in the Houses of Parliament to discuss our work in different regions and across the country.

We are working with local transport authorities to improve customer journey choices, and actively manage travel demand to reduce congestion. We have developed and rolled out a Travel Demand Management Toolkit to help us develop a range of solutions.

Working with Transport Focus

As the independent road users' watchdog, Transport Focus' role is to advise the Secretary of State for Transport on their needs and views. They are responsible for measuring customer satisfaction by carrying out the *National Road User Satisfaction Survey*. We work with Transport Focus to exchange surveys and information gathered from across our regions and road-user groups to help us understand the specific issues that matter to our customers. The surveys are published on their website at www.transportfocus.org.uk

Working with emergency services

We work closely with our partners through the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme and through the Collision, Lead, Evaluate, Act, Reopen (CLEAR) initiative, which outlines the steps to take during an incident. We are strengthening our partnership working with the emergency services through the National Roads Police Intelligence Forum and developing a plan for enforcement and compliance activities on our network.

Working with the ORR

The ORR is our monitor and advises Government on our efficient, safe and sustainable delivery of Government investment for the benefit of road users and the wider public. We submit data to the ORR, when requested, to help them produce regular reports on our performance. These are published on their website at www.orr.gov.uk

Developing international relationships

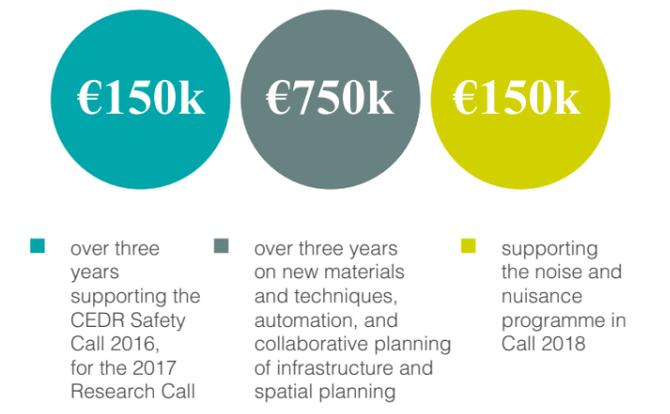
Part of the vision in RIS1 is for Highways England to be a world leader in operating, maintaining and modernising roads, with the SRN enhancing the UK's global competitiveness.

We actively engage with international partners to share and learn best practice and expertise, helping to identify new ideas and innovation that will support the delivery of improved benefits and efficiencies.

As part of our collaboration through the Conference of European Directors of Roads (CEDR), we invest in the Transnational Research Programme. This supports our Innovation, Technology and Research Strategy commitment to invest up to 5% of our annual research budget with other European road authorities. It enables the exchange of experience, information and research, including developing proactive ways of delivery and a better understanding of benefits and costs for new techniques.

As a direct result of a previous mobility and intelligent transportation systems CEDR research programme of work, we were able, through pooled funding, to advance our understanding of Mobility as a Service, autonomous driving and the business case for connected vehicles. Our investment of both funds and resource will leverage around six times the value than if we had completed the research on our own.

Some of our investments this year:



We also have an active collaboration agreement between the Belgian Roads and Traffic Agency, Rijkswaterstaat of the Netherlands and Highways England. Through this agreement, we work together with our partners on issues of strategic importance so that we can learn from each other's experience.

Our people

► We are proud of our people. We are committed to recruiting, developing and incentivising our staff to build our organisational capability and capacity. We are also dedicated to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across all areas of our business.

Employee engagement and enablement

We conduct an in-depth annual staff survey to gain a clearer picture of how our employees are feeling, recognising that people who are engaged with their role and the company in which they work are likely to perform better. We also conduct shorter pulse surveys, enabling us to measure engagement at regular six month intervals.

We are pleased with the year-on-year rise in satisfaction, with our annual survey identifying that we have increased employee engagement to 52%, and employee enablement to 56%. Our employees have a strong and positive view about our strategic direction and purpose, as well as our future. Our employees' attitude to safety is improving, evidencing our business-wide commitment to our first imperative. We have also seen a strong increase in commitment to teams and immediate managers, resulting in an above industry norm in this area.

Our company values

Our company values and associated behaviours have informed our people's activity in 2018-19, and we have further embedded them in our processes, communications and management development.

Our values and behaviours, for example, form an integral part of our online recognition platform, High5. Over 29,000 recognitions were given for colleagues demonstrating our values, behaviours and imperatives in the last year. From these nominations, 2,300 were selected to receive financial awards (in the form of vouchers). Over 11% were cross-organisational, which demonstrates our progress towards working more collaboratively.



In February 2018, we launched MDP:Connect, a continuation of our Management Development Programme (MDP). This is the second phase and its purpose was to align everyone to our imperatives, values and behaviours. It focused on supporting our people to articulate how their role connects to why we exist, what we do, and how we do it. Our senior leaders delivered MDP:Connect through talking to our people about why their role makes a difference now and for the future, using personal stories as a way to bring this to life. It was delivered to over 5,600 attendees over an eight-month period, through a three-stage process as outlined in the case study on page 85.

Our delivery over the year

HE2020

As part of our transformation journey, we built on our *Highways England 2020 Organisational Plan* (HE2020), setting out the changes we are making to enable us to deliver current and future investment programmes. The plan contains cross-organisation and directorate-led initiatives, in areas such as capability development, culture change and estate and capital portfolio management, to improve how we operate.

► Strategic case study



MDP:Connect

An HR-led programme for all our people, focused on connecting roles to our organisational purpose, has resulted in an increase in employee engagement, and a cultural shift within our developing organisation.



The challenge

In 2016, we launched our management development programme, which was rolled out to 1,600 of our managers across 2016 and 2017.

This programme focused on developing our leadership coaching skills, allowing us to have good quality one-to-one performance conversations.

We were keen to build on the success of this programme and to get our whole business involved in becoming a high-performing organisation.

The solution

MDP:Connect was designed to build on the previous programme, helping managers to communicate our strategy, imperatives, values, and business plan to all our people. It was designed to align leaders, managers and teams, focusing on everyone being able to articulate how their role connects to why we exist, what we do and how we do it.

It started with two-day workshops for the 80 most senior managers in the business. This was then followed up with workshops for all managers, led by our Executive and senior leadership teams.

Finally, we ran conferences that were open to every single employee in our business to share these themes and work out what they mean to each of us in our day-to-day activities.

The outcome

We ran pulse surveys during the programme to gain quick insights into the feelings of our people in between the annual engagement surveys. These yielded some very positive results and enabled us to make improvements to the programme as we went along.

“I think I now have a greater appreciation of how many elements and teams around the business fit together to work towards common goals. The opportunity to meet and hear from the senior leaders in the business is really appreciated.”

MEMBER OF STAFF

In our annual people survey, our engagement score has risen to 52% (from 40% in 2016 and 46% in 2017).

Lessons learned

The three-stage approach worked well, with clear leader visibility and ownership through the second and third stages.

Interactive activities helped bring the messages to life and clear and concise language was used throughout.

Aligning measurement to engagement survey questions worked well to show the impact of the programme.

We will incorporate these lessons learned as we plan for MDP:Deliver, which we will launch in 2019. MDP:Deliver will help us all focus on the things we do that matter most to ensure our success.

This year we have focused on preparing for the final phase of HE2020 and the transition to HE2025. Recognising our Operating Expenditure will remain flat, we have been identifying how our organisation needs to evolve to deliver our imperatives efficiently and effectively through our existing resources and capabilities.

The findings of our external benchmarking exercises were published in spring 2018 and compared the structure and size of our corporate functions. The results confirmed that these functions are broadly the right size for the scale of our organisation.

We have started a programme of simplification across our directorates under our Organisational Effectiveness Programme to ensure the different elements of our organisation are as efficient as they can be. The six initiatives are:

- make/buy decisions
- shadow activities and removal of non-value adding activity
- spans and spines
- directorate operating models
- simplification of policies, processes and procedures
- metrics and benchmarking

HR

In the last year, we resolved 47,519 queries from employees and line managers via our HR teams, with our average time to resolve a general query standing at 3.4 working days. To further improve our service delivery, we now have 54 current documented HR processes in place, along with a programme of continuous improvement to develop our processes and governance.

Staff capability

We have built on the development of key capabilities, such as programme and project management and asset management, by defining technical competencies for all roles across the organisation and establishing corresponding training programmes. We also defined clear career pathways for all functions within each directorate.

Throughout 2018-19, our people attended roughly 30,000 training days. This represents on average six training days per employee. Our investment in training was mainly focused on areas linked to our capability development as an organisation:

- portfolio, programme and project management
- asset management and operations
- health, safety and wellbeing
- engineering
- customer service
- leadership and management
- commercial and finance
- IT

The remainder of the training was focused on supporting new starters with induction requirements, individual personal development, professional qualifications and personal development linked to people's current roles or career progression.

Our people accessed this learning 24/7 through our learning management system, Click2Learn. This provides access to over 100 online learning modules, a library of content through Ashridge Business School, Affinity Connect content to support career change, and a range of virtual learning events available on demand. To date, 91.7% of our employees have accessed a Click2Learn course, and have averaged six completed online modules per person throughout 2018-19. As the second road period approaches, we are reviewing and expanding our learning catalogue to support our staff in developing the skills they will require to deliver through the next road period and into the future.

CLICK2LEARN



91.7%

STAFF UPTAKE TO DATE



6

MODULES PER PERSON IN 2018-19

We invested in developing leadership talent within our business, and across the sector, through our Roads Academy. It now has four programmes offering a full career pathway in leadership development. With an alumni of 157 and 95 current learners on programme, the Roads Academy is growing into a qualified and driven leadership community who will provide a step change in the way our leaders operate. Over the next 12 months, we will see three emerging leader cohorts and one senior leaders cohort graduate, increasing our alumni to

186. Over the last year the Roads Academy was a finalist for the CIPD People Management Awards Best L&D Initiative – Third/Public Sector, and won the Coventry University award for Enterprise and Innovation.

For our customer-facing staff in operations, some of the highlights in 2018-19 were:

- customer-focused variable signs and signals training for 350 control room operators, focusing on enabling the operators to see and hear how our customers feel when they are impacted by incidents
- Health and Safety training for over 1,000 traffic officers, including Driver First Assist (first aid) training, to support customers during incidents, and driver refresher virtual reality training
- recruiting and training 119 control room operators and 196 on-road traffic officers
- designing a mandatory training plan for traffic officers and control room operators, driving our Health and Safety refresher training for over 1,800 staff and ensuring safety competence of individuals throughout their career

Staff capacity

Attracting employees with the right skills is essential to building and strengthening our organisational capacity and our ability to deliver our strategic objectives. Our recruitment processes delivered a stable, high volume resourcing service across the business: by the end of 2018-19, we filled 1,565 vacancies, with 1,148 being filled by external candidates, growing the business to over 5,600.

As expected, and as seen in the previous two years, growth has been significant in the capability areas of programme and project management, asset management and commercial roles. At the same time, we have reduced our reliance on contingent resource, temporary staff filling roles on an interim basis, and the year has seen these reduce from over 100 to less than 50 in number.

To support our sourcing requirements, we put in place a new recruitment supplier framework, appointing specialist organisations to work with our in-house team to reach wider candidate markets. We have also increased our social media attraction, with success in programme and project management. Our commercial and operational campaigns increased our presence in the market as an employer of choice.

Having initially piloted a Returners Programme in 2017-18, we have implemented this initiative as a standard part of our ongoing sourcing approach. Six people joined the six-month programme in communications, legal and engineering roles this year. We also launched our ex-military programme, actively seeking to attract those who have recently left or are due to leave the military. Once they have joined, we support them with a buddy who is also ex-military to aid with their integration into a civilian workplace.

This year, we recruited 18 apprentices and 30 graduates. We now have over 160 graduates and apprentices working across the business. Our early talent roles make up 3% of the entire workforce against our 5% target, and we plan to recruit a further 51 apprentices and 40 graduates in 2019-20.



18

APPRENTICES



30

GRADUATES

Having implemented a new HR and recruitment system, we have been focused on continually improving our recruitment processes. We are developing an inclusive attraction, selection and retention approach to attract and retain talent from the widest possible pools. To achieve this, we have signed up to the Clear Assured Standard for inclusion to benchmark our current recruitment practices and plan improvement activity.

We have developed and implemented a Strategic Workforce Planning approach and system within our Major Projects directorate. This supports our business planning process through accurate short and medium-term resource planning directly linked to programme planning and scheduling activities. Our Major Projects directorate is now able to deploy staff in a more objective manner, based on the needs of specific projects, as well as targeting development in line with future programme resource, competency and capability requirements. In 2019, we are developing the system to be used more widely across the organisation.

Performance and talent management

In 2018, we transitioned our performance management process online within our HR system, driving a consistent approach to mid-year and end-of-year performance reviews. Employees' performance was reviewed in conversations with their line managers based on performance against their personal goals and how they delivered these in accordance with our organisational values.

We improved talent and succession planning processes through implementing a talent management module in our HR system. At mid-year, for certain paybands, talent reviews were facilitated through the system, using the mid-year assessments of performance and potential. This provided greater visibility and consistency, and enabled higher quality career-focused discussions with staff. It also ensured easy accessibility of data to enable us to manage those individuals with high performance and potential.

Wellbeing

Through an extended programme of mental health first aider training, we now have 165 employees carrying out support at 53 of our 56 control centres, outstations and offices. Our mental health first aiders have also substantially contributed to raising the profile of our 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme. 27% of colleagues, a rise of 2%, now use this programme to access free, confidential advice from health, legal and debt specialists.

We launched our new online wellbeing platform, PAM Life, which is a 24/7 online service that allows our employees to assess, track and monitor their wellness. As well as interesting content – fitness videos, healthy recipes and articles to help assess physical and mental health – colleagues have direct access to a food coach, health coach, fitness coach and mind coach to get bespoke advice and guidance.

Trauma support

Having undertaken research with representatives from our on-road and control centre colleagues, we identified that specialist trauma support would greatly improve the wellbeing of staff that deal with on-road incidents.

We recognise that colleagues may have reactions following a traumatic incident and this can be distressing. A well-planned, carefully coordinated and expertly implemented professional intervention can help a colleague manage their reaction and support their recovery.

The Centre for Crisis Psychology are experts in the field of trauma and pioneers in trauma aftercare. They provide us with:

- trauma training for staff in Operations
- specialist aftercare: guaranteed availability of Trauma Care Consultants and 24-hour trauma support helpline; and access to organisational and clinical advice post-incident
- incident management advice
- advice and support to our trained diffusers
- face-to-face or telephone clinical intervention
- ongoing follow-ups with individuals
- trauma support to staff in other parts of the organisation who may, more unusually, come across trauma events

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Our aims and commitments

We are working to create an environment where:

- individuals' differences are valued and respected
- everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute and develop
- our policies, procedures and behaviours support fairness and inclusion

We are committed to:

- recruiting and retaining a workforce that represents the diverse society we serve
- delivering services that all of our customers can access and that take account of their diverse needs
- meeting our legislative duty to promote equality and social inclusion, and to eliminate discrimination and harassment
- embedding equality, diversity and inclusion principles into all areas of our business, driving real change in how we work with our customers, communities, supply chain and our employees

Our colleague networks assist us in the shaping and delivery of our policies and working practices to improve our people's experience across our organisation. Our existing networks of Leading Women and Access for All have been complemented by the development of three further groups: LGBT+; Armed Forces and Veterans Group; and Menopause and Hormone Condition Group.

Our Armed Forces and Veterans Group is open to anyone who is part of the armed forces family. It is an opportunity to network and support our ex-military recruitment programme. Our Menopause and Hormone Condition Group aims to provide support and information for women experiencing any hormonal imbalance, helping them manage the effects in the workplace and in their personal lives.

Alongside our Armed Forces and Veterans Group, we achieved a silver award for our ex-military programme, which focuses on recruiting military personnel and supporting their transition into civilian work. As part of this programme, we also provide reservists with up to 10 days paid special leave to attend training.

We ran our Returners Programme for a second year, aiming at providing individuals who have had a career break of two or more years with the opportunity to come back into the workplace and start to build their careers again.

In 2018-19, we worked hard to establish and grow our LGBT+ group to ensure that we become a more inclusive and LGBT+ friendly employer. The group raises awareness across the business of LGBT+ issues, as well as providing insight, advice and support.

Our LGBT+ group is run by a committee of 12 volunteers, accountable to one of our Executive Directors as senior sponsor. In the past year, membership has grown from around 20 people to more than 280, three Prides have been attended, and the business has connected with more than 25 external LGBT+ networks in the public sector to share ideas and resources, and to foster opportunities for collaboration.

Looking ahead to 2019-20, we have agreed to submit an application to become Stonewall Diversity Champions, and to look to apply for the Workplace Equality Index for external validation and feedback for further improvements.



Our social impact

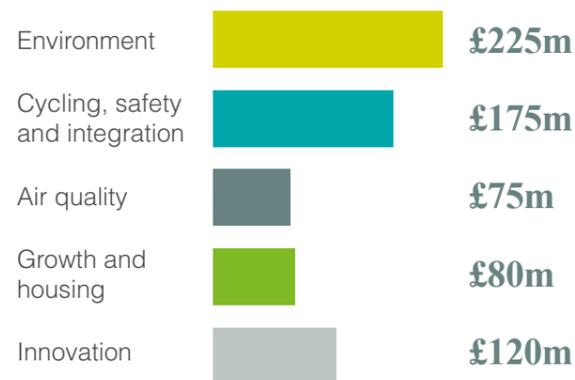
► We believe that connecting people and communities creates jobs and social opportunities, and helps businesses and the economy thrive. As well as creating growth, we know we have a vital role to play in protecting the environment and in improving safety and quality of life for current and future generations.

We work in partnership with our supply chain to develop and deliver efficient and innovative solutions, and we listen closely to our customers and stakeholders who help shape our work.

1. Sustainability schemes

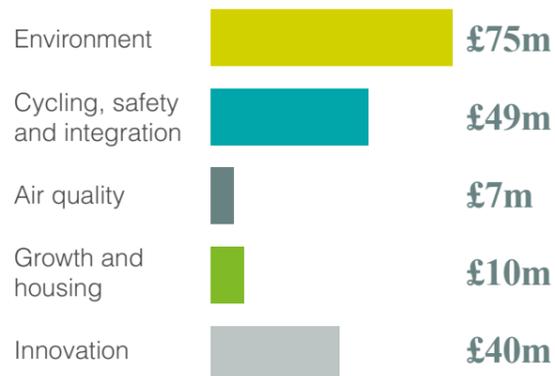
Our £675 million Designated Funds provide ring-fenced funding to improve the surroundings of the SRN as well as to support and protect quality of life.

Our Designated Funds for 2015-20 cover five areas:



Our Designated Funds Advisory Group helps us to test ideas and understand the opportunities for our network to have a more positive impact on those who use it and the communities who live alongside it.

In 2018-19, we spent a total of £181 million on social impact schemes, with funding divided as follows:



We are always looking at new ways of working with our stakeholders and using their expertise to help us deliver schemes. For example, we are working closely with the National Trust, Historic England and the English Heritage Trust on the A303 Stonehenge project to deliver a final design that protects and enhances this unique World Heritage Site.

In another important collaboration, in April 2018, we worked together with the Environment Agency on the jointly-funded £6.2 million Catterick Flood Scheme. This partnership was largely funded through our Environment Designated Fund, with the Environment Agency's field operations team delivering the construction work.

“We are always looking for innovative ways to get the most benefit from our flood schemes, and by also creating five hectares of new habitat, this is a fantastic example of how working together can bring multiple benefits for the local community, economy and environment.”

EMMA BOYD CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

We encourage our stakeholders to generate ideas for where the funds are spent. In 2018, we launched a new area on our website that allows any organisation to contact us with ideas that can be developed in partnership.

2. Environment

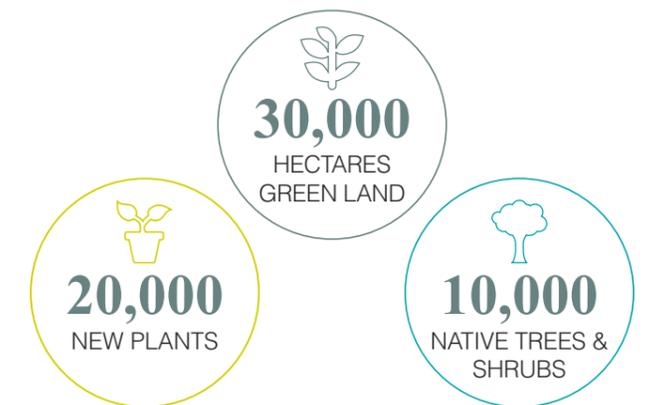
It would be easy to believe that the SRN only consists of tarmac and other hard features like bridges and signage.

Our road network also includes about 30,000 hectares (the size of about 30,000 full-size rugby pitches) of green land – known as our soft estate.

This buffers neighbouring communities from the full impact (such as visual impact, noise and air quality) of busy high-speed roads, and helps our roads fit more smoothly into the built and natural environment.

At the outset of any of our projects, we assess where we can offset the environmental impact, for example through planting, as well as looking at how we can protect native species. For example, on the verges of our A1M project in Yorkshire this year, we planted an area of 5.7 hectares with 20,000 new plants as well as seeding it with wildflowers.

We have delivered a vast woodland and hedgerow connectivity scheme at 21 sites (totalling 105 miles) along the A30 and A38 in Devon and Cornwall. Over 10,000 native trees and shrubs have filled or reduced gaps in hedgerow and woodland along the roadside.



We know reducing the visual impact of roads is important to our communities. In June 2018, we paved the way for improved road building with the release of the first suite of our new design standards in the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB), helping ensure that roads are designed, built and maintained to the highest and safest standards. The DMRB was first published in 1992, and our review (which began in April 2017) is due for completion by March 2020. Highways England's Chief Highways Engineer and Chair of its Strategic Design Panel, commented:

“This is an exciting time for the highways sector as we deliver the Government's record £15 billion investment in roads. The updated DMRB documents mark a historic moment for the design of the UK's motorways and major A-roads.”

MIKE WILSON CHIEF ENGINEER

► Strategic case study

Minimising noise pollution for those who live near our roads

We have worked hard this year to ease the issue of noise pollution for people living in over 1,000 areas close to motorways and major A-roads.



Our challenge

We know that reducing the noise from our roads can have a positive effect on the quality of life for those who live near them.

We have a £39 million Designated Fund to reduce noise levels for people living close to motorways and major A-roads. We have pledged to reduce noise levels for people living in over 1,000 areas close to motorways and major A-roads by spring 2020 through installing noise barriers, providing free double glazing and using new road surfacing materials that create less noise.

Solution

We have installed free double glazing at more than 600 homes.

We have laid quieter surfacing on over 6,000 lane miles on motorways and major A-roads since 2015 – equivalent to resurfacing the entire M6 three times over. Quieter surfacing is now installed as standard wherever possible on the roads we manage. The smoother and thinner top layer can help make roads significantly quieter than traditional road surfaces, although it does have higher maintenance costs.



40,000

RESIDENTS ENJOY A QUIETER LIFE

People living near the busy A1 in Nottinghamshire are among 40,000 roadside residents enjoying a quieter life thanks to a major noise reduction initiative.

A 600-metre-long noise barrier close to the village of North Muskham, near Newark, is the latest structure to be installed as part of the scheme. The three-metre-high barrier has been adopted by the local community after villagers decided to plant 150 shrubs in front of it.

The outcome

Last year, we won the Silent Approach award at the Noise Abatement Society's annual awards ceremony in London for our work to reduce noise levels for over 40,000 roadside residents since 2015.

The awards recognise organisations which are judged to have been outstanding in their efforts to both reduce the impact of noise and seek to pioneer practical and innovative solutions.



Following this release we also published our *Strategic Design Panel Progress Report 2* in December 2018. This goes along with our design vision and principles in *The Road to Good Design*, published in January 2018.

Clearing litter

Keep Britain Tidy run an annual Great British Spring Clean, encouraging people to clean up the country and make littering a socially unacceptable behaviour. The official Spring Clean ran from 22 March to 23 April 2019, and we ran an extended campaign to coincide with our main litter-picking activity on the network.

We ran a social media campaign from 1 March to 11 April to educate road users about the impact of dropping litter. Not only does it affect the environment, but it puts the health and safety of those who clear the network at risk – as well as taking them away from other maintenance and safety tasks. It also affects road users themselves, who subsequently experience lane closures and delays. Overall the campaign gained 225,542 impressions, with 1,054 likes, 448 shares and 342 comments.

We also focused on clearing the top 25 litter hotspots across our network. We coordinated our activity with local authorities to improve coverage and minimise disruption to our customers.

In the South West, for example, we cleared over 600 bags of litter from our key hotspots, and in the North West we ran a public awareness campaign using social media, posters and road signage. We also installed window-height bins at motorway service areas to make it easier for HGV drivers to dispose of litter before joining the SRN.

3. Helping vulnerable users

Motorists are not the only users of our roads, and we are committed to making it as easy as possible for non-motorised, or vulnerable users – primarily cyclists, walkers and equestrians – to navigate the SRN.

This year, we published our first cycling and accessibility report. We have made significant progress in integrating cycling and accessibility needs in the early stages of scheme design, and we are working closely with key stakeholders to deliver schemes which suit the needs of communities.

This year we teamed up with Sustrans, the walking and cycling charity, to deliver a £3 million cycle scheme to encourage more people to ride their bikes. We are also working closely with Sustrans to help provide safer crossings and connect cycle schemes on England's busiest roads with the charity's 16,505 mile national cycle network.

In another partnership, we are working with the National Trust to deliver improvements to an approximately 2.5 mile section of the national cycle network in Kent.

4. Community and relationships

Community investment through our major projects

The M5 Oldbury Viaduct renewal scheme: leaving a legacy

West Bromwich is the second most economically disadvantaged area in the UK. One of the priorities of the scheme is to open up economic opportunities, use local skills and leave a lasting positive legacy for the region.

The project team worked with CRISIS, the national homeless charity, by employing 12 homeless people as operatives, as part of a pilot. The scheme's approach to inclusive working earned it recognition as part of the Construction News Talent Awards in the Best Place to Work and Diversity and Inclusion Initiative of the Year categories, and also a 2018 Highways England supplier recognition award for Building Capability and Capacity.

Our supply chain organisations who are delivering the M5 Oldbury Viaduct scheme have proactively engaged with local organisations to:

- employ local apprentices
- source people from a diverse pool of talent
- employ disabled and long-term unemployed people
- promote the industry in local schools and colleges to break down preconceptions

The scheme partnered with Sandwell College, Job Centre Plus, Think Sandwell, ex-forces agencies, The Prince's Trust and Women into Construction. They developed a bespoke marketing campaign to ensure we reached the widest pool of people.

A new collaborative forum on mobility and disability

We set up a National Mobility and Disabled Road Users Forum in December 2018 to help us gain better insights into the accessibility requirements for people with a disability. The forum includes representatives from the Joint Committee on Mobility for Disabled People, Disabled Motoring, IAM, Driving Mobility, Transport Focus and the DfT, along with Highways England representatives across a number of different policy and delivery teams.

Our work with the Armed Forces

We are particularly keen to recruit ex-forces personnel as many of the skills they possess are essential for the running of our business.

Our work over this year has seen us move from bronze to silver as part of our Army covenant agreement. Leading mental health charity, Combat Stress – which works with veterans to help them tackle the past and plan for the future – welcomed our latest recruitment campaign.

“I’m delighted to see this campaign from Highways England to recruit more veterans into the company. The buddy initiative to help veterans transition to a civilian job is a fantastic example of how a company has created an effective support programme in the workplace.”

SUE FREETH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE COMBAT STRESS

5. Employees and supply chain

As an employer of over 5,600 people, we are committed to creating a culture of inclusivity, and this commitment extends beyond our own workforce and into our wider community, fostering more inclusive services and outcomes for our customers and stakeholders. The benefits of being a diverse and inclusive organisation include safer working environments, improved productivity, greater innovation, and better staff engagement and talent attraction. Inclusive teams tend to be more productive because they better understand the diverse needs of the customers and communities we serve.

Employee volunteering

We have revised our volunteering policy this year, allowing our people to focus on activities that broaden relevant skills, and to inspire young people. We have focused on schools or groups in disadvantaged communities close to our offices, Regional Control Centres or road schemes.

A highlight of our employee volunteering work this year has been our focus on the Year of Engineering. This is a Government campaign (through the DfT) to work with hundreds of industry partners – including Highways England – to offer a million direct and inspiring experiences to young people throughout the year.

The UK faces a potential shortfall of 20,000 Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics graduates a year. The campaign aims to showcase the creativity and innovation of engineering, and widen the pool of young people considering the profession, diversifying the UK workforce which is currently 91% male and 94% white.

Bringing people back to work

Our Returners Programme is aimed at bringing people who have taken a career break of two or more years back to work. They are placed in positions of a middle to senior level on a six-month programme, with the aim of securing a permanent position at the end of the six months.

During the programme they are provided with a mentor, and participate in coaching sessions run by an external specialist.

Building on the successes of the first intake onto this programme (100% of participants secured permanent roles at Highways England), we took on a further intake of returners in September 2018. They worked in positions across Corporate Affairs and Communications, Safety, Engineering and Standards, and General Counsel.

Within the first three months of the programme, one of the participants secured a permanent role following a competitive recruitment process. At the end of the programme five secured permanent positions.

Supply chain development

Our work with our supply chain focuses on two main areas of impact:

- employment and skills
- supporting diversity and inclusion

Employment and skills

We know that there could be a shortage of skilled and competent workers across our supply chain in the next five years, due to capacity constraints within the construction and infrastructure industries.

We have committed to:

- providing visibility of demand and expectations to enable our supply chain to better plan work
- procuring and operating to enable the supply chain to best respond to future demand and expectations
- considering the impact on the supply chain when planning work/determining our future delivery strategy
- scanning the market to ensure we have an understanding of future supply and demand

As an example, in our Regional Development Programme we have outlined how we want our supply chain to work in collaboration to solve regional and national labour issues.

Supporting diversity

Commitment starts from the top and, in June 2018, our Chief Executive Jim O’Sullivan invited 13 Chief Executives and Managing Directors from our biggest spending supply chain organisations to an event facilitated by global management consultants McKinsey. It focused on the case for change, where we are now, and what needs to be done to drive change. The session provided an opportunity to discuss current inclusion activity across the sector and future aspirations.

Formed in 2010, the Supplier Diversity Forum has delivered an extensive programme of activity to accelerate the pace of change in the sector. This year, the forum hosted an event at Birmingham’s International Convention Centre during National Inclusion Week. The theme was ‘valuing people at work’, and focused on growing inclusive working environments and cultures at project level.

Measuring success – benchmarking activity

Since 2011, we have asked our supply chain to provide baseline workforce data by age, gender, disability and ethnicity for their staff who deliver Highways England contracts. This year we added religion, belief and LGBT+ data as categories.

Our collaborative performance framework is the primary tool we use to monitor how well our supply chain are meeting our requirements as set out in their contracts. Performance related to equality, diversity and inclusion is rated from scores of 2 to 10. This year our monitoring has revealed that, out of a total of 36 suppliers, 71% are routinely achieving a score of 6 (representing good performance) or above.



71%
OF OUR SUPPLIERS ACHIEVE
'GOOD' PERFORMANCE